

Julie Robitaille | Robert Connelly



# Writer's RESOURCES

From Paragraph to Essay | Second Edition

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# Writer's Resources

From Paragraph to Essay

SECOND EDITION

**Julie Robitaille**

Santa Fe Community College

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**Edwin Dobb, Not in Our Town!** 413

*An American town discovers a hate group in its midst and finds the courage to fight back.*

**R. Daniel Foster, Friends as Healers** 419

*The author argues that close friends benefit people physically, mentally, and emotionally. Good use of evidence from authority, quotes, and tag phrases.*

**Thomas L. Friedman, Excerpt from "It's a Flat World, After All"** 423

*The author argues that globalization presents opportunities and challenges.*

**Jeff Galloway, Growing Through a Phase** 429

*The author classifies the stages that runners go through as they mature.*

**Daniel Goleman, What's Your Emotional I.Q.?** 433

*The author defines emotional intelligence in order to show that it is more important than traditional intelligence in determining success.*

**Pete Hamill, Crack and the Box** 438

*The author compares TV addiction to drug addiction and discusses causes and effects of both.*

**Michael Ryan, Who Is Great?** 443

*The author examines the characteristics of greatness and concludes that greatness has more to do with drive and passion than innate intelligence or ability. Good example of use of sources and tag phrases.*

**Steve Jobs, Stay Hungry, Stay Foolish 448**

*The author, inventor and executive of Apple Computers, gives three pieces of advice to live by.*

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Pilgrimage to Nonviolence 454**

*Dr. King discusses the philosophy of nonviolence.*

**Patrick Mazza, The Invisible Hand 459**

*The author argues that human activity is accelerating global warming, which in turn intensifies El Niño related weather occurrences. Excellent example of cause/effect, argumentation, and use of sources.*

**John E. Obedzinski, M.D., Why Happy Families Are Different 465**

*A pediatrician defines the behavioral characteristics of strong, resilient families.*

**Mike Rose, I Just Wanna Be Average 470**

*The author recalls growing up in an inner city and learning of the power of his imagination as a means of escape.*

**Rita Rooney, Helping Children through Divorce 475**

*The author provides guidelines for parents in handling a divorce with sensitivity and love for their children.*

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*An African-American writer reflects on his inability to save his brother from the violence that plagues inner cities.*

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# Preface

*Writer's Resources: From Paragraph to Essay*, Second Edition, is an outgrowth of our twenty years of experience teaching beginning college students in the classroom and in the Writing Center. In addition to being teachers, we are both actively committed to the writing life. Our personal experience as writers and our professional experience as teachers have taught us that writing is at once one of the most difficult and one of the most significant activities we can engage in as human beings. Writing helps us know what we think and, as a result, it helps us to know who we are. It also helps us interact with others and participate in our community.

The writing classroom is changing, just as our culture and the demographics of our student populations are changing. Beginning college writers need more than instruction in the basics to succeed. We support the notion that the classroom is a learning community in which the diversity of the class is embraced and celebrated through the writing of its members. We plant the seeds for this learning community with peer models who accompany students on their journey through this textbook. Throughout the text, the four peers share samples of their journals, their writing process, their paragraphs, and their essays. The peers encourage the kind of supportive learning environment that student writers need in order to feel comfortable taking the risks necessary to become better writers.



## About the Text

*Writer's Resources: From Paragraph to Essay* provides the resources and support that students need to develop into successful writers. Those resources include instruction in basic skills and forms of writing, numerous peer and professional models of good writing, and an emphasis throughout the text on the writing process.

Our approach to teaching adult learners is pragmatic. We break down rules and concepts into manageable pieces that allow students to focus on one concept at a time and to build understanding and mastery incrementally. Concepts are presented in simple, clear language, supported with numerous examples, and reinforced by frequent practice exercises that allow students to apply what they have learned. Our approach to the forms of writing—paragraphs, essays, and rhetorical patterns—is to begin with one or more peer examples and then to break the form down into its component parts, illustrated with numerous examples.

## Organization

### Part I: Getting Started

Chapter 1, “The Power of Language,” foregrounds the relationship between writing and empowerment, introduces the concept of the writer’s voice, and introduces the four student peers (Alicia Martinez, Tony Anderson, Beth Kaminski, and Dan Tribble) who share their writing throughout the text. The chapter ends with an assignment in which students introduce themselves to their classmates and instructor by telling the story of how they came to college. The four student peers share their introductory essays as examples.

