

Tips for national test papers - literacy

1) If the question starts with ...

There is a spelling mistake on line ...

Look out for

- missing double letters e.g. succesful (should be **successful**)
- missing silent letters e.g. Febuary (should be **February**)
- i before e rules e.g. recieve (should be **receive**)
- plurals e.g. tomatos (should be **tomatoes**)
- an unwanted 'e' before -ing e.g. takeing (should be **taking**)

Can you think of any more?

2) Questions starting with ...

This document is most likely to be ...

The writer's main intention ...

According to the document ...

Take extra care with reading for understanding.

3) If the question starts with ...

A word has been incorrectly used ...

Look for homophones (words that sound the same) e.g.

Practice... noun (as in "ice") e.g. The piano practice went well.

Practise... verb (as in doing something) e.g. She practises every day.

Aloud... to sing out aloud

Allowed... he was not allowed out

Resent... to feel indignant or bitter

Recent... recently as in 'not long ago'

To... She went to church on Sundays.

Too ... I ate too much cherry pie.

4) If the question starts with ...

There is a grammatical error ...

- Read the question carefully.
- Read the specified lines of text carefully.

Look out for incorrect **tenses** e.g.

When I opened the door I **see** the dog lying in the road. He was whimpering so I **run** over to him but he got up, barked and **chase** me.

Look out for incorrect **subject – verb agreement** e.g.

No job, from cellars to rooftops, **are** too small for us.
Although the restaurant was busy there **was** only four waiters.
My friends and I **is** convinced they charged us too much.

Check that

- A singular subject has a singular verb form.
- A plural subject has a plural verb form.

Watch out for the verb **to be**

A common error is to put ...

Singular subjects with plural verbs

e.g.

- I were
- he were
- it were

Or

Plural subjects with a singular verb

e.g.

- we was
- they was

Check your answers carefully.

Grammar practice

Complete these tables with the correct **verb forms**

| To be | |
|------------|------------|
| I am | I was |
| You _____ | You _____ |
| He _____ | He _____ |
| She _____ | She _____ |
| It _____ | It _____ |
| We _____ | We _____ |
| They _____ | They _____ |

| To have | |
|------------|------------|
| I have | I had |
| You _____ | You _____ |
| He _____ | He _____ |
| She _____ | She _____ |
| It _____ | It _____ |
| We _____ | We _____ |
| They _____ | They _____ |