

Sentence Correction – Advanced Concepts

Sentence Correction

... the Ivy-GMAT way!

PRIMEX (a technique exclusive to Ivy-GMAT) is the most effective technique to solve any GMAT SC question ... you are sure to reach near 100% accuracy.

PRIMEX stands for:

- Preferences
- Rules
- Idioms
- Meaning Clarity
- Exceptions

The central part of PRIMEX is **meaning clarity** ... the most critical aspect of SC. Apart from meaning clarity, the following are crucial:

- **Read the full sentence:** Even the non-underlined portion ... **no exception** to this rule.
- **Grammar RULES:** Intuition is your last resort... So any choice that seems right, feels right, sounds right, smells right, etc. may not be the right answer.
- **Idioms** (long list – has to be memorized – very crucial for success on GMAT-SC despite the latest announcements)
- **GMAT favorites** (long list – has to be memorized)
- **Style:** Diction, Redundancy, Concision, Awkwardness, Ambiguity ... all these aspects also matter to get the final answer.

LOCATION of Errors:

- Most of the errors on GMAT-SC occur at four potential places
 - The Beginning of the Underlined Portion
 - The End of the Underlined Portion
 - After the Comma
 - One word / phrase before the underlined portion

The best SC approach

- **Read the full sentence** and understand the meaning of the sentence. **This is the most crucial step.**
- **SCAN:** Use Horizontal / Vertical Scanning to look for differences in the choices
- **SPLIT:** Look for a 2/3 or a 3/2 split. Most likely you are likely to narrow down to two choices
- **POE:** Don't try to select the correct answer – eliminate wrong ones
- **Paper:** Use a tick cross system with a pencil. Don't rely on memory.
- **TRAP:** Choice "A" can be the right choice in a substantial number of questions.

List of GMAT-Idioms – can't do without

- Idioms are expressions that are the way they are
- There can be no explanations / reasoning for idioms
- *You have to memorize a list, e.g.,*
 - Forbid *to do* NOT *from doing*
 - Cope *with* NOT cope *up with*
 - Comprise NOT comprise *of*; although in the passive voice, *is comprised of* is correct.
 - Mistake A *for* B NOT mistake A *as* B
 - *Neck and Neck* competition, NOT *neck to neck*
 - *Laid up* with fever NOT *laid down*
 - Consider NOT consider *to be* or consider *as*... The list continues

Concision

AVOID	USE
Despite the fact that	Although
Have the capability	Can
Exactly the same	Same
In close proximity to	Near
Past experience	Experience
Final Outcome	Outcome

GMAT favorites

- In case there is a choice between the left column word / expression and the right column expression, the GMAT will prefer the word / expression on right column.
- Favorites are the last on the list of priorities on SC.
- Only after checking Grammar, Idiom, Meaning Clarity and Concision should you think of these as the tie-breakers.
- The use of favorites before checking Grammar, Idiom, Meaning Clarity and Concision will certainly land you in trouble in tougher problems.
- For example, there are a few sentences in the Official Guide in which the use of "BEING" is correct.
- Also, remember the entire phrase: for example the choice is between "Instead of" and "Rather than", not between "Instead" and "Rather".
- Apply these with a lot of caution.

Avoid	Use
Instead of	Rather than
Due to	Because of
2 times	Double / Twice
Being	... Lack of "being"
Compare to	Compare with
Do it	Do so
May be	Perhaps
If	Whether
Hopefully	It is hoped
As well as	And
Enough	So
Ability	Able
Capability	Can
As a result of	Result from
One time	Once
4 times	Quadruple
Economical	Economic
Try and	Try to
Liable	Likely
Ought to	Should
But	Although
"Which" after the comma	A NOUN or ING form
Just like	Just as / Just as ... so / just as ... so too
Like	Such as
Like	As if / as though
Noun form	Verb Form
Apostrophe / Possessive forms	Nominative forms

Cases to avoid:

Such like Occurring Seeming On account of Owing to Lesser Not any And also

Words followed by 'to be' / 'to' / 'that': Seem, Known, Thought, Estimated, Believe, Appear, Qualify, Likely, Predict, Project

Root form: ordered, mandatory, ruled, authorized, condition, imperative, important, required, proposed, necessary, demand

Incorrect: The game was postponed due to rain. **Correct:** The game was postponed because of rain.

Correct: The game's postponement was due to rain.

V-A-N Pattern 1: Prefer a Verb to an Action Noun

Wordy: The townspeople's REVOLUTION WAS AGAINST the king. **Better:** The townspeople REVOLTED AGAINST the king.

An *Action Noun*, such as *revolution*, is a noun that expresses an action. Try to express actions with verbs (such as *revolt*), rather than with action nouns (such as *revolution*). Generally, a short, simple verb is stronger than a phrase with the relevant action noun and a generic verb, such as *be* or *make*. In the other examples listed below, notice how the nouns create wordy prepositional phrases.

Wordy: They are subject to the applicability of rules.

Better: Rules apply to them.

Wordy: His conception of money was as a goal.

Better: He conceived of money as a goal.

Wordy: The cost of storms to the country is billions.

Better: Storms cost the country billions.

Wordy: Her decision was to go.

Better: She decided to go.

Wordy: His example was an influence on me.

Better: His example influenced me.

Wordy: Her example was an inspiration to me.

Better: Her example inspired me.

Wordy: They made a reference to the strike.

Better: They referred to the strike.

Wordy: The weight of the apples is a pound.

Better: The apples weigh a pound.

However, note that, like all other patterns of wordiness and conclusion, this pattern does NOT provide hard-and-fast rule. As you start to notice these patterns, do not fall in love with them! Always use concision last. Moreover, in many cases, a difference among answer choices involving Concision also hinges on other issues.

V-A-N Pattern 2: Prefer a That-Clause (with Verbs) to a Series of Phrases (with Nouns)

Wordy: The hypothesis ABOUT the COMPOSITION OF the universe AS largely dark energy seems strange.