Chapter 2, “The Challenge Ahead,” addresses critical first-year college skills, such as attitude and organization. Students read “Jordan Is Never Afraid of Failure,” which addresses the critical role of attitude and work habits in determining success. They learn the importance of attitude, organization, practice, and the use of resources in determining their own success in college. The writing assignment at the end of the chapter asks students to discuss how Michael Jordan’s example relates to their success in college and to consider which of the resources described in the chapter will be a part of their plan for succeeding in the course.

### Part II: Writing Paragraphs and Essays

Part II addresses the writing process for the paragraph and the essay as well as instruction in the structure of both the paragraph and the essay. The writing process chapters, “Generating Ideas,” “Writing a Paragraph,” and “Writing an Essay” are intended as an overview of the writing process that will be used, reinforced, and developed throughout the text. We illustrate the writing process by using a single example, Beth’s “Ready for the Junk Heap” about the disadvantages of her car, so that students can follow the process from beginning to end with a single accessible topic.

In order to accommodate instruction at both the paragraph and essay level, the writing process has been divided into Chapter 3: “Generating Ideas,” (which covers narrowing the topic, examining the writing context, and generating ideas), Chapter 4: “Writing a Paragraph,” and Chapter 6: “Writing an Essay” (which cover the specific demands of organizing ideas, drafting, revising, and editing at the paragraph and essay level). Instructors who focus on paragraph-length writing would assign Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, and instructors who begin with the essay would assign Chapter 3 and Chapter 6. The transition from paragraph to essay-length writing is facilitated here as elsewhere in the text by the development of a single topic as both a paragraph and an essay.

After each step in the process, students can apply what they have learned by responding to writing process prompts in order to develop their own topic. The entire collection of Writing Process Prompts is available in the appendix so that students can access the prompts easily to complete future assignments.

Chapter 5, “The Structure of the Paragraph,” provides detailed instruction on the parts of the paragraph. The peer models offer a number of examples of paragraphs written on topics students can relate to. Each part of the paragraph is broken down into basic concepts with examples and exercises. The instruction is intended to show students how to construct well-developed paragraphs. For example, we stress the use of specific details that directly relate to the topic sentence. Examples and exercises help students grasp this vital concept in the process of composing paragraphs.

Chapter 7, “The Structure of the Essay,” defines and explores the parts of the essay. The sample essays are amplifications of paragraphs students were introduced to in “The Structure of the Paragraph.” Particular attention is paid to the learning process students must undergo in moving from paragraph to essay writing. Concepts include a detailed presentation of methods of providing background information, formulating thesis statements, developing effective body paragraphs, concluding an essay, and avoiding common pitfalls.

### Part III: Rhetorical Patterns

The eleven rhetorical pattern lessons are designed to be used at either the paragraph or essay level and to be thorough and flexible enough to accommodate a variety of instructional approaches. For each pattern, students are given a **definition** of the pattern; a **sample student paragraph and essay** on one topic (which allows instructors to teach the rhetorical patterns at either the paragraph or essay level); **sample topic sentences or thesis statements; common transitions** for the pattern; **tips** on developing a paper in that pattern; and **pitfalls** to be avoided. Students can then select a writing topic, **including the choice to write about a topic related to a photo**, and develop their paragraph or essay. We imagine that students would read and discuss the lesson and any peer or professional models before writing their own paragraph or essay.

### Part IV: Writing Elements and Skills

Rather than lodging instruction on grammar, punctuation, and stylistic topics (such as word choice and sentence variety) within chapters on the

paragraph or essay, we have separated them under “Writing Elements and Skills” so that instructors can introduce topics in the order they feel is most appropriate for their students. Because it would be impossible to cover all of these chapters in one semester, we intend instructors and students to select those chapters that fit their individual needs.

The presentation of skills and concepts lends itself to presentation in class and to independent review. Instructors may wish to cover certain topics in class and assign others for students to review independently, and students who want help with topics such as spelling can find abundant resources for independent review and practice. The second edition includes many more exercises, as well as answer keys in the back of the text so that students can check the odd number items. Each chapter provides at least five Exercises within each chapter covering separate concepts or rules and at least two Review Exercises. New to the second edition, each chapter concludes with one to two Editing Exercises, which provide realistic editing practice using the skill in the context of a longer piece of writing. (We do not include answer keys for Review Exercises or Editing Exercises so that teachers can use these for testing if they desire.) In addition, we have increased the number of the popular Proofreading Exercises in Chapter 39 to ten.

