

# **E20: Episode 20:**

## **Mystery at Harvard:**

**What is up with the precariously propped prunes?**

# Pruning technique:

Reduce the sentence length by "pruning" or cutting out unnecessary information.

Unnecessary information can come in the form of a dependent clause or a mummy wedge.

## Two ways:

1. Dependent clauses:
2. Mummy wedges:

### 1. Dependent clauses:

***Time dilation:*** At the front of the sentence.

***Example:*** ~~In 2015,~~ Professor Thomas went to Egypt.

***Regular dependent clauses:*** Give a "mini definition" of the word just to the left of the comma.

***Example:*** Sean made a hideout, ~~a hidden tree fort in his back yard.~~

## 2. Mummy wedges:

Words that start a preposition and separate the **noun** from the **verb**.

noun

verb

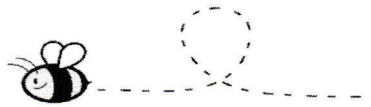
**Example:** Shreya ~~in the blue shirt~~ studies long hours.

**Note:** A mummy wedge can come between a noun and a verb in a sentence or **also** at the end of a sentence.

**Example:** I met Allyson ~~on the bus~~.

## How can I recognize a mummy wedge?

A great way to recognize a mummy wedge is to remember the story of the bumble bee and the bottle of Apple cider vinegar.



Place the bee **in a location** of the bottle to see if it is a mummy wedge!

**In, of, with, on, next to, across, over, under, to, along etc....**

3 The tomato is, in fact, related to the highly toxic deadly nightshade—but so are potatoes, red peppers, and eggplant.

[3]

[A] Whatever the reason, many people in the United States held the tomato, which they weren't sure about,

under suspicion until the 1800s. Then, according to legend, Colonel Robert Johnson, a tomato grower from Salem, New Jersey, took it upon himself to convince the public that tomatoes were not only harmless but also delicious. According to the story, Colonel Johnson stood on Salem's courthouse steps before two thousand uneasy spectators. Johnson calmly plucked a tomato from a basket and takes a bite. [B] After finishing this first

tomato, while reaching for another. [C] Stunned, the audience watched Johnson defy death, fully expecting him to fall in agony at any moment. He finished the entire basket of tomatoes without getting sick. The

trouble with this tomato story; however, is that there's

little evidence to support it.

3. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following true statement:

Tomatoes contain compounds that may help prevent cancer and heart disease.

Should the writer make this addition here?

- A. Yes, because it's relevant to the paragraph's discussion of how eating tomatoes can affect health.
- B. Yes, because it explains why people in Great Britain and the North American colonies eventually embraced the tomato.
- C. No, because it shifts the paragraph's emphasis from a perceived health hazard of tomatoes to possible health benefits.
- D. No, because it doesn't explain how these compounds prevent cancer and heart disease.
- 4. E. NO CHANGE
- G. tomato, which they had misgivings about
- H. tomato, a relative of the deadly nightshade.
- J. tomato

- 5. A. NO CHANGE
- B. For instance,
- C. Likewise,
- D. Besides,

- 6. F. NO CHANGE
- G. has taken
- H. will take
- J. took

- 7. A. NO CHANGE
- B. if he were to reach
- C. next reaching
- D. he reached

- 8. F. NO CHANGE
- G. moment and he
- H. moment, he
- J. moment he

- 9. A. NO CHANGE
- B. story, however,
- C. story, however
- D. story however

- 10. Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?
  - F. lesser
  - G. minimal
  - H. limited
  - J. not much

[4]

The tomato probably gained favor in the United States thanks to creative cooking. In the early 1800s, Creole chefs in New Orleans began using tomatoes, in their gumbos and jambalayas.

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Inspiring to this example, cooks around the country began serving tomatoes. [D] No one was poisoned, and the taste caught on. Today, it's estimated that the average U.S. consumer eats nearly ninety pounds of fresh and processed tomatoes per year.

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11. A. NO CHANGE  
 B. tomatoes in their gumbos  
 C. tomatoes in their gumbos,  
 D. tomatoes, in their gumbos,
12. F. NO CHANGE  
 G. Inspiring for  
 H. Inspired by  
 J. Inspired to

Question 13 asks about the preceding passage as a whole.

13. Upon reviewing the essay and finding that some information has been left out, the writer composes the following sentence incorporating that information:
- They found the tomato to be a surprisingly versatile food that could be fried, grilled, pickled, boiled, and prepared in countless other ways.
- If the writer were to add this sentence to the essay, it would most logically be placed at Point:
- A. A in Paragraph 3.  
 B. B in Paragraph 3.  
 C. C in Paragraph 3.  
 D. D in Paragraph 4.

## PASSAGE II

## The Tin Whistle

Though it goes by many names—*dilliney* and *Irish whistle* being but two—the tin whistle is singularly memorable. Its sounds have found their way into types of music as different as pop, jazz, and punk. It's the

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instrument, that haunts the sound track to the 1997 film

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*Titanic* and that has also been featured on television. Popular in modern times, the instrument has roots in

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14. F. NO CHANGE  
 G. so different than  
 H. as different than  
 J. so different with
15. A. NO CHANGE  
 B. instrument;  
 C. instrument;  
 D. instrument
16. Which choice most closely matches the specificity of the preceding example in the sentence?  
 F. NO CHANGE  
 G. Captain Picard plays in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.  
 H. shows up on other sound tracks as well.  
 J. made appearances in other media.

# 1

Irish and Scottish music that go back centuries, perhaps even decades.

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*Tin whistle* is actually the name for a set of whistles

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that very in length and width (and therefore in the range

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of sounds they produce). To my surprise, the tin whistle today is typically made from brass or nickel-plated brass and has a plastic mouthpiece, or *fipple*. The instrument is a flute, though unlike the flute commonly used by Western orchestras, the tin whistle is played by blowing into the end of the tube, not across and into a hole on the side.