Better: The hypothesis THAT the universe IS largely COMPOSED OF dark energy seems strange.

When you tack a long thought onto a noun, try to put the thought in a **That-Clause** rather than in a long series of prepositional phrases. A **That-Clause** starts with the word **that** and contains a working verb (one that, **as is**, can be the main verb of a sentence by itself). **Is composed** is a working verb.

"Idea" nouns, such as *hypothesis*, *idea*, or *suggestion*, lend themselves particularly well to this pattern. Other examples include *belief*, *discovery*, *evidence*, *indication*, and *report*. These sorts of nouns are often modified by **That-Clauses** that contain full sentences:

The **BELIEF THAT** the Earth is flat is contradicted by **EVIDENCE THAT** the Earth is round and the **DISCOVERY THAT** the Earth circles the Sun.

V-A-N Pattern 3: Prefer a Verb to an Adjective

Wordy: The artist WAS INFLUENTIAL TO the movement.

Better: The artist INFLUENCED the movement.

Wordy: This rash is aggravating to the pain.

Better: This rash aggravates the pain.

We are able to go to the store now.

Better: We can go to the store now.

This signal is indicative of a problem.

Better: This signal indicates a problem.

Her example was inspirational to me.

Better: Her example inspired me.

This painting is suggestive of calm.

Better: This painting suggests calm.

V-A-N Pattern 4: Prefer an Adjective to a Noun

Wordy: THERE IS AN ABUNDANCE OF funds for school construction. **Better:** Funds for school construction ARE ABUNDANT.

Wordy: She has the ability to juggle. **Better:** She is able to juggle.
The best form here is "She can juggle."

Wordy: She has the capability to juggle. **Better:** She is capable of juggling.
Wordy: I am of the conviction that they are right. **Better:** I am convinced that they are right.
Wordy: We have a disinclination to stay. **Better:** We are disinclined to stay.
Wordy: He is in isolation. **Better:** He is isolated.

V-A-N Pattern 5: Prefer an Adverb to a Prepositional Phrase

Wordy: Oil prices have fallen, but prices at the gasoline pump have not fallen TO A COMPARABLE EXTENT.
Better: Oil prices have fallen, but prices at the gasoline pump have not fallen COMPARABLY.

To modify a verb phrase (e.g., *have not fallen*), use a simple adverb rather than a long prepositional phrase that means the same thing. Since prepositional phrases contain nouns, this is another example of the V-A-N principle.

Notice also that the first example above is suboptimal for another reason. The phrase 'fall to' often indicates the 'level' to which something falls, rather than the 'extent': *Prices have fallen to under a dollar*. As a result, you might misread the first example.

Wordy: to a considerable extent **Better:** considerably
Wordy: to a significant degree **Better:** significantly

Two other concision patterns do not fit the V-A-N framework but are worth noting. Both of these patterns involve overuse of the generic verb **to be**. As we have already seen, the verb **to be** can appear in many instances of wordiness. When you search for the most concise answer, run an "Elimination **BE**": get rid of any unnecessary uses of **be**. (Remember that the verb **to be** can take on many other forms: *am, are, been, is, was, were*.)

V-A-N Pattern 6: Prefer an Adjective to an Adjective Clause with Be

Wordy: Marcos is a professor WHO IS ADMIRABLE. **Better:** Marcos is an ADMIRABLE professor.

An adjective clause that contains the verb **to be** (in any of its forms) is generally wordier than the adjective by itself.

In particular, if the main clause contains **be** as well, try to use the adjective alone. The first example has two occurrences of the word **is**, one of which is unnecessary. The second example has only one **is**, because the adjective **admirable** has been moved in front of the noun **professor**.

This principle works similarly with nouns that identify or describe other nouns:

Wordy: Joan, WHO IS a FIREFIGHTER, works in Yosemite Park.
Better: Joan, a FIREFIGHTER, works in Yosemite Park.

V-A-N Pattern 7: Remove IT IS ... THAT. ..

Wordy: IT IS without fear THAT children should play. **Better:** Children should play without fear.

The first construction is perfectly grammatical and even useful when you want to emphasize some aspect of the situation (such as **without fear**). But the GMAT avoids such constructions in correct answers. You should do the same as you make your choice.

Again, none of these Concision patterns expresses a rule but rather a preference. Make use of these patterns judiciously. In particular, be wary of shortcuts. Words or phrases such as being or the fact that do not automatically indicate that an answer choice is wrong. In The Official Guide 12th Edition, both of these common signals of wordiness are present in correct answers. The other answer choices are all grammatically wrong.

Concision: Don't Make It Too Short

As you cut out unnecessary words, be careful not to cut too much out of the sentence! Avoid creating awkward phrasings or introducing new errors.

The GMAT sometimes tries to trick you with **false concision**: tempting expressions that are too short for their own good. Some patterns are listed below.

"Too Short" Pattern 1: Keep the Prepositional Phrase if You Need To

Too Short: I talked to the BOSTON SOLDIER.

Better: I talked to the SOLDIER FROM BOSTON.

Too Short

Aegean Sea salt

Ural Mountain ore

Danube River access

Changes IN the population of honeybees

Memorial Day week OR Memorial Day's week

The merger year

The oxygen amount

The honeybee population density

OR the honeybee population's density

Better

salt FROM the Aegean Sea

ore FROM the Ural Mountains

access TO the Danube River

population changes OF honeybees

the week OF Memorial Day

the year OF the merger

the amount OF oxygen

the density OF the honeybee population

"Too Short" Pattern 2: Keep 'That Of' or 'Those Of' if You Need To

Too Short: The face I see in ads every day is a famous actor.

Better: The face I see in ads every day is THAT OF a famous actor.

Wordy: The fields I most enjoy studying are THOSE OF physics and chemistry.

Better: The fields I most enjoy studying are physics and chemistry.