## Part V: Readings

The professional essays are introduced by “Successful Reading Strategies,” which focuses on active reading skills. Intended to serve as models of good writing and as springboards for discussion and writing, the readings are drawn from a wide range of popular periodicals. We have tried to gather an eclectic mix of “traditional” and “new” readings that will appeal to a variety of interests and reading levels.

The Special Topics section that appears before each reading highlights composition strategies used by professional writers. Topics include introduction and conclusion strategies, use of rhetorical patterns, use of sources and tag phrases, and thematic relationships between essays.

Marginal glosses of words, names, and events students may not be familiar with are provided to aid students’ understanding of the meaning of words in context and to improve their understanding of the essay as a whole. Because we have found that students are unfamiliar with many of the words and references they encounter in essays, we have tried to err on the side of inclusion rather than exclusion. The professional essays are followed by comprehension questions, discussion questions, and suggestions for writing topics.

## Features

### Student Models

Adult learners perform best if given concrete models of the writing they are asked to complete. “Show; don’t tell” is an axiom not just for fiction writers, but also for writing instructors. The peer models are a powerful vehicle for demonstrating the process of writing and the products that stu-

dents can produce. The peer models also help students understand how readers come to know writers through their writing.

## Focus on Writing Process

The writing process is introduced in Part II, reinforced in the chapters on the paragraph and the essay and in each of the “Rhetorical Patterns” lessons in Part III.

## Transition from Paragraph to Essay

The transition from paragraph to essay is facilitated by numerous paragraph- and essay-level models of the same topic in “Writing Paragraphs and Essays” and in “Rhetorical Patterns.”

## Rules and Tools

One of the improved features in this second edition is the Rules and Tools Appendix. Intended as a brief handbook, Rules and Tools gives students a quick reference guide to all of the skills. Every rule for each skill is followed by an example. Students can use Rules and Tools while writing papers to look up quickly grammar and punctuation rules, and the examples are chosen to show students how the rules are used.

## Flexibility

Unlike many texts, *Writer’s Resources* does not dictate the order or sequence in which topics are introduced. Although we imagine most users will begin with Chapter 1, “The Power of Language,” after that point, instructors may select the chapters that fit the topics they teach in the sequence they deem most appropriate. We imagine that instructors will assign chapters from several parts of the book simultaneously. For example, instructors might choose to assign Chapter 23, “Word Choice,” with Chapter 8, “Description.” Numerous suggestions for such pairings are available in the instructors’ manual.

## New to This Edition

- **Additional exercises throughout skill chapters**—There are now five or more exercises in each chapter and one to two review exercises that can be used for practice or testing.
- **Additional editing exercises**—There are ten Proofreading Exercises that combine skills into three levels of basic, intermediate, and advanced in order to give students realistic practice finding common errors and correcting them.
- **Student answer key for odd-numbered items in exercises**—Students can monitor their learning as they work independently.
- **ESL Appendix**—Second-language students can review common second-language errors and practice applying concepts through

numerous exercises. Answer keys for odd-numbered exercises and all editing exercises allow students to monitor their own progress.

- **Using Journals Appendix**—Material on journal writing has been moved to the Appendix for easy access by those who choose to assign it.
- **Documentation Appendix**—A review of the format for MLA in-text citations and works cited entries allows students to document research papers using MLA style.
- **Successful Reading Strategies**—A review of reading strategies prior to the professional readings teaches students how to become active readers.
- **Four new readings**—A commencement speech by Steven Jobs will give students a surprising view of success from a shining star of American business; a stirring selection from Thomas L. Friedman's important best seller, *The World Is Flat*, introduces students to the global world of business and makes a strong case for the importance of education; Pete Hamill's controversial comparison of crack and TV addiction will stimulate students to examine the effect of TV on their own lives and on society; and Michael Ryan defines greatness by examining its characteristics and giving numerous examples of people from a variety of fields who are great.
- **Expanded Rules and Tools Reference Guide**—This guide provides a convenient summary of grammar and punctuation rules with examples to make looking up information easy for students.

