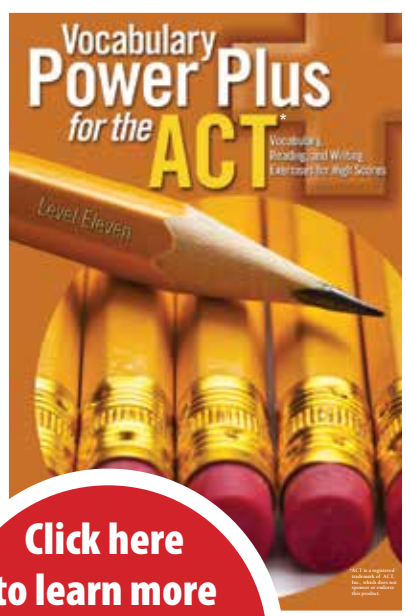




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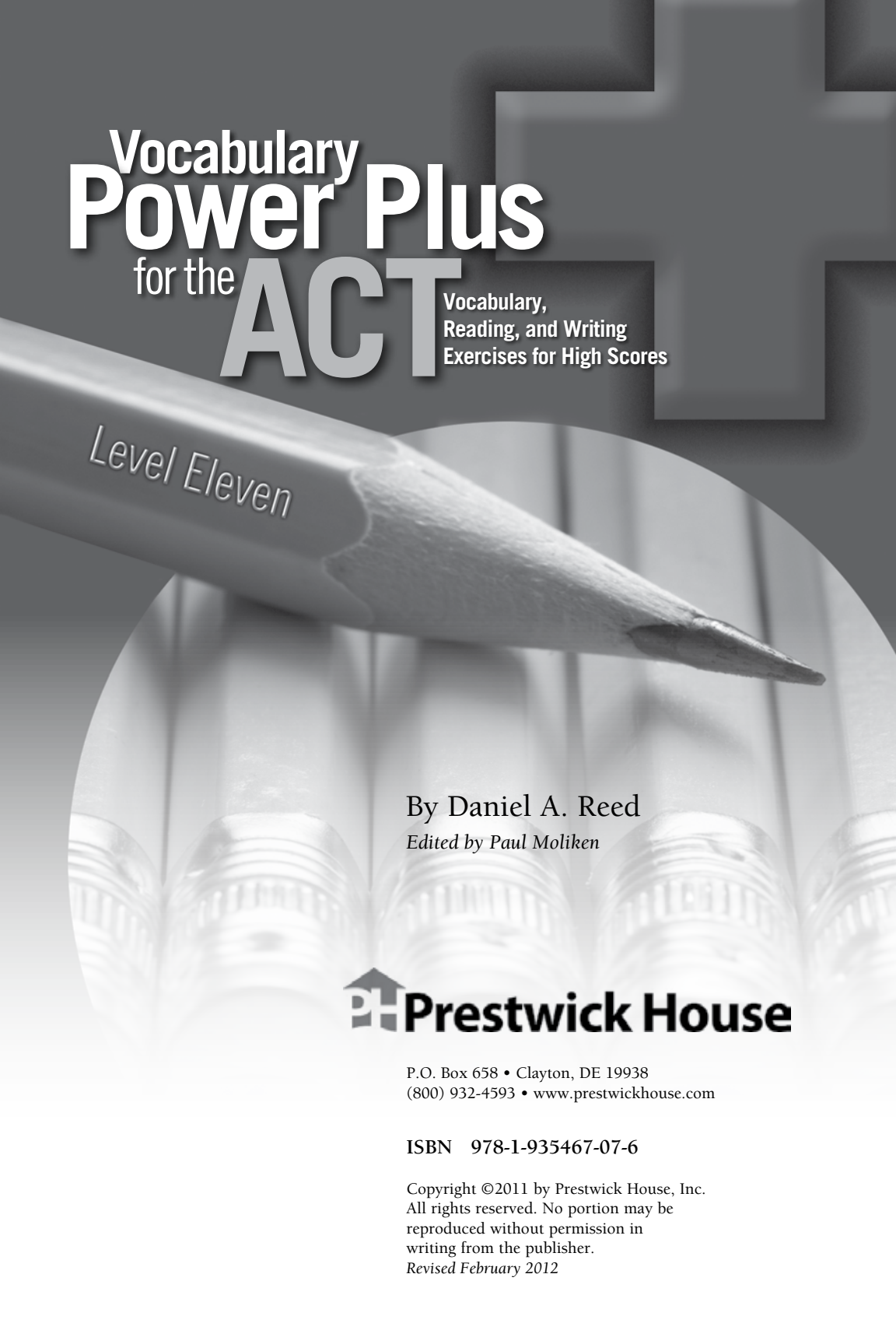
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Vocabulary **Power Plus** for the **ACT**

