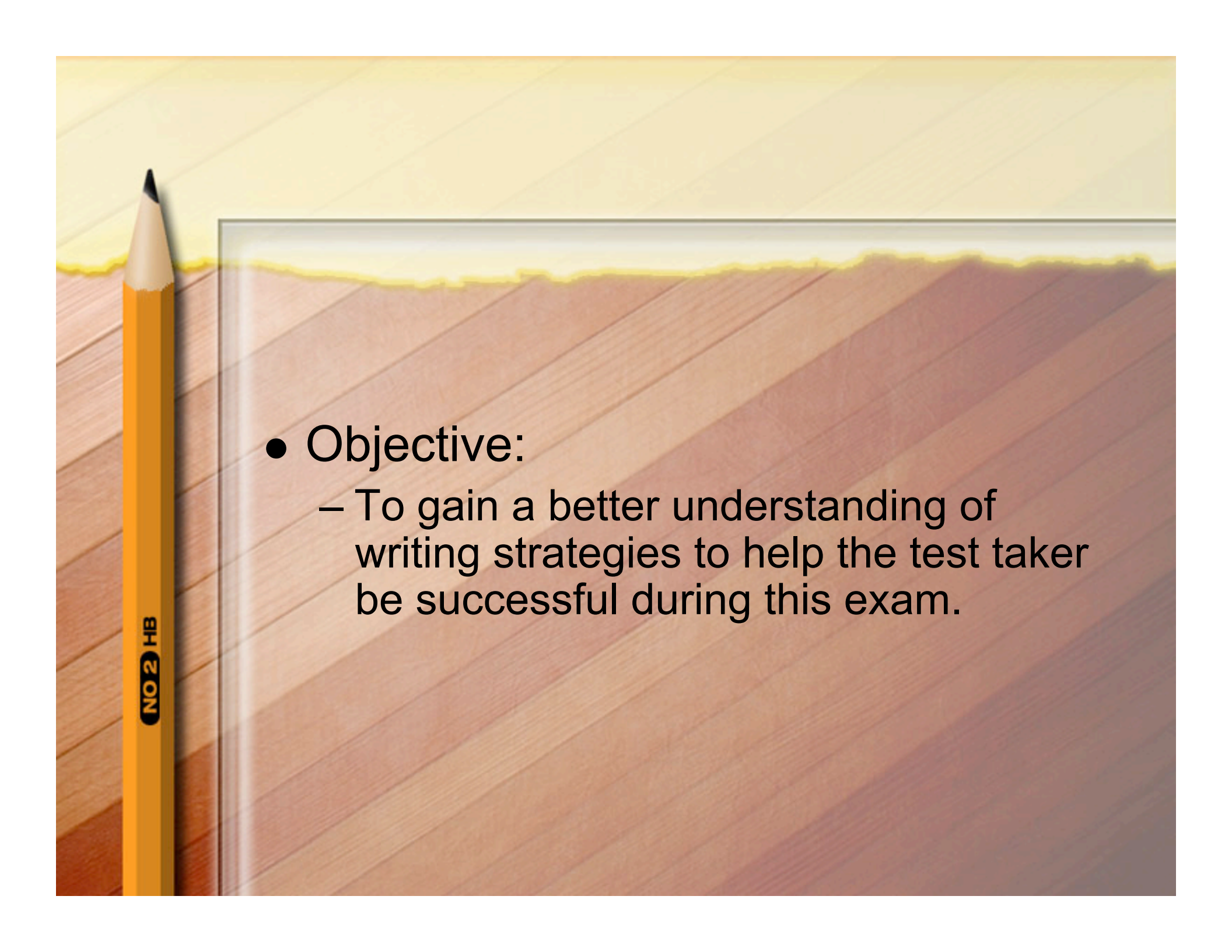


Preparation for the PPST Writing Exam

Contained in this section, you will find tips and suggestions for the computerized and written forms of the writing test. There will be details for the multiple-choice and essay sections of the writing test

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- The background of the slide features a wooden desk surface. On the left side, there is a yellow notepad with a torn edge. An orange pencil with a black band that reads "NO 2 HB" is positioned vertically on the left. The main content area is a semi-transparent rectangle over the desk.
- Objective:
 - To gain a better understanding of writing strategies to help the test taker be successful during this exam.

