

Redundancy



NAKHJEVANI
LANGUAGE
ACADEMY

Redundancy

Redundancy questions involve removing unnecessary words. On the SAT, you'll encounter two types of redundancy:

- Words that essentially repeat or unnecessarily define previous words (Examples 1 and 2)
- Inflated and useless phrases that could be omitted or condensed into fewer words (Example 3 and 4)

Example 1

Wrong: Our problem is that we're too self-aware of ourselves.

Correct: Our problem is that we're too self-aware.

Self-aware already implies *ourselves*, so we don't need *of ourselves* in the sentence.

Example 2

Wrong: I once believed and had faith in the power of love.

Correct: I once believed in the power of love.

The phrase *had faith in* repeats the same meaning as *believed*.

Example 3

Wrong: Joey bought a super-sized hamburger due to the fact that he was really hungry.

Correct: Joey bought a super-sized hamburger **because** he was really hungry.

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Example 4

Wrong: The legal documents were reviewed in a way that was deemed thorough.

Correct: The legal documents were reviewed **thoroughly**.

Inflated phrases like *due to the fact that* and *in a way that was deemed* must be made concise.

Example 5

Wrong: The reason why red pandas have ringed tails is because they are relatives of both the giant panda and the raccoon.

Correct: Red pandas have ringed tails **because** they are relatives of both the giant panda and the raccoon.

Correct: **The reason** red pandas have ringed tails is that they are relatives of both the giant panda and the raccoon.

This specific redundancy error is very common. It has three words that essentially mean the same thing—*reason*, *why*, and *because*, all of which point to the cause of something. You only need one of those words.

Example 6

Wrong: After hearing the spy's information, the general knew that an attack was imminent in the future.

Correct: After hearing the spy's information, the general knew that an attack was imminent.

Imminent by definition means *in the future*.

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Example 8

Wrong: The last to sing, Jason and Jesse made sure to amaze the crowd with a full range of vocals at the end of the performance.

Correct: The last to sing, Jason and Jesse made sure to amaze the crowd with a full range of vocals.

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Example 9

Wrong: We should evacuate the building immediately in the hypothetical event that a fire occurs.

Correct: We should evacuate the building immediately if a fire occurs.

The phrase *in the hypothetical event that a fire occurs* is too wordy and awkward. How much a certain phrase can be shortened can be a matter of style. Luckily for you, the answer choices will be very clear-cut on the SAT. You'll definitely know from the answer choices when they're testing wordiness.

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Example 10

Wrong: The Black Friday deals attracted hordes of shoppers. These shoppers rampaged through the doors as the stores opened.

Correct: The Black Friday deals attracted hordes of shoppers, **who** rampaged through the doors as the stores opened.

Example 11

Wrong: The commander's charge into the opposing army was fearless, an act of bravery.

Correct: The commander's charge into the opposing army was fearless, ~~an act of~~ bravery.

Example 12

Wrong: Generic drugs are usually cheaper than when buying name-brand ones.

Correct: Generic drugs are usually cheaper than ~~when buying~~ name-brand ones.