"Too Short" Pattern 3: Keep "That" after a Reporting Verb (such as indicate, claim, contend, or report)

Too Short: The study INDICATES the problem has vanished.

Better: The study INDICATES THAT the problem has vanished.

The criminals AGREED THAT gold would be the scam.

They CLAIMED THAT gold was growing scarce.

They CONTENDED THAT the price of gold would rise.

They DECLARED THAT they had discovered gold.

Investors FOUND THAT they could not get answers.

An article INDICATED THAT the mine was worthless.

An investigation REVEALED THAT the gold was a mirage.

The court RULED THAT the criminals were guilty of fraud.

This story SHOWS THAT crime does not pay.

Other common Reporting Verbs include *announce, assert, believe, confess, demonstrate, doubt, expect, hold, know, mention, observe, proclaim, reason, recognize, repeat, state, think, and warn*, as well as various forms with the verb **be**, such as *be convinced, be certain, be assured*, and so forth.

Absolute Phrases

Notice the following sentences (such constructions are considered correct)

1. Joan looked nervous, **her fears** *creeping* up on her.
2. Tom paled when he came home, **his mother** *standing* in the doorway.
3. She returned to her bench, **her face showing all the unhappiness that had suddenly overtaken her**.
4. The boy watched, **his eyes bulging in the dark**.
5. About the bones, ants were ebbing away, **their pincers full of meat**.
6. Six boys came over the hill half an hour early that afternoon, running hard, **their heads down, their forearms working, their breath whistling**.
7. Noiselessly Lenny appeared in the open doorway and stood there looking in, **his big shoulders nearly filling the opening**.
8. Light flickered on bits of ruby glass and on sensitive capillary hairs in the nylon-brushed nostrils of the creature that quivered gently, gently, **its eight legs spidered under it on rubber-padded paws**.

Notice in the above sentences:

The part after the comma (called the **absolute phrase**) has the following characteristics:

1. It starts with a possessive form (his, her, its, their etc.)
2. It only adds to the meaning (just additional or filler information). It is not core information.
3. It contains no verb (it is a phrase).
4. It is adverbial in nature (it goes back to the whole clause, not to a specific noun).

Absolute phrase construction is a preferred construction on GMAT SC.

Appositive Phrases / Modifiers

Appositives rename noun phrases and are usually placed beside what they rename.

The bold part in the following sentences is **the appositive**. The appositives are nouns that **refer to a particular noun** in the preceding part. They are **adjectival** in nature, i.e., they modify only a specific noun. Appositives provide **filler** (not core) information about the main noun. Such constructions are preferred on the GMAT.

1. The lady, **our president**, spoke out against racism.
2. We waited in our favorite meeting place, **the pub**.
3. Our department head, **a careful reader and outspoken critic**, will review the memo before it is circulated.
4. My radio, **an old portable**, is in the repair shop.
5. The boys climbed the mountain, **one of the highest in the West**.
6. Lamp Trimmer Samuel Hemming, lying in his bunk, heard a curious hissing sound coming from the forepeak, **the compartment** closest to the bow of the Titanic.
7. Ives and Ramirez parked, and upon approaching the entranceway saw Father Jimenez, **an old man** now in wire-rim glasses peering out from behind the screen.
8. Three days ago he received a payment for \$1000, **part of the** long-overdue pension that had been delayed for various bureaucratic reasons.
9. I went to the bar with John Smith, **a consultant** in Los Angeles.
10. In America, as in anywhere else in the world, we must find **a focus** in our lives at an early age, **a focus** that is beyond the mechanics of earning a living or coping with a household.

Notice the above sentence (#10) carefully. The word FOCUS is repeated. Such appositive constructions are the most preferred on the GMAT.

Abstract nouns modifying the entire preceding clause (after a comma)

(If you have an appositive modifier that's an abstract noun - such as "strategy", "figure", "statistic", "findings", "situation", "change", "difference", etc. - then such an appositive may be allowed to describe the entire situation described in the previous clause.)

1. I only have one onion, **a deficiency** that will make it impossible to cook this dish.
2. The scientists discovered whale-fish bones in the Arctic, **findings** that prove the existence of whale-fish.
3. Scientists have found high levels of iridium in certain geographical formations around the world, **results** that suggest the cataclysmic impact of a meteor millions of years ago.
4. An asteroid bigger than Mount Everest slammed into North America, Sixty-five million years ago, **an event** that caused the plant and animal extinctions that mark the end of the geologic era known as the Cretaceous Period.
5. The coach tried to put 5 receivers on the line, **a strategy** that failed.
6. X observed large concentrations of metals in the sediments, **findings** consistent with the history of deposits in the region.
7. Recent studies have shown that X is 60 percent of Y, **a finding** that has shocked many in the scientific community. OR Recent studies have shown that X is 60 percent of Y, **a statistic** that has shocked many in the scientific community.
8. Neanderthals had a vocal tract resembling an ape's and so were probably without language, **a shortcoming** that may explain why they were supplanted by our own species.
9. Scientists have observed large concentrations of heavy-metal deposits in the upper twenty centimeters of sediments from the Baltic Sea, **findings** consistent with the growth of industrial activity in the area.
10. I went to the bar with John Smith, **an excursion** that was much more fun than working all night.
11. The general tried to get his troops to retreat before being surrounded, **a strategy** that ultimately failed.

Such **abstract noun constructions** are preferred on the test ... always correct.

Important: Usually on the GMAT, you will need to choose between a pronoun ('which' or 'it') that refers to a verb and an abstract noun that refers to the entire preceding clause / situation. In such a case, you must choose the Abstract noun construction. ALWAYS!