Vocabulary,
Reading, and Writing
Exercises for High Scores

Level Eleven

By Daniel A. Reed

Edited by Paul Moliken



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•Introduction•

VOCABULARY *POWER PLUS FOR THE ACT* combines classroomtested vocabulary drills with reading and writing exercises designed to prepare students for the American College Testing assessment; however, *Vocabulary Power Plus for the ACT* is a resource for all students—not just those who are college bound or preparing for the ACT. This series is intended to increase vocabulary, improve grammar, enhance writing, and boost critical reading skills for students at all levels of learning.

Vocabulary lessons combine words-in-context exercises with inferences to ensure that definitions are understood, instead of merely memorized.

Lengthy critical reading exercises and detailed questions emulate the reading passages of the ACT Reading test. Each passage involves a topic in social studies, natural science, prose fiction, or humanities, and is accompanied by multiple levels of questions.

ACT-style grammar passages and questions provide practice in punctuation, usage, structure, and word choice.

The process-oriented writing exercises in *Vocabulary Power Plus for the ACT* develop speed and thrift in essay writing, qualifiable with the objective writing fundamentals in the simulated ACT essay scoring guide.

We hope that you find the *Vocabulary Power Plus for the ACT* series to be an effective tool for teaching new words and an exceptional tool for preparing for the ACT.

Strategies for Completing Activities

Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

A knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes can give readers the ability to view unfamiliar words as puzzles that require only a few simple steps to solve. For the person interested in the history of words, this knowledge provides the ability to track word origin and evolution. For those who seek to improve vocabulary, this knowledge creates a sure and lifelong method; however, there are two points to remember:

1. Some words have evolved through usage, so present definitions might differ from what you infer through an examination of the roots and prefixes. The word *abstruse*, for example, contains the prefix *ab* (away) and the root *trudere* (to thrust), and literally means *to thrust away*. Today, *abstruse* is used to describe something that is hard to understand.
2. Certain roots do not apply to all words that use the same form. If you know that the root *vin* means “to conquer,” then you would be correct in concluding that the word *invincible* means “incapable of being conquered”; however, if you tried to apply the same root meaning to *vindicate* or *vindictive*, you would be incorrect. When analyzing unfamiliar words, check for other possible roots if your inferred meaning does not fit the context.

Despite these considerations, a knowledge of roots and prefixes is one of the best ways to build a powerful vocabulary.

Critical Reading

Reading questions generally fall into several categories.

1. *Identifying the main idea or the author’s purpose.* Generally, the question will ask something similar to, “What is this selection about?”

In some passages, the author’s purpose will be easy to identify because one or two ideas leap from the text; however, other passages might not be so easily analyzed, especially if they include convoluted sentences. Inverted sentences (subject at the end of the sentence) and elliptical sentences (words missing) will also increase the difficulty of the passages, but all of these obstacles can be overcome if readers take one sentence at a time and recast it in their own words. Consider the following sentence:

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short, ambiguous, and paradoxical sentences, which apparently mean much more than they say—of this kind of writing Schelling's treatises on natural philosophy are a splendid instance; or else they hold forth with a deluge of words and the most intolerable diffusiveness, as though no end of fuss were necessary to make the reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences, whereas it is some quite simple if not actually trivial idea, examples of which may be found in plenty in the popular works of Fichte, and the philosophical manuals of a hundred other miserable dunces.

