

TOEFL READING

SENTENCE SIMPLIFICATION QUESTIONS

General info:

- Your job: to choose a sentence that has the same essential meaning as a sentence that occurs in the passage.

How to recognize:

Which of the following best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence?

Incorrect answer choices **change the meaning** in important ways or **leave out essential information**.

Tips and tricks:

1. Read the sentence carefully and remember the facts. Try to simplify it by yourself;
2. Break the sentence down into meaningful parts by looking for punctuation and transition expressions. Compare with each answer choice;
3. Eliminate incorrect choices: leave out important information or contradict the passage

“If a pot has no bottom or has large openings in its sides, it could hardly be considered a container in any traditional sense. **Since the laws of physics, not some arbitrary decision, have determined the general form of applied-art objects, they follow basic patterns, so much so that functional forms can vary only within certain limits.** Buildings without roofs, for example, are unusual because they depart from the norm. However, not all functional objects are exactly alike; that is why we recognize a Shang Dynasty vase as being different from an Inca vase. What varies is not the basic form but the incidental details that do not obstruct the object’s primary function . . .”

Since the laws of physics, not some arbitrary decision, have determined the general form of applied-art objects, they follow basic patterns, so much so that functional forms can vary only within certain limits.

Which of the following best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence? Incorrect answer choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.

- A.** Functional applied-art objects cannot vary much from the basic patterns determined by the laws of physics.
- B.** The function of applied-art objects is determined by basic patterns in the laws of physics.
- C.** Since functional applied-art objects vary only within certain limits, arbitrary decisions cannot have determined their general form.
- D.** The general form of applied-art objects is limited by some arbitrary decision that is not determined by the laws of physics.

Since the laws of physics, not some arbitrary decision, have determined the general form of applied-art objects, they follow basic patterns, so much so that functional forms can vary only within certain limits.

- **D.** The general form of applied-art objects is limited by some arbitrary decision that is not determined by the laws of physics. – **X:** *changes the meaning of the sentence to its opposite; says that the form of functional objects is arbitrary*
- **B.** The function of applied-art objects is determined by basic patterns in the laws of physics. – **X:** *changes the meaning: says that the functions of applied-art objects are determined by physical laws.*
- **C.** Since functional applied-art objects vary only within certain limits, arbitrary decisions cannot have determined their general form. – **X:** *leaves out an important idea: does not say that it is physical laws that determine basic form.*
- **A:** Functional applied-art objects cannot vary much from the basic patterns determined by the laws of physics. – **V**