Finer points related to the word "Twice"

If you say "twice as **many**", then this construction should be paired with a **countable noun**.

e.g., *twice as many dogs* --> "dogs" is a countable noun

If you said "twice as **much**", then this construction should be paired with an **uncountable noun**.

e.g., *twice as much water* --> "water" is an uncountable noun

If the noun in question is already an **explicitly numerical quantity**, then you should use **neither** "much" nor "many". instead, you should just use "twice" or "double" by itself.

e.g., *twice the increase* --> "increase" is an explicitly numerical quantity

twice as much water --> correct, since "water" is an uncountable noun (but is not an explicitly numerical quantity)

twice the water... --> incorrect, since water is not a numerical quantity

twice as much as the increase... --> incorrect; redundant

twice the increase... --> correct

Twice vs. Double:

Twice is used as an adjective ... it must refer to a **noun** mentioned in the sentence elsewhere.

Double is used as a **verb** or a **participle** (in cause and effect etc.) ... it does not refer to a specific noun.

IDIOM LIST

a consequence of	depends on whether	no less . . . than
a debate over	depicted as	no less was X than was Y
a responsibility to	determined by	not only X but also Y
a sequence of	differ from	not so much X as Y
able to X	different from	not X but rather Y
access to	disagree with (person/idea)	noted that
agree with (person/idea)	discourage from	permit X to Y
agree to (a plan or action)	dispute whether	persuade X to Y
allows for	distinguish between X and Y	prefer X to Y
appeal to	distinguish X from Y	prohibits X from Y
approve/disapprove of	doubt that	potential to
an instance of	either X or Y	range from X to Y
as a result of	enable X to Y	rates for (not 'of')
as good as	encourage X to Y	regard as
as great as	enough X that Y	requiring that X Y
as many . . . as	estimated to be	requiring X to Y
as much as	except for	responsible for
as X as to Y	expect to	resulting in
ask X to Y	fascinated by	retroactive to
associate with	forbid X to Y	sacrifice X for Y
attend to	identical with	seem to indicate
attribute X to Y	in contrast to	similar to
based on	in danger of	so as not to be hindered by
be afraid of	independent from	so X as to be Y
believe X to be Y	indifferent towards	so X as to constitute Y
better served by X than by Y	insist that	so X that Y
better than	interaction of	subscribe to
both X and Y	isolated from	such X as Y and Z
capable of	just as X, so Y	targeted at
centers on	know to do X	the more X the greater Y
claims to be	less X than Y	the same to X as to Y
compare to (similarities)	likely to be	to result in
compare with (differences)	mandate that	to think of X as Y
concerned with	mistake X for Y	used as
conform to	modeled after	view X as
connection between X and Y	more . . . than ever	whether to
consider X Y (without 'to be')	more common among X than	worried about (not 'over')
contrast X with Y	among Y	X instead of Y
credited with	more X than Y	X is attributed to Y
defined as	native to	X out of Y (numbers)
demand that	a native of	X regarded as Y
dependent on	neither X nor Y	

Parallel Connectors (X || Y)

- X rather than Y
- Between X and Y
- Both X and Y
- (Range) From X to Y
- Either X or Y
- Neither X nor Y
- Just as X so Y
- Not only X but (also) Y
- Not X but (rather) Y
- Not so X as Y
- Same X as Y
- X is Greater, fewer, less, more... than Y
- More X than Y
- Believe X to be Y
- X is Y
- To think of X as Y
- X regarded as Y
- Prefer X to Y
- Mistake X for Y
- The same to X as to Y
- As ... to X as to Y
- No less was X than was Y
- The more X.... the er... Y
- As X ... as Y
- Whether X or Y

TENSES

	Explanation	Past	Present	Future
		<u>Simple Past</u>	<u>Simple Present</u>	<u>Simple Future</u>
Moment	action that takes place once, never or several times	He played football every Tuesday.	He plays football every Tuesday.	He will / is going to play football every Tuesday.
	actions that happen one after another	He played football and then he went home.	He plays football and then he goes home.	He will play football and then he will go home.
	State	He loved football.	He loves football.	He will love football.
		<u>Past Continuous</u>	<u>Present Continuous</u>	<u>Future Continuous</u>
Period	action going on at that moment	He was playing football.	He is playing football.	He will be playing football.
	actions taking place at the same time	He was playing football and she was watching.	He is playing football and she is watching.	He will be playing football and she will be watching.
		<u>Past Perfect</u>	<u>Present Perfect</u>	<u>Future Perfect</u>
Result	action taking place before a certain moment in time; emphasizes the result	He had won five matches until that day.	He has won five matches so far.	He will have won five matches by then.
		<u>Past Perfect Continuous</u>	<u>Present Perfect Continuous</u>	<u>Future Perfect Continuous</u>
Duration	action taking place before a certain moment in time (and beyond), emphasizes the duration	He had been playing football for ten years.	He has been playing football for ten years.	He will have been playing football for ten years.

Conditionals:

If I meet her, I will tell her a story. **[Future Probable]**

If I met her, I would tell her a story. **[Future Improbable]**

If I were to meet her, I would tell her a story. **[Future Improbable]**

Were I to meet her, I would tell her a story. **[Future Improbable]**

If I had met her, I would have told her a story. **[Past (could not happen)]**

A note about –ING forms

These forms confuse students as these can be used in many ways:

–ING forms used as VERBS: An –ING form alone cannot be a verb... To be part of a verb, it must be accompanied by some form of the verb "to be." So IS + ING, WAS + ING, AM + ING, ARE + ING, WERE + ING, HAS BEEN + ING, HAVE BEEN + ING, HAD BEEN + ING, WILL BE + ING etc... will be verbs.

He IS RUNNING (VERB)

Note: It doesn't mean that everything of the form IS + ING is always verb. Focus on sentences below:

Seeing is believing.

All he needs is training.

His main problem is drinking.

In the sentences above, "is believing", "is training", or "is drinking" are not verbs.

The words "believing", "training", and "drinking" are nouns (gerunds).

–ING forms used as NOUNS (GERUNDS): –ING form (as a gerund) is a standalone noun.