If we edit out some of the words, the main point of this sentence is obvious.

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short,
sentences, which apparently mean
much more than they say
or
they hold a deluge of words
as though necessary to make the
reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences

Some sentences need only a few deletions for clarification, but others require major recasting and additions; they must be read carefully and put into the reader's own words.

Some in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought.

After studying it, a reader might recast the sentence as follows:

In conversation, some people desire praise for their abilities to maintain the conversation, rather than for their abilities to identify what is true or false, as though it were better to sound good than to know what is truth or fiction.

2. Identifying the stated or implied meaning. *What is the author stating or suggesting?*

The literal meaning of a text does not always correspond with the intended meaning. To understand a passage fully, readers must determine which meaning—if there is more than one—is the intended meaning of the passage.

Consider the following sentence:

If his notice was sought, an expression of courtesy and interest gleamed out upon his features; proving that there was light within him and that it was only the outward medium of the intellectual lamp that obstructed the rays in their passage.

Interpreted literally, this Nathaniel Hawthorne metaphor suggests that a light-generating lamp exists inside of the human body. Since this is impossible, the reader must look to the metaphoric meaning of the passage to properly understand it. In the metaphor, Hawthorne refers to the human mind—consciousness—as a lamp that emits light, and other people cannot always see the lamp because the outside “medium”—the human body—sometimes blocks it.

3. Identifying the tone or mood of the selection. *What feeling does the text evoke?*

To answer these types of questions, readers must look closely at individual words and their connotations; for example, the words *stubborn* and *firm* have almost the same definition, but a writer who describes a character as *stubborn* rather than *firm* is probably suggesting something negative about the character.

Writing

The ACT writing exam allocates only thirty minutes to the composition of a well-organized, fully developed essay. Writing a satisfactory essay in this limited time requires the ability to quickly determine a thesis, organize ideas, and produce adequate examples to support the ideas.

An essay written in thirty minutes might not represent the best process writing—an ACT essay might lack the perfection and depth that weeks of proofreading and editing give to research papers. Process is undoubtedly important, but students must consider the time constraints of the ACT. Completion of the essay is just as important as organization, development, and language use.

The thesis, the organization of ideas, and the support make the framework of a good essay. Before the actual writing begins, therefore, a writer must create a mental outline by establishing a thesis, or main idea, and one or more specific supporting ideas (the number of ideas will depend on the length and content of the essay). Supporting ideas should not be over complicated; they are simply ideas that justify or explain the thesis. The writer must introduce and explain each supporting idea, and the resultant supporting paragraph should answer the *why?* or *who cares?* questions that the thesis may evoke.

Once the thesis and supporting ideas are identified, writers must determine the order in which the ideas will appear in the essay. A good introduction usually explains the thesis and briefly introduces the supporting ideas. Explanation of the supporting ideas should follow, with each idea in its own paragraph. The final paragraph, the conclusion, usually restates the thesis or summarizes the main ideas of the essay.

Adhering to this mental outline when the writing begins will help the writer organize and develop the essay. Using the Organization and Development scoring guides to evaluate practice essays will help to reinforce the process skills. The Word Choice and Sentence Formation scoring guides will help to strengthen language skills—the vital counterpart to essay organization and development.