## Supplements

### ANNOTATED INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION

The answers to all exercises make teacher preparation a snap.

### WRITER'S RESOURCES ONLINE TESTING PROGRAM

ThomsonNOW™ for Robitaille/Connelly's *Writer's Resources: From Paragraph to Essay*, Second Edition, is a powerful online learning system that saves instructors time through its automatic grading and easy-to-use gradebook, and provides students with an efficient way to study. Using a variety of technologies to accommodate different learning styles, ThomsonNOW contains quizzing and interactive multimedia tutorials that work with students to build personalized study plans and help them comprehend the fundamental concepts of writing and become efficient writers.

First, students take a **pre-test** to assess their proficiency in the material covered in the corresponding text chapter. Based on the results of the pre-test, students receive a **Personalized Study Plan** tailored to the specific areas they require the most help with. After working through the study plan, students complete a follow-up **post-test** to assess their mastery of the material. The Personalized Study Plans help students prioritize their studies and use their study time effectively, and also contain Practice Exercises that offer additional practice in the writing concepts covered in each lesson.

## INSTRUCTORS' MANUAL

In addition to providing the answers to exercises in the text, the instructors' manual contains chapter-by-chapter suggestions for implementing the material, sample syllabi, additional paragraphs and essays by the student peers, additional professional readings, and additional proofreading tests and resources.

## Acknowledgments

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## About the Authors

Bob Connelly counts writing as one of his favorite activities. After receiving his B.A. from the University of Florida, Bob spent time living and studying in northern Europe and then attended the University of Chicago, where he received an M.A. in English literature. He has been teaching writing for over twenty-five years at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Florida. In addition to writing textbooks, he has written a novel entitled *Hollywood*, which is as yet unpublished. In his spare time, Bob runs, swims, and practices meditation.

Julie Robitaille is committed to the writing life. She received a B.A. in English from Emory University, an M.A. in English literature from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and an M.A. in creative writing from the University of Florida. For twenty years, she directed the Writing Lab at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Florida, and she now teaches writing full time. In addition to teaching and writing textbooks, she also writes novels and screenplays and paints. She lives in Gainesville, Florida, with her husband, Steve, and their two sons, Jean Paul and Jordan.

# To the Student

## Our Purpose

We believe that writing helps all of us engage more fully with the world around us. Because writing is a process in which we formulate our thoughts and opinions and communicate them to others, writing helps us know ourselves and connect with our community. Writing well is one of the truly essential skills of a college-educated person.

In our experience, students come into a beginning writing course filled with a mixture of hope and fear. We all know that writing is not an easy activity. It takes courage and determination just to sit down to face a blank sheet of paper. We don't always look forward to the comments of our readers, especially when they are English teachers. Yet college writing classes are consistently ranked as some of the most popular classes for college freshmen. Students report that they enjoy the engagement with classmates and the sense of community that they develop, and most students find the exchange of ideas in a writing class stimulating.

We have guided over twenty thousand students through the material you will use this term. Through our experience, we have developed a set of principles that we would like to share with you as you begin your writing course.



## Learning to Write Well Is Important

Writing is a tool that empowers you—literally gives you power. Writing well enables you to succeed in school and as a result get and keep a good job. On another level, writing empowers you because becoming comfortable with the writing process helps you figure out what you think, and once you know what your thoughts and beliefs are, you can share them with others and perhaps convince others to share, or at least understand, your point of view.

## Given Clear Models and Enough Practice, Everyone Can Learn to Write Well

One of the best ways to learn is to see **clear examples** of what you are asked to do. Therefore, we have provided four student peers (Beth, Tony, Alicia, and Dan) to share their work throughout the book. Their writing is not as sophisticated as the professional essays generally seen in textbooks, but they provide examples of writing that is attainable. All of you can learn to write as clearly and as persuasively as they do, especially when you learn to take ownership of your writing and to care about what you say and how clearly you communicate your ideas.