The best test to identify NOUNS is to ask a question with WHAT? If the answer is the –ING form, the given word (–ING form) is a noun (gerund).

RUNNING (Noun – gerund) is a good exercise. [WHAT is a good exercise? Ans. Running]

The remaking of (Noun – gerund) capitalism is called for. [WHAT is called for? Ans. The remaking of capitalism]

Being an American (Noun – gerund) was an advantage for him in the home country. [WHAT was an advantage? Ans. Being an American]

If the answer to a "WHAT" question is the –ING form, the –ING form is a noun (called gerund).

CAUTION: *Imagine the sentence:* Being an American, she enjoyed certain privileges in Canada.

In this sentence, "Being an American" is a modifier (acts as an **adjective**) as we can't ask the WHAT question here.

–ING Forms used as Adjectives (Present Participles) – referring to a single noun in the sentence:

*The **resulting** temperature was high.* (The word 'resulting' is an Adjective – present participle – used BEFORE the noun 'temperature').

*The temperature **resulting** from the warming was high.* (The word 'resulting' is an Adjective – present participle – used AFTER the noun 'temperature').

–ING Forms used as Adjectival Modifiers (Present Participles) – referring to a single noun:

***Looking** at the baby's picture, she said that she also wanted a baby.* (The word 'looking' is an Adjective – this word modifies SHE – so we call it the adjectival modifier—used away from and BEFORE the noun).

*The captain resented the cuts in endorsements, **fuming** at the very suggestion given by the chairman of the Board.* (The word 'fuming' is an Adjective – this word modifies the captain – so we call it the adjectival modifier—used away from and AFTER the noun).

Remember: Adjectival modifiers used after the comma usually don't refer to the immediately preceding subject.

–ING Forms used as Adverbial Modifier – referring to a verb, action, or the entire preceding clause:

*The firm's investors invested unwisely for three consecutive years, **leading** to the complete collapse of the bank.* (Here the word 'leading' modifies the entire clause – so it is called the adverbial modifier).

Advanced Parallelism

Concrete nouns refer to things, people, places, and even time periods or certain events: rock, continent, electron, politician, region, holiday, week etc.

Action nouns refer to actions, as their name implies. They are often formed from verbs: Eruption, pollution, nomination, withdrawal, development, change, growth

–Ing forms of verbs can also be used as nouns to indicate actions. *–Ing* verb forms used as nouns are called Gerunds.

How to identify ING forms as nouns?

Ask "WHAT" ... if the answer is the –ING form, then it is a noun (gerund).

Fishing is fun. (What is fun?)
My favorite occupation is **reading**.
Pointless **questioning** makes me sick.
He is crazy about **singing**.
They are afraid of **swimming** in the sea.
Sam dreams of **being** a pop-star.
My uncle is afraid of **going by plane**.

Smoking costs a lot of money.
I don't like **writing** letters.
I dislike his **coming** here uninvited.
I don't like **playing** cards.
You should give up **smoking**.
He is interested in **making friends**.
We insist on **cooking** the dinner ourselves.

I don't like **writing**.
She is good at **dancing**.

Cooking is one of her hobbies.
Getting a good job is not easy.
Driving becomes more and more expensive.
Making fun of other people is not nice.

Cycling is fun.
Finding a parking space is quite difficult in this area.
No **smoking** in this area.
Learning about other cultures makes people more tolerant.

Focus on the sentence:

Tracking satellites accurately is important for the space agency. (WHAT is important?)

The underlined phrase acts as a noun: Something is important for the space agency.

A settling of debts is called for. **The clearing of** forests is a bad idea. (WHAT is a bad idea?)

The making of *Titanic* was aired. **The accurate tracking of** satellites is important for the space agency.

Wrong: The rebels demanded the **withdrawal** of government forces from disputed regions, significant **reductions** in overall troop levels, **raising** the rebel flag on holidays, AND a general **pardon**.

Right: The rebels demanded the **withdrawal** of government forces from disputed regions, significant **reductions** in overall troop levels, **THE raising OF** the rebel flag on holidays, AND a general **pardon**.

Wrong: The rebels demanded the **withdrawal** of government forces from disputed regions AND **releasing** certain political prisoners.

Wrong: The rebels demanded the **withdrawal** of government forces from disputed regions AND **THE releasing OF** certain political prisoners.

Right: The rebels demanded the **withdrawal** of government forces from disputed regions AND **THE RELEASE OF** certain political prisoners.

So, logically speaking:

N || N || ING of || ING N > ING of > ING

If the noun form is not available, we have to use the gerund form.

Focus on the sentence below:

Doctors generally agree that such factors as cigarette smoking, eating rich foods high in fats, and alcohol consumption not only do damage by themselves but also aggravate genetic predispositions toward certain diseases.

Here, the three factors are perfectly parallel: 1: cigarette smoking ... 2: eating rich foods ... 3: alcohol consumption
They're parallel because they're all nouns. As far as the choice between "consumption" and "consuming" goes:

If you are ever given a choice between a DEDICATED NOUN FORM of an action and the corresponding GERUND form of the action, you should always go for the dedicated noun form.

Notice that this doesn't mean that you should automatically reject all -ING forms of those actions, since some of them are not gerunds; some of them are modifiers, in which case you should absolutely use the -ING form.

*Every year, **the running** of the Boston Marathon attracts hundreds of thousands of spectators.*

--> this is correct, since there is no dedicated noun form (like "runnage").

*People **running** the Boston Marathon are generally in very good physical shape.*

--> also correct; this is an adjective.

***The performing** of certain dance moves requires years of practice.*

--> inferior, though not technically incorrect

***The performance** of certain dance moves requires years of practice.*

--> correct, and better than the previous version

*People **performing** dance moves extremely skillfully often appear to be exerting less effort than they really are.*

--> correct; this "performing" is an adjective.

In this problem, "consumption" is the only one of the three words that has a dedicated noun form. (There are no words such as "eatage", "smokation", etc.) ... so that's the best you're going to get.