Pronunciation Guide

a	— track
ā	— mate
ä	— father
â	— care
e	— pet
ē	— be
i	— bit
ī	— bite
o	— job
ō	— wrote
ô	— port, horse, fought
ōō	— proof
ö	— book
u	— pun
ū	— you
û	— purr
ə	— about, system, supper, circus
îr	— steer
ë	— Fr. coeur
oi	— toy

Word List

Lesson 1

aegis
altruism
amorphous
besiege
boor
carrion
enervate
ephemeral
erotic
faction
fervent
ignoble
opulent
perspicacity
rectify

Lesson 2

antithesis
bauble
bestial
bland
chagrin
diaphanous
effete
emendation
gloat
impediment
impotent
labyrinth
maelstrom
nihilism
shard

Lesson 3

adventitious
ambiguous
bona fide
cataclysm
deviate
edify
extenuate
fecund
glower
impale
importune
obfuscate
optimum
parochial
pedestrian

Lesson 4

baroque
besmirch
celibate
debacle
demeanor
facetious
fortuitous
hedonism
imperative
obloquy
perfunctory
quasi-
recapitulate
sacrosanct
sadistic

Lesson 5

bowdlerize
carnal
deference
ebullient
elegy
fop
impair
imprecation
nebulous
non sequitur
panegyric
pedantic
quandary
rakish
sanguine

Lesson 6

affluence
amoral
antipathy
banal
bedlam
denouement
elucidate
eschew
imminent
obdurate
onerous
parody
peruse
scurrilous
sedulous

Lesson 7

adroit
affectation
bovine
callow
dichotomy
fatuous
ferret
knell
laconic
macroscopic
patent
peccadillo
quiddity
rationalize
sagacious

Lesson 8

agape
carcinogen
censure
deride
gambol
gibe
grotesque
hackneyed
immolate
imperious
martinet
neologism
olfactory
quagmire
recondite

Lesson 9

blanch
chimerical
eclectic
finesse
grandiose
harbinger
heterogeneous
hybrid
idiosyncrasy
machination
masochist
nubile
pejorative
raiment
sapient

Lesson 10

adulterate
bucolic
caveat
defile
diadem
emanate
garish
gratuitous
idolatry
immutable
impecunious
impious
onus
redolent
sedition

Lesson 11

cessation
delineate
desiccated
elixir
epitome
fetish
fissure
garrulous
juxtapose
kinetic
lachrymose
languid
legerdemain
libertine
scintillate

Lesson 12

badinage
bilious
blandishment
debauchery
fastidious
garner
gumption
halcyon
hegira
kismet
malapropism
milieu
necromancy
paradigm
regress

Lesson 13

animosity
brevity
cataract
despicable
empathy
harlequin
hoi polloi
impinge
nirvana
obsequious
offal
redundant
salutary
savant
sentient

Lesson 14

aggrandize
bombast
deign
elicit
endemic
flaunt
mendacious
obviate
orthography
paleontology
panache
paroxysm
recoil
saturnine
shibboleth

Lesson 15

aesthetic
chaff
egregious
empirical
flaccid
foment
germane
hallow
hermetic
hospice
meretricious
orifice
perdition
querulous
ratiocinate

Lesson 16

affinity
fiscal
flagellate
flout
impalpable
jocular
lascivious
malleable
miscreant
palliate
recant
recreant
regale
salacious
salient

Lesson 17

beguile
coalesce
desultory
ennui
ergo
hector
hiatus
hubris
lambent
nonentity
pandemic
pecuniary
rebuke
sang-froid
sibilant

Lesson 18

apotheosis
auspicious
avuncular
contiguous
incendiary
inimitable
malfeasance
platonic
pontificate
proletariat
prurient
refractory
specious
tenacious
vociferous

Lesson 19

abnegation
acrid
apex
credulity
dross
fulminate
gravitas
hegemony
insuperable
jejune
polyglot
psychosomatic
truculent
verisimilitude
viscous

Lesson 20

acerbic
androgynous
augur
beatitude
diaspora
discursive
disseminate
extemporaneous
intractable
maladroit
politic
requiem
sinecure
tendentious
traduce

Lesson 21

bon mot
clandestine
digress
furlough
misogyny
peon
plenary
plutocrat
potboiler
redoubtable
stolid
succor
travesty
vignette
xeric