PPST Writing Exam

- Paper-Based

- 60 minutes
 - Divided into two 30 minute sections
- 38 Multiple-choice questions
 - Contain usage and sentence correction
- 1 essay question
 - Based on a given topic
 - No spell/grammar check
 - Handwritten

- Computerized

- 68 minutes
 - Divided into two sections: one 38 minutes and one 30 minutes
- 44 multiple-choice questions
 - Contain usage and sentence correction
- 1 essay question
 - Based on a given topic
 - No spell/grammar check
 - Typed

PPST Writing Exam

- Both forms (paper/computer) of the Writing test assess your ability to use grammar and language appropriately.
- The essay portion assesses your ability to communicate effectively through writing.
- All categories on the exam are essential to a well-educated adult in a professional role.
- Remember that they are testing your ability to understand Standard Written English, not a local or regional dialect of English.
- The essay section invites you to draw from personal experiences to support your opinion on the assigned topic.

PPST Writing Exam

- Multiple-Choice Topics

- Grammatical Relationships

- Identifying Errors in:

- Nouns
 - Pronouns
 - Verbs
 - Adverbs
 - Adjectives

- Structural Relationships

- Identifying Errors in:

- Comparison
 - Coordination
 - Correlation
 - Parallelism

- Word Choice and Mechanics

- Mechanics

- Capitalization
 - Punctuation
 - Etc.

- Word Choice

- Idiomatic Expressions
 - Commonly Confused words
 - Wrong word use
 - Redundancy

- Essay

- Follow assigned task
 - Show organization
 - Provide and sustain clear thesis
 - Use support to develop ideas
 - Use language properly
 - Construct effective sentences

PPST Writing Exam

- Multiple-choice

- Grammatical Relationships

- Noun: a person, place or thing
 - Dad, work, pen
 - Pronoun: replaces a noun
 - He, she, it
 - Verb: expresses an action or state of being
 - Run, think, act

- Adverb: describes or limits a verb, adjective, or pronoun
 - Quickly, beautifully
 - Adjective: Describes or limits nouns or pronouns
 - Purple, bald

PPST Writing Exam

– Structural Relationships

- Comparison: where the similarities between two or more thoughts or ideas are shown
 - The companies both had advertisements in the local newspaper.
- Subordination: perceived negative links between ideas and their relative importance
 - Sales of single-family homes are up, although sales of the more expensive homes are still depressed
- Correlation: to present a relationship between thoughts or ideas
 - The company profits rose as advertising increased.
- Parallelism: repeated similarities in thoughts or ideas that stand out or could have been added as a rhetorical device
 - The companies are motivating, encouraging, and training their employees to move forward with the new program.

PPST Writing Exam

- Word choice and mechanics

- This area will test your knowledge of basic grammatical rules

- Capitalization: proper nouns, beginning of a sentence, etc.
 - Punctuation: use a question mark at the end of a question, understand the use of commas, etc.
 - Usage: proper combination of subjects and verbs, etc.

- Word choice

- Idiomatic Expressions: “clichés,” or words when put together mean something different than the dictionary definition
 - Commonly Confused words, such as: there, their, and they’re
 - Wrong Word Usage: effect and affect
 - Redundancy: the insistence of needless repetition

PPST Writing Exam

- Other Helpful Writing Tips:

- Common Verb Tenses

- Present (I talk.)
 - Present Perfect (I have talked.)
 - Past (I talked.)
 - Past Perfect (I had talked.)
 - Future (I will talk.)
 - Future Perfect (I will have talked.)

- Better Punctuation

- (,) Commas should go between items in a list, after introductory clauses, to set off interrupting elements, and between modifiers in a series
 - (;) Semicolons should be used to join closely related independent clauses and between items in series.
 - (:) Colons are used to introduce a list, or formal statement in a sentence
 - (-) Dashes should be used sparingly and only to set off incidental information
 - (") Quotation marks identify quotes or speaking
 - Punctuation marks belong inside quotation marks (usually)

PPST Writing Exam

- Other Helpful Writing Tips (con't):
 - Nouns are made plural by adding -s or -es in most cases
 - Nouns are made possessive by adding -'s to singular nouns (cat's bowl) or just the apostrophe if the noun is plural (the Jones' van)
 - Singular nouns require singular verbs: My brother sings in choir.
 - Plural nouns require plural verbs: My brothers sing in choir.

PPST Writing Exam

- Essay Portion

- Before you begin on your essay, BRAINSTORM ideas
- Keep in mind organization of thoughts (think 5 paragraph essay)
- No grammar/spell check
- Vary sentence length
- Offer support for your thesis through examples

- Timing Structure

- 30 minutes total
 - 2-3 BRAINSTORM
 - 2-3 Organize thoughts into paragraphs
- =25 minutes left
 - 20 minutes to write introduction and body paragraphs
- =5 minutes left
 - 5 minutes to compose conclusion

Examples of Test Questions

- Examples can be found at the Educational Testing service website: www.ets.org.