ING forms used as adjectives (Present Participles)

- The **barking** dog kept us awake at night. (**Adjective immediately before the noun**)
- The dog **barking** outside the gate kept us awake. (**Adjective immediately after the noun**)
- **Barking** and yelling, the dog chased him. (**Adjective modifier before the noun**)
- The dog chased the man ferociously, **barking** as loudly as it could. (**Adjective modifier after the noun**)

Present Participle Adjectives

1. The present participle describes the person or thing that causes the reaction. *A **frightening** movie*
2. The present participle describes the condition of it. The noun described has a more active role:
*The mugger made a **threatening** move towards me.*

Some more examples:

- She jealously watched her boyfriend **flirting** with another girl.
- The party was **boring**.
- The car race was **exciting**.
- Passengers **wanting** to go to Liverpool had to change in Manchester.
- Irish people **living** in Great Britain have the right to vote in British elections.
- The house **standing** at the end of the road will soon be sold.
- The boy **carrying** a blue parcel crossed the street.
- **Talking** to her friend, she forgot everything around her.
- **Being** vegetarians, they don't eat meat.
- **Wagging** its tail, the dog bit the postman.
- **Being** a good boy, he helped his mother in the kitchen.
- **Being** on holiday, she couldn't go to the party.
- **Being** very tall, he became a basketball player.
- The movie was *The Incredible **Shrinking** Man*.
- Cowboy Bob put on his **riding** clothes when he went for a canter.
- The weather was **freezing** cold Saturday.
- The **sailing** ship ran aground in Newfoundland.
- Uncle Fester has a **snoring** parrot.
- The newest **broadcasting** station plays only rap music.
- XYZ's **holding** company went bankrupt last month.
- Grandmother lost her **reading** glasses again.
- The rustic cabin didn't even have **running** water!
- Her **clinging** gown made her look fat.
- The **burning** grass crept close to the house.
- The crying baby drew a long breath and sucked in a spider crouching in the corner of the crib.

3rd forms of the verbs used as adjectives (Past Participles): When you are describing a person's reaction or feeling, or a condition or an action, use the past participle form (**-ed, -en, -d, -t, -n, or irregular** ending) if the noun described has a **passive** relationship with something.

- Jennifer's **burned** hand hurt her very much.
- The **broken** chair was used for firewood.
- Her recipe called for 12 **beaten** eggs.
- Nancy found a **hidden** staircase behind the paneling in the old house.
- All the protesters had **shaved** heads.
- All the words on the test were **misspelled** by Algie.
- The book was **known** to all of us.
- Gertrude threw out the **spoiled** meat.
- Laura, **fascinated** by the movie star, wrote him a letter every day.
- **Correct:** The **barking** dogs annoyed the whole neighborhood.
- **Correct:** The dogs **that were barking** annoyed the whole neighborhood.
- **Incorrect:** The **barked** dogs annoyed the whole neighborhood.
- **Incorrect:** The dogs **that were barked** annoyed the whole neighborhood.

Barking works because present participles are similar to **active** verbs. The subject is doing the action. **Barked** doesn't work because most past participles are similar to **passive** verbs. The action is done to the subject by something or someone else. They receive the action. *A dog can be fed, but it can't be **barked**.*
Some verbs can be used in both forms (depending upon the context and meaning): All of these examples are correct.

- The **breaking** dishes made a mess in the kitchen.
- The dishes **that were breaking** made a mess in the kitchen.
- The **broken** dishes made a mess in the kitchen.
- The dishes **that were broken** made a mess in the kitchen.

Present Participle Adjectives - Cause of feeling	Past Participle Adjectives - Receiver of feeling
Confusing directions were on the exam. (The directions caused confusion.)	Confused students blamed the directions. (The students received the confusion from the directions.)
Relaxing music played in the background. (The music is causing the relaxation.)	Relaxed music makes me sleep. (The music was written to be calming--someone created it that way.)
An encouraging word is all we need. (The words "give" encouragement.)	Encouraged by the words, we went on with our work. (We received the encouragement.)
A tiring speech followed the banquet. (The speech was causing the tiring.)	The tired listeners wanted to go home. (Something caused the listeners to be tired.)

More examples of past participles:

- Each Saturday, we have a pizza **delivered** to our home.
- We had our last party **organized** by professionals.
- I have a cat **called** Tari.
- I am very **interested** in history.
- The cup **filled** with milk stood on the table.
- The battle **fought** at this place was very significant.
- The books **sent** to us are for my aunt.
- The picture **stolen** from a museum was offered on EBay.
- The song **sung** last night is still in my head.
- The documentation **telecast** last Tuesday was impressive.
- The conference **planned** by non-governmental organizations was about globalization.
- The problems **discussed** will be essential for your exam.
- Last month I read a book **written** by a Scottish author.
- I found the key hidden under the mat.
- **Accused** of murder, he was arrested.
- **Shocked** by the bad news, she burst into tears.
- **Excited** about their birthday party, the girls could not sleep.
- **Born** into a rich family, she got everything she wished for.
- **Built** in 1859, Big Ben is a national symbol
- The **stolen** baby was found by the police unharmed.
- Dean's **broken** arm was set in plaster by the doctor at the hospital.
- Please bring all of the **required** documents for your interview tomorrow.
- The **mangled** pair of sunglasses, **bruised** face, **broken** arm, and **bleeding** knees meant Genette had taken another spill on her mountain bike.

In short:

Participles can be used as adjectives (***an exciting movie, the amazing stunt, a satisfying meal***). There are two types of participles: present participles and past participles. Present participles end in ***ing***, and past participles end in ***-ed, -en, -d, -t, -n, or irregular***. Be careful what ending you use. There is a big difference between a ***walked dog*** and a ***walking dog***, or an ***interested person*** and an ***interesting person***. Participles used as adjectives may precede or follow the word they are modifying.