Lesson One

1. **factionous** (fak' shəs) *adj.* causing disagreement
The *factionous* sailors refused to sail any farther into the storm.
syn: belligerent; contentious *ant:* cooperative; united
2. **ignoble** (ig nō' bəl) *adj.* dishonorable; shameful
Cheating on an exam is an *ignoble* way to get good grades.
syn: despicable; base *ant:* noble; glorious
3. **boor** (bōr) *n.* a rude or impolite person
The *boor* grabbed handfuls of hors d'oeuvres and walked around while he ate them.
syn: buffoon; clown *ant:* sophisticate
4. **aegis** (ē' jis) *n.* a shield; protection
The life of the witness is under the *aegis* of the witness protection program.
syn: backing
5. **perspicacity** (pūr spi kas' i tē) *n.* keenness of judgment
The old hermit still had the *perspicacity* to haggle with the automotive dealer.
syn: perceptiveness *ant:* stupidity; ignorance
6. **fervent** (fūr' vənt) *adj.* eager; earnest
We made a *fervent* attempt to capture the stallion, but he was too quick for us.
syn: burning; passionate *ant:* apathetic
7. **rectify** (rek' tə fī) *v.* to correct; to make right
JoAnne tried to *rectify* her poor relationship with her son by spending more time with him.
syn: remedy; resolve
8. **enervate** (en' ər vāt) *v.* to weaken
The record temperatures *enervated* the farmhands before noon.
syn: devitalize; exhaust *ant:* energize; strengthen

9. **besiege** (bi sēj´) *v.* to overwhelm; to surround and attack
People jumped from the ground and brushed themselves off as ants *besieged* the picnic.
10. **ephemeral** (i fem´ ə r ə l) *adj.* lasting only a brief time; short-lived
The gardener experienced *ephemeral* fame the year she grew a half-ton pumpkin.
syn: transient; fleeting *ant:* permanent
11. **altruism** (al´ trōō iz ə m) *n.* a concern for others; generosity
A person with *altruism* will usually stop and help a stranded motorist.
syn: unselfishness; magnanimity *ant:* selfishness; egoism
12. **carrion** (kar´ ē ə n) *n.* decaying flesh
The *carrion* along the desert highway was a feast for the vultures.
13. **erotic** (i rot´ ik) *adj.* pertaining to sexual love
The museum staff cancelled the exhibition when it saw the *erotic* sculptures.
14. **amorphous** (ə mōr´ fəs) *adj.* shapeless, formless, vague
What began as an *amorphous* idea in Steven's dream turned into a revolutionary way to power automobiles.
15. **opulent** (op´ ū lənt) *adj.* rich, luxurious; wealthy
Despite the stock market crash, the wealthy family continued its *opulent* lifestyle.

Exercise I

Words in Context

From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.

amorphous	enervate	besiege	factionous
ephemeral	perspicacity	altruism	carion

1. Carter had been walking for more than four hours since his truck ran out of fuel. The morning desert sun _____ him, bringing him closer to exhaustion. In his weary state, he chastised himself for not having the _____ to have brought an extra can of fuel on the trip. In such a barren, isolated place, Carter knew that he couldn't rely on the _____ of others for help if his truck broke down. The only living things on the road were biting flies that _____ Carter and forced him to swat his face and neck every few seconds. They continued to attack until they detected the foul smell of _____ when Carter passed a dead hare on the shoulder of the road. The departure of the flies gave him _____ relief as he continued his trudge; the bugs went away, but in the distance, Carter could see, through eyes stinging with sweat, the _____ distortions of light along the hot, desert floor.

From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.

rectify	factionous	ignoble	erotic	amorphous	besiege
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2. Some of the council approved the new zoning restriction, but a few _____ members refused to cast votes. None of them actually approved of the _____ bookstore next to the little league field, but they wanted to find a better way to legally _____ the _____ situation.