A person playing a tin whistle can produce different notes by covering up all, some, or none of the six holes in the instrument's body and by blowing into it more or less forcefully and quickly. Normally, the holes below the open hole closest to the player are uncovered; if the player covers some of those lower holes, however, the whistle produces sharp or flat notes. Experienced players can bring in a still greater variety of sounds by making quick changes in finger placement and by touching their tongue to the roof of their mouth as they begin a note.

Compared to many other instruments, the tin whistle is inexpensive, therefore, it's also known as the pennywhistle. Its cost and relative simplicity

make it a good instrument for beginning musicians.

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17. A. NO CHANGE  
B. more time.  
C. millennia.  
D. years.
18. Which of the following placements for the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?  
F. Where it is now  
G. Before the words *Tin whistle* (adjusting the capitalization as needed and placing a comma after the underlined portion)  
H. Before the word *is*  
J. Before the word *name*
19. A. NO CHANGE  
B. very much  
C. varying  
D. vary
20. F. NO CHANGE  
G. Despite its name,  
H. As an illustration,  
J. Clearly,
21. A. NO CHANGE  
B. is playing  
C. played  
D. plays
22. F. NO CHANGE  
G. generate  
H. churn up  
J. fetch
23. A. NO CHANGE  
B. which is why  
C. that's why  
D. DELETE the underlined portion.
24. F. NO CHANGE  
G. fresh beginners who are new to music.  
H. new musicians new to music.  
J. novice beginners in music.

Add to that the low cost of the instrument, and there's no good excuse not to give a tin whistle a try.

25. Given that all the choices are true, which one most effectively completes this sentence in paragraph 1 by mentioning a new reason for learning to play whistles?
- A. NO CHANGE
  - B. ease with which beginning players can pick up the instrument,
  - C. numerous instructional books, CDs, and videos available,
  - D. best players take years to hone their skills.

PASSAGE III

**Robert Smalls: War Hero and Congressman**

Robert Smalls was born into slavery on the McKee plantation in Beaufort, South Carolina, in 1839. By the time Smalls was twelve, Henry McKee had hired him out to work a variety of jobs in the shipyards of South Carolina's Charleston harbor. Eventually, Smalls was hired as a sailor on the *Planter*, a cotton steamer.

Late in 1861, the newly formed Confederate government chartered the *Planter* to transport weapons and supplies between the many fortifications around Charleston. The crew of the *Planter*, a former cotton steamer, was now forced to

work for the Confederacy. Smalls, whom had extensive knowledge of the harbor and great ability as a boat handler, was promoted to wheelman, or pilot.

When the *Planter*, ready for an early morning delivery, was left in Smalls's care on the night of May 13, 1862, he felt his opportunity had arrived.

26. F. NO CHANGE  
G. sailor, on the *Planter*,  
H. sailor, on the *Planter*  
J. sailor on the *Planter*
27. A. NO CHANGE  
B. being that a  
C. it was the  
D. as a result of a
28. F. NO CHANGE  
G. *Planter*, a vessel that now transported weapons and supplies,  
H. Confederate-chartered *Planter*  
J. *Planter*
29. A. NO CHANGE  
B. who  
C. whose  
D. DELETE the underlined portion.
30. Which of the following true statements, if added here, would most effectively introduce the new subject of this paragraph?
- F. All winter and spring, the *Planter* hauled weapons, materials, soldiers, and equipment to various islands around Charleston.
  - G. Often, Smalls sailed the *Planter* along the coast to make sure Confederate forts were secure.
  - H. Smalls was given increasing freedom on the ship, and he began to plan an escape.
  - J. In November 1861, Beaufort, where Smalls had grown up, fell to Union troops.

# 1

During the predawn hours when Smalls smuggled his family aboard the *Planter*. Also joining Smalls were several other slaves in the crew.

In the darkness, as he steamed the boat away from its berth. Smalls calmly gave the proper signals and passed unhindered through the harbor's defenses.

[A] Then he turned the vessel, directing it toward a Union ship helping blockade the harbor, and increased speed.

[B] Just as the *Planter* was about to be fired upon by Union forces, Smalls raised a white bedsheet, signaling the ships surrender. [C] Union troops welcomed the group and rewarded Smalls by making him the civilian captain of the *Planter*. [D] After the war, the ex-slave returned to Beaufort and bought his formerly master's home.

[35] In postwar South Carolina, newly enfranchised African Americans helped elect Smalls to the state legislature, where he served from 1868 to 1870. He then went on to serve five terms in the U.S. House

of Representatives. [36]

31. A. NO CHANGE  
B. hours; it was at that time when  
C. hours, then  
D. hours,
32. E. NO CHANGE  
G. as Smalls  
H. Smalls  
J. while he
33. A. NO CHANGE  
B. the ship's  
C. the ships'  
D. there
34. F. NO CHANGE  
G. former masters  
H. former master's  
J. formerly masters
35. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following sentence:  
That might be hard to believe, but it's true!  
Should the writer make this addition here?  
A. Yes, because it clarifies and expands upon the information in the preceding sentence about Smalls's purchase.  
B. Yes, because it proves that the writer has researched Smalls's life thoroughly.  
C. No, because it doesn't make clear Henry McKee's reaction to the end of the war or to Smalls's purchase.  
D. No, because it isn't consistent with the writer's tone and approach in the essay as a whole.
36. The writer wants to divide this paragraph into two in order to separate the information about Smalls's escape in and surrender of the *Planter* from the information about Smalls's postwar life and accomplishments. The best place to begin the new paragraph would be at Point:  
F. A.  
G. B.  
H. C.  
J. D.