1941

Exam Checks on Seniors

Ann Koebel

Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation

Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol21/iss7/3

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Interest in the creative writing work of other students is shown by the large number of Iowa Staters who read and criticize each day the compositions displayed on the English Department bulletin board in Beardshear Hall.

**Exam Checks on Seniors**

Faults in spelling and diction are found most common in senior English test, says Ann Koebel.

**WITH** poor spelling in the lead as cause of the greatest number of errors, the results of the senior English examination, given last quarter, have been tabulated. This test, compulsory for first quarter seniors, entailed the writing of a 500-word theme on one of three given topics during a two-hour period.

Second in number of mistakes in spelling were those in diction. This included using an inaccurate word, using an idiom incorrectly, having a dangling modifier or not having a logical connection of thought. For instance, a student might say, "the crowd congregates on the corner," instead of "the crowd congregates on the corner."

Next in the list were mistakes in punctuation. Students frequently failed to distinguish between the use of the comma and the semicolon. Instead of writing "I have been in college four years; I learned a lot," they would write "I have been in college four years, I learned a lot."

Grammatical errors were fourth on the list of mistakes. There were several of this type most frequently made. One was a lack of agreement in number between subject and predicate: for example, "the family were" instead of "the family was." A second was the use of an adjective when an adverb was required, i.e., "he did good in his work" instead of "he did well in his work." Another frequent mistake was the use of fragmentary, or incomplete sentences, as "when I finish," instead of "I will when I finish."

The last group of errors were miscellaneous ones, the result of inadequate checking. For example, the last letter of a word might be omitted or sometimes even the whole word was missing.

Although mechanical errors fell into the above five groups, there was another place in which some of the papers were especially weak. The legibility of some of them reached the vanishing point.

The purpose of this examination was not to keep students from graduating, but merely to find those who were especially weak in mechanics so that they may be given additional help. According to the Department of English, the cooperation shown by the seniors has been commendable. Even those whose work was rejected showed no resentment.

A Writing Clinic was also started in the fall in the English Office Building, on Mondays through Fridays from 1 to 5 p.m. on all days when school is in session. Any student who has any kind of writing problem, whether it be where to place a comma or how to improve his writing, may come to the clinic for help. Freshmen are not encouraged as they are already receiving instruction in their English classes and because there is a limit to the number of people handled.