How to select the right adjective — Present Participle or Past Participle?

An easy test:

Try to add a "was" or a "were" temporarily in the part of the sentence ... if the sentence makes sense in the context of the sentence, the word without the "was / were" is the correct adjective.

The volcano erupting / erupted was a sight to watch.

Here ... "The volcano **was** erupting" makes sense and "The volcano **was** erupted" is nonsensical. So the right adjective is **erupting**.

The cell-phone designed / designing for the elderly had larger keys.

Here ... "The cell-phone **was** designed" makes sense and "The cell-phone **was** designing" is nonsensical. So the right adjective is **designed**.

(Differing / Differed) only by 2 minutes, the times in the 2 clocks created confusion in the minds of the football players. CORRECT: differing

(Determined / Determining) by a lot of effort, the times proved to be accurate. CORRECT: determined

NOTE: If you can't insert the words WAS / WERE, the word has to be a **SIMPLE PAST TENSE VERB** (in the second form). Also, if we can insert WAS / WERE, then "was / were + 3rd form of the verb (past participle)" is a **passive verb**.

He **stretched** the wire. (VERB)

The elastic **stretched** because of repeated usage became too loose to be used in the child's pants. (ADJECTIVE)

The deadline **was stretched** to meet the targets. (PASSIVE VERB)

The man **found** the coin. (VERB)

The coin **found** in the museum turned out to be of inferior quality. (ADJECTIVE)

The coin **was found** in the museum. (PASSIVE VERB)

The book **sold** 3 million copies. (VERB)

The book **sold** was of an inferior quality. (ADJECTIVE)

The book **was sold** at almost all the stores. (PASSIVE VERB)

The simple rule for parallelism is: Adjectives | | Present Participles | | Past Participles

A mastodon carcass, **thawed** only once AND still **fresh**, is on display.

The match was **interesting** but **fixed**.

Only a few feet **wide** BUT **spanning** a continent, the railroad changed history.

The sizzler was **spicy** and **appetizing**, but a bit **overcooked**.

Because of **strained** budgets and **fading** public support, Indian Hockey is dying a slow death.

Bold, interesting, and liked by all the sections of the media, the movie went on to become the biggest blockbuster of the year.

The smoke **coming** out of the window and **frosted** by the fog was very thick.

The tourist, **soaked** in the luxury and **brimming** with ecstasy, enjoyed thoroughly in the remote European country.

*In the examples above, the words in **BOLD** are parallel to each other because they are adjectives.*

Notice the sentence:

Many of the earliest known images of Hindu deities in India date from the time of the Kushan empire, **fashioned** either from the spotted sandstone of Mathura or from Gandharan grey schist.

In the sentence above, the word 'fashioned' is an adjective modifier (past participle) modifying the 'images' ... notice that the past participle adjective can be used away from the noun as well (though this is a rare construction on the GMAT).

Let's focus on four real GMAT sentences to understand this further:

1. Scientists have recently discovered what could be the largest and oldest living organism on Earth, a giant fungus that is an interwoven filigree of mushrooms and root-like tentacles spawned by a single fertilized spore some 10,000 years ago and extending for more than 30 acres in the soil of a Michigan forest.
- A. extending B. extends C. extended D. it extended E. is extending

Imagine the sentence:

The crumbled chair, **broken** and **ageing** with each passing day, was nearing the end of its life.

Broken (a Past Participle) and **ageing** (a Present Participle) are both modifying (describing) chair (which is a noun). Hence, **broken** and **ageing** are adjective forms (since adjectives describe nouns). In this sentence, it is clear that **broken** is Past participle, since the Past tense of **break** is **broke** while Past participle is **broken**. And since Past participles and present participle are considered parallel structures, this sentence is correct.

The most important clue in this sentence is AND ... the word AND mandates Right to Left strict parallelism. To the right of AND is "extending" ... to check parallelism, we have to understand the role of the word "extending". It is not a verb as -ING forms alone are never verbs. So it can be a noun or an adjective. In this sentence the word "extending" is describing something ... we need to know what it is describing.

If we read further ... "extending for more than 30 acres in the soil of a Michigan forest" can describe the largest organism (30 acres is really LARGE), which is the same as "giant (large) fungus" or "interwoven (interconnected, large) filigree". "Mushrooms and root-like tentacles" of a single plant can't extend for 30 acres ... their filigree (wire formed into delicate tracery such as *filigree foliage*) can. So the word "extending" surely describes "organism".

As the word "extending" describes something, it is an adjective. And the word "extending" is written after the word AND ... so we must find another adjective (that describes the organism) to the left of AND. We have the word "spawned" before AND. "Spawn" (meaning: produce or generate, especially in large numbers and undesirably) cannot describe tentacles, as tentacles of a plant cannot extend for 30 acres and can't get generated in large numbers. Also, the fact that "a single spore" was responsible for the whole 30-acre growth (happening for the last 10,000 years) makes sure that the word "spawned" describes the organism ...

So we have 2 adjectives: "spawned" and "extending", both describing the organism ... perfectly parallel ... option A must be correct.

Option B: "extends" is a verb ... but there is no verb parallel to "extends" before the word AND ... Incorrect.

Option C: "extended" is also an adjective. But this signifies intention whereas the given action of extending is completely unintended. So this is the wrong adjective.

Imagine the two sentences:

*The road **extended** from A to B was found to be skewed by the local authorities.* Here, the word "extended" means that somebody intentionally extended the road. Past participles show intention.

*The smoke **coming** out of the building corroborated the suspicion that the building had caught fire.* Here the word "coming" is unintended. Present participles show no intention.

There's really no point in deciding which of these roles "extended" is playing—the point is that both interpretations produce incorrect answers! In an appropriate context, "extended" could be either a past participle or a past-tense verb. Most importantly, if either of these interpretations works, then the sentence is correct.