From the list below, supply the words needed to complete the paragraph. Some words will not be used.

aegis altruism boor fervent carrion opulent

3. Councilman Parker, a wealthy native of the small town, knew that a few council members had a[n] _____ desire to remove him from office. Some of them resented his _____ lifestyle, and others claimed that Parker was careless because he lived under the _____ of his wealth and thus had no fear of being fired. They also called Parker a _____ because he had the habit of interrupting conversations and barging into offices without knocking.

Exercise II

Sentence Completion

Complete the sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the italicized vocabulary word.

1. The highway crew removed the *carrion* from the road because...
2. Bob decided to *rectify* his crime by...
3. People called Cory a *boor* because he always...
4. In an act of *altruism*, Jennifer went to the nursing home to...
5. Citizens protested the opening of an *erotic* bookstore near the park because...
6. Under the *aegis* of the police department, the witness could safely...
7. During the summit, the *factionous* ambassador caused...
8. Working on the roof *enervated* the contractors, especially when...
9. The *ephemeral* argument was over in...
10. Features in the *opulent* mansion include...
11. The wounded fish was soon *besieged* by...

12. The *amorphous* body of the amoeba had no discernable...
13. If it were not for dad's *perspicacity*, I would have purchased a car that...
14. His *fervent* speech convinced...
15. A person can lose his or her job by committing an *ignoble* act such as...

Exercise III

Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

Study the entries and answer the questions that follow.

The roots *fus* and *fun* mean "melt" or "pour out."

The suffix *ion* means "the act of."

The roots *grad* and *gress* means "step" or "go."

The suffix *el* means "little."

The prefix *con* means "together."

The prefixes *di*, *dif*, and *dis* mean "apart."

The prefix *e* means "out" or "from."

1. Using literal translations as guidance, define the following words without using a dictionary.

A. fusion	D. regress
B. funnel	E. progress
C. infuse	F. congress
2. If you have an *effusive* personality, then it _____ of you.
Motor oil will _____ across the gravel if it spills out of the can.
3. A step-by-step process is often called a[n] _____ process, and a highway crew might use a[n] _____ to smooth out a road.
4. *Egress* literally translates to _____, and if someone loses a high-paying job and takes a lower-paying job, his or her career is said to have _____.
5. List all the words that you can think of that contain the roots *grad* and *gress*.

Exercise IV

Inference

Complete the sentences by inferring information about the italicized word from its context.

1. You probably will not miss too many days of school, because the *ephemeral* strain of influenza does not...
2. Brenda felt guilty for stealing the money from the register, so she *rectified* the situation by...
3. Out of pure *altruism*, Ed went to the homeless shelter on Christmas Eve to...

Exercise V

Writing

Here is a writing prompt similar to the one you will find on the essay writing portion of the ACT.

The argument has been fought and, at times, won by NASA, that humankind should not focus only on solving problems on Earth before investing enormous amounts of money and labor on exploring space. The challenges of space travel, much like the challenges of a world war, often yield new technology that would not have been developed otherwise. The new technology might, as in the case of antibiotics, save millions of lives.

Should the billions of dollars spent on space exploration instead be diverted to ending poverty or creating sustainable energy?

Pretend that you are the governor of a state that has an above-average poverty level. Write a speech in which you argue for or against space and deep sea exploration. Include at least three reasons to support your central argument.

Thesis: Write a *one-sentence* response to the above assignment. Make certain this single sentence offers a clear statement of your position.

Example: If all money goes to the solving of survival problems, with none going to research or exploration, then the world will be stuck in the dark ages because new technology and understanding will be essentially nonexistent.

Organizational Plan: List at least three subtopics you will use to support your main idea. This list is your outline.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Draft: Following your outline, write a good first draft of your essay. Remember to support all your points with examples, facts, references to reading, etc.

Review and revise: Exchange essays with a classmate. Using the scoring guide for Organization on page 246, score your partner's essay (while he or she scores yours). Focus on the organizational plan and use of language conventions. If necessary, rewrite your essay to improve the organizational plan and/or your use of language.