

Name _____
Please print your last name first, then print your first name.

Legal Methods Section Number _____
Example: A1

Formal Language Usage Pretest

Learning to write like a lawyer is a process that begins in the University of Memphis School of Law first-year course entitled *Legal Methods* and extends throughout the years of law school and into the years of practice. The members of the Legal Methods faculty expect you to use formal language correctly and concisely. The Writing Center staff works exclusively with students enrolled in Legal Methods. Our mission is to help you refine and perfect your use of formal language as you write for your professors.

The purpose of this pretest is to help you self-assess your strengths using formal language effectively so that you may prepare mechanically accurate text. Using non-legal content, the questions test the correct use of punctuation marks, the preferred presentation of the mechanics of language, and the effective selection of formal word choice and phrasing. Completing this document entitled *Formal Language Usage Pretest* is a requirement of Legal Methods. Failing to complete this pretest, turning in work that is not your own, or turning in work that does not represent your best effort may result in the loss of points used to calculate your grade for Legal Methods. Your score on this pretest will not affect your Legal Methods grade.

Your completed pretest is due by 9:00 a.m. on the first day of Orientation, Monday, August 12, 2019. Members of the Writing Center staff will collect your completed pretest before the first session on that Monday, and then during the Orientation session entitled *Using Formal Language Effectively for Legal Methods*, I will return your completed pretest to you and teach about using language correctly, highlighting the expectations the Legal Methods faculty members hold for your use of the written word.

Please print and complete this document entitled *Formal Language Usage Pretest*. If you do not have access to a printer, you may pick up a hard copy of this pretest at the Security Desk of the University of Memphis Law School beginning August 5, 2019. Print your name legibly on the line above. Please use a pen or pencil to mark your selection or selections for each question. Please do not use reference materials as you answer the questions, as the purpose of this pretest is to help you self-assess your current skills in using formal language correctly. Thank you.

—Dr. Marilyn Dunham Smith, Director of the Writing Center

1. Select the sentence that includes the correctly punctuated singular possessive noun.
☐ Dr. Seuss' Sam likes green eggs and ham.
☐ Dr. Seuss's Sam likes green eggs and ham.
2. Select the sentence that includes the correctly punctuated plural possessive noun.
☐ The royal siblings' song made Rico's earworm list after his children repeatedly watched *Frozen*.
☐ The royal siblings's song made Rico's earworm list after his children repeatedly watched *Frozen*.
3. Select the sentence that includes the correctly punctuated plural possessive noun.
☐ *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown ranks highly among beloved children's stories.
☐ *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown ranks highly among beloved childrens' stories.
4. Select the sentence correctly indicating that two people each possess something individually.
☐ Frodo and Bilbo's quests were epic.
☐ Frodo's and Bilbo's quests were epic.
5. Select the sentence correctly indicating that two people jointly possess something.
☐ Harry and Ron's plan was to meet Hermione at midnight.
☐ Harry's and Ron's plan was to meet Hermione at midnight.
6. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
☐ Lin-Manuel Miranda's winning the 2015 MacArthur Foundation Award was well deserved.
☐ Lin-Manuel Miranda winning the 2015 MacArthur Foundation Award was well deserved.

7. Select the sentence correctly demonstrating possession.
 - ☐ Yours is the only company to which I have written a letter of application.
 - ☐ Your's is the only company to which I have written a letter of application.
8. Select the sentence correctly demonstrating possession.
 - ☐ Han Solo, who's *Millennium Falcon* made the Kessel Run in less than twelve parsecs, was a gifted pilot.
 - ☐ Han Solo, whose *Millennium Falcon* made the Kessel Run in less than twelve parsecs, was a gifted pilot.
9. Select the correctly punctuated sentence. Assume a proper citation follows each sentence.

Original Text: As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon again. —Senator Culley

 - ☐ “We will travel bravely to the moon again.”
 - ☐ “[W]e will travel bravely to the moon again.”
 - ☐ “. . . we will travel bravely to the moon again.”
10. Select the correctly punctuated sentence. Assume a proper citation follows each sentence.

Original Text: The culprit used an umbrella as a weapon. —Sherlock Holmes

 - ☐ Inspector Lestrade confirmed Holmes's supposition that the perpetrator did “use an umbrella as a weapon.”
 - ☐ Inspector Lestrade confirmed Holmes's supposition that the perpetrator did “use[] an umbrella as a weapon.”
11. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - ☐ All members of the away team carried these items (1) a communicator, (2) a tricorder, (3) a hypospray, and (4) a phaser set to stun.
 - ☐ All members of the away team carried these items: (1) a communicator, (2) a tricorder, (3) a hypospray, and (4) a phaser set to stun.
12. Select the correctly punctuated sentence or sentences.
 - ☐ The professor collected her books, notes, pen, and laptop.
 - ☐ The professor collected her books, notes, pen and laptop.
13. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - ☐ When he was eleven, Sheldon read Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, and James Watson's *The Double Helix*.
 - ☐ When he was eleven, Sheldon read Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* and James Watson's *The Double Helix*.
14. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - ☐ Indiana Jones recovered the idol from his dead guide, and escaped the cave by outrunning the giant bolder.
 - ☐ Indiana Jones recovered the idol from his dead guide and escaped the cave by outrunning the giant bolder.
15. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - ☐ Captain Ahab battled the white whale but was defeated by two beasts: Moby Dick and revenge.
 - ☐ Captain Ahab battled the white whale, but was defeated by two beasts: Moby Dick and revenge.
16. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - ☐ MacGyver used not only a broken zipper, but also a paper clip to repair the jeep.
 - ☐ MacGyver used not only a broken zipper but also a paper clip to repair the jeep.
17. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - ☐ Carson read *The Federalist Papers* and Eli read Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.
 - ☐ Carson read *The Federalist Papers*, and Eli read Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.
18. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - ☐ Liam studied Homer's *Odyssey*, but he did not study Homer's *Iliad*.
 - ☐ Liam studied Homer's *Odyssey* but he did not study Homer's *Iliad*.

19. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Therefore, you're going to need a bigger boat.
 - ☐ Therefore you're going to need a bigger boat.
20. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Because life moves pretty fast, Ferris took the day off to slow down and look around.
 - ☐ Because life moves pretty fast Ferris took the day off to slow down and look around.
21. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Whatney who did not like Commander Lewis's taste in music used wit and skill to survive on Mars.
 - ☐ Whatney, who did not like Commander Lewis's taste in music, used wit and skill to survive on Mars.
22. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ The music festival, which had its largest attendance this year, is held annually on the riverbank.
 - ☐ The music festival which had its largest attendance this year is held annually on the riverbank.
23. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Follow the road, with the yellow brick, to find the great and powerful wizard.
 - ☐ Follow the road with the yellow brick to find the great and powerful wizard.
24. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ The throne, that served as a symbol of ambition and a metonym of monarchy, was torched by a dragon.
 - ☐ The throne that served as a symbol of ambition and a metonym of monarchy was torched by a dragon.
25. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Ray risked losing his Iowa farm because he plowed under his corn to build a baseball diamond.
 - ☐ Ray risked losing his Iowa farm, because he plowed under his corn to build a baseball diamond.
26. Select the sentence correctly displaying the presentation of a date for formal writing.
- ☐ I will graduate on Saturday, May 14th, 2022, at the Convention Center.
 - ☐ I will graduate on Saturday, May 14, 2022 at the Convention Center.
 - ☐ I will graduate on Saturday, May 14, 2022, at the Convention Center.
27. Select the correctly punctuated sentence. Assume that a proper citation would follow each sentence.
- Original Text: As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon again. —Senator Culley
- ☐ “As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon . . .”
 - ☐ “As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon”
28. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Higgins appreciated the well written report, although she knew Magnum did not draft it.
 - ☐ Higgins appreciated the well-written report, although she knew Magnum did not draft it.
 - ☐ Higgins appreciated the report that was well-written, although she knew Magnum did not draft it.
29. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ While Stark refers to the defense companies as “the Big Six,” the nickname was not widely used before 2017.
 - ☐ While Stark refers to the defense companies as “the Big Six”, the nickname was not widely used before 2017.
30. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Recently many in the field have adopted Stark's nickname “the Big Six”; in fact, the nickname appeared on the brochure at a 2018 conference for defense contractors.
 - ☐ Recently many in the field have adopted Stark's nickname “the Big Six;” in fact, the nickname appeared on the brochure at a 2018 conference for defense contractors.

31. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- ☐ Marty knew the DeLorean's electrical flux capacitor was depleted, however he did not know that it required 1.21 gigawatts to operate or that a lightning bolt could generate the necessary power.
 - ☐ Marty knew the DeLorean's electrical flux capacitor was depleted; however, he did not know that it required 1.21 gigawatts to operate or that a lightning bolt could generate the necessary power.
32. Select the sentence with the correctly presented time.
- ☐ Nick Park's film featuring Wallace and Gromit begins at 7:00 P.M.
 - ☐ Nick Park's film featuring Wallace and Gromit begins at 7:00 p.m.
 - ☐ Nick Park's film featuring Wallace and Gromit begins at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the evening.
33. Select the sentence written in active voice.
- ☐ The treasure was stolen by Captain Jack Sparrow.
 - ☐ Captain Jack Sparrow stole the treasure.
34. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- ☐ Between you and I, the play was terrible.
 - ☐ Between you and me, the play was terrible.
35. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- ☐ A lawyer that many regard as irreproachable is Harper Lee's Atticus Finch.
 - ☐ A lawyer who many regard as irreproachable is Harper Lee's Atticus Finch.
36. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- ☐ She is whom we admire.
 - ☐ She is who we admire.
37. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- ☐ If I was rich, I would travel the world.
 - ☐ If I were rich, I would travel the world.
38. Select the most effectively worded sentence.
- ☐ In order to save the world, the Avengers needed to work together.
 - ☐ To save the world, the Avengers needed to work together.
39. Select the most effectively worded sentence.
- ☐ Reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein made an investigation into the Watergate burglary.
 - ☐ Reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein investigated the Watergate burglary.
40. Select the most effectively worded sentence.
- ☐ There are three reasons why I chose the University of Memphis School of Law.
 - ☐ I chose the University of Memphis School of Law for three reasons.
41. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- ☐ I would rather read fifty pages then write fifty pages.
 - ☐ I would rather read fifty pages than write fifty pages.
42. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- ☐ Since you have additional homework to complete, the pretest ends with this question.
 - ☐ Because you have additional homework to complete, the pretest ends with this question.