Imagine the sentence:

The new state highway, built in 2007 and **extended** for an additional five miles in 2009, is now the busiest road in the area. --> here, "extended" is a past participle.

The state highway **extended** for fifty miles before it was razed in 1985. --> here, "extended" is a past-tense verb.

Option D: "it extended" is a verb ... but there is no verb parallel to "extended" before the word AND ... Incorrect.

Option E: "is extending" is a verb ... but there is no verb parallel to "is extending" before the word AND ... Incorrect.

Consider another sentence:

In the search for alien life, astronomers have recently begun studying a promising region, a solar system that is populated by a number of potentially life-friendly planets formed by fragments of an exploding star some 7 million years ago and features many of the geological and climatic prerequisites for the evolution of life.

A. features B. featured C. had featured D. featuring E. feature

Here, the word **formed** is an adjective parallel to **featuring**. Ans. D (Use the same logic as given above).

2. First discovered more than 30 years ago, Lina's sunbird, a four-and-a-half-inch animal found in the Philippines and that resembles a hummingbird, has shimmering metallic colors on its head; a brilliant orange patch, bordered with red tufts, in the center of its breast; and a red eye.

A. found in the Philippines and that resembles
B. found in the Philippines and that, resembling
C. found in the Philippines and resembling
D. that is found in the Philippines and it resembles
E. that is found in the Philippines, resembling

A. Here, the first underlined word is "found", which is an adjective for the word Lina's sunbird (animal) ... we also have the word AND ... the word after AND is "resembles" (verb). Not parallel.

B. Here, the first underlined word is "found", which is an adjective for the word Lina's sunbird (animal) ... we also have the word AND ... the word after AND is "that" ... if "that" is not there on the left side, it can't be on the right side (to maintain parallelism).

C. Here, the first underlined word is "found", which is an adjective for the word Lina's sunbird (animal) ... we also have the word AND ... the word after AND is "resembling", which is also an adjective for the sunbird (animal). The adjectives "found" and "resembling" are perfectly parallel.

Options D and E are not parallel! We are describing two characteristics of the bird, both of which should be parallel.

3. The increased popularity and availability of televisions has led to the decline of regional dialects, language variations which originate from diverse ethnic and cultural heritages and perpetuated by geographic isolation.

A. which originate from diverse ethnic and cultural heritages and perpetuated
B. that originated from diverse ethnic and cultural heritages and perpetuated
C. originated from diverse ethnic and cultural heritages and perpetuated
D. originating from diverse ethnic and cultural heritages and perpetuated
E. originating from diverse ethnic and cultural heritages and perpetuating

Imagine the sentence: He saw a man **injured** (somebody else was responsible) by a bullet and **limping** in pain.

Let's apply the simple WAS / WERE test: *The man **was** injured by the bullet* is correct ... *The man **was** injuring by the bullet* is nonsensical. So **injured** is the right adjective.

*The man **was** limping in pain* is correct ... *The man **was** limped in pain* is nonsensical. So **limping** is the correct adjective.

So **injured** (past participle, -ed adjective) is parallel to **limping** (present participle, ING adjective).

Consider the sentence: Because of **strained** budgets and **fading** public support, Indian Hockey is dying a slow death.

In this case, **strained** is the adjective (past participle – intended action) for the word **budgets**; **fading** is the adjective (present participle – unintended action) for the word **support**.

In the given question, we need to know 2 things:

Something **originates** on its own (unintended action). So the correct adjective is **originating**.

Perpetuate (make an unfounded belief continue indefinitely) is an intended action. So the correct adjective is **perpetuated**.

For example:

Originating in Europe and **perpetuated** by immigrant Europeans to spread their dominance, Spanish had become a major language in the Americas by 1900s.

Languages **originate** on their own (by the way people speak different dialects in various parts of the world). The origin of a language at a particular place is **not an intended activity**.

Perpetuation of the Spanish language was an intended activity by the Europeans. It could not have happened on its own.

So, in the above sentence, we cannot use 'originated' in place of 'originating' and 'perpetuating' in place of 'perpetuated'.

In this question, the word AND mandates parallelism. In option A, originate (verb) and perpetuated (adjective) are not parallel. In option B, originated (verb) and perpetuated (adjective) are not parallel. In option C, originated (wrong adjective) and perpetuated (right adjective) are not parallel. In option D, originating (right adjective) and perpetuated (right adjective) are parallel (CORRECT). In option E, originating (right adjective) and perpetuating (wrong adjective) are not parallel.

4. The growth of the railroads led to the abolition of local times, which was determined by when the sun reached the observer's meridian and differing from city to city, and to the establishment of regional times.
- A. which was determined by when the sun reached the observer's meridian and differing
 - B. which was determined by when the sun reached the observer's meridian and which differed
 - C. which were determined by when the sun reached the observer's meridian and differing
 - D. determined by when the sun reached the observer's meridian and differed
 - E. determined by when the sun reached the observer's meridian and differing

Imagine 2 different cities where local times were determined in 1800s:

Determination is an intended activity, so the right adjective is '**determined**'.

The *difference* in the times in 2 cities is an unintended activity, so the right adjective is '**differing**'.

Also, if we use WAS / WERE ...

*The times **were** determining in the 2 cities.* Nonsensical!

*The times **were** determined in the 2 cities.* Correct ... so the right adjective is 'determined'.

*The times **were** differed in the two cities.* It will mean as if someone intentionally made the two times different. Nonsensical!

*The times **were** differing in the two cities.* Correct ... so the right adjective is 'differing'.

As per meaning clarity, only 'local times' could have been determined by the movement of the sun, so the word 'which' refers to 'local times' (plural). The word 'was' cannot be correct in A and B.

In C, 'were determined' is a passive verb and 'differing' cannot be a verb (ING forms alone are never verbs). Not parallel.

In D, **determined** is the right adjective but **differed** is the wrong adjective.

In E, **determined** and **differing** are the right adjectives, both of which refer to 'local times'. CORRECT.