Another key factor in learning to write well is **practice**. Like anything else—learning to play basketball, for example—the more you practice, the better you get. Developing the skill of writing is like developing any skill. It takes a combination of isolated drills to develop certain muscles and performance practice to hone the skill of writing. You can't learn to write simply by doing drills on individual skills, any more than you can learn to play basketball by practicing shooting free throws. But that practice at the free throw line can certainly help your performance when you are under pressure. And given the number of states that are requiring exit testing from writing classes, performing under pressure is the name of the game. The more you work with and manipulate language, just like the more you handle a ball, the more adept and coordinated you will become.

## Attitude Counts

As in any sport, how you think about your performance matters. You wouldn't stand much of a chance of improving if every time you took a shot at the basket you told yourself, "I'm never going to make it." You have to believe in yourself and you have to think positively. You have to imagine yourself doing well if you are going to improve your chances of making the shot.

Being a student is one of the most difficult jobs in the world. Every day you are confronted with what you don't know. Learning can be hard on the ego. Please remember that you have our respect and the respect of your instructor for having the courage to become a student and better yourself through higher learning.

## Having a Coach Helps

Your instructor will use *Writer's Resources* as a tool to help you learn to write well. It's important that you develop a good relationship with your instructor because he or she will coach you through the process of becoming a better writer. You have to listen to your coach if you are going to improve your performance. Coaches give you feedback, not to make you feel bad but to help you improve. If you don't know what you are doing wrong, how can you possibly improve?

## Teammates Can Help

The four student models (Beth, Tony, Alicia, and Dan) who share their work and experience with you are the beginnings of your learning community. You will enjoy your writing class more and get more out of it if you connect with the other members of your class. Your classmates can help you succeed in the course in numerous ways, from helping you generate ideas for your writing to giving you feedback on your writing.

## Every Adventure Starts with the First Steps

We hope that you will enjoy the learning process you are now beginning. We encourage you to get to know your instructor and the members of your class. It's important that you identify time in your busy schedule when you will work on this writing course. Most experienced college students set up a weekly schedule of classes, work, and times for homework, and they stick to that schedule throughout the term. Good luck, and may you succeed in meeting your goals and living your dream!

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# Part I

## Getting Started

### Introduction

P

art I will introduce you to the rewards and challenges of a college writing class. Language is the most powerful tool you will learn to use in your lifetime. Because writing can help you clarify your thinking, help you make a good impression on instructors and supervisors, and help you share your vision of the world with others, learning to write clearly will help you succeed in school, at work, and in your personal life.

In Chapter 1, “The Power of Language,” we introduce the concept of voice, a writer’s ability to communicate in writing his or her personality and vision of the world, and we introduce the four student peers who will share their writing and their advice throughout the textbook. In Chapter 2, “The Challenge Ahead,” you will read a short essay on the qualities that make the basketball star Michael Jordan successful, and we introduce the most important tools for success in college: developing the right attitude, getting organized, practicing regularly, and using your available resources.

We hope that this textbook will help you succeed in conquering the challenges that lie ahead as you begin your journey through college.

## The Student Peers



Tony Anderson

Alicia Martinez

Dan Tribble

Beth Kamiski

# Chapter 1

## The Power of Language

### Why Write?

Let's start with the most basic question: Why bother learning to write well? Many students feel that new technology will decrease or even eliminate the need to study writing. In fact, new technology and new ways of communicating through e-mail and discussion boards make the ability to write well more important in the twenty-first century than ever before. Few people have time to edit their e-mails carefully, and no one pauses in the middle of an Internet chat session to look up how to use an apostrophe or comma correctly. However, these forms of communication represent us to our peers and often to our supervisors. It is through our writing that people form opinions of us and of our ability to communicate clearly.

Learning to write well is important because it gives you power. Writing well enables you to accomplish your goals, whether those goals include being successful in school, getting and keeping a good job, or simply expressing your ideas clearly. We each see the world differently, and language is the way we communicate who we are and how we see the world. Learning to use language effectively may not be easy, but it can help you share your vision of the world with others.

As any college graduate will tell you, gaining control of language is the key to being successful in school. Learning the course material is only half the battle because instructors award grades based on a student's ability to communicate his or her understanding of course material in writing. Most classes require essay exams, reports, and papers, and many of these writing

assignments must be completed in class. Learning to write clearly will make succeeding in school much easier.

Writing also plays an important role in getting and keeping a good job. Employers consistently say that they are looking for employees who can communicate clearly. They are unlikely to hire an applicant who does not demonstrate strong writing skills. Once hired, employees need to be able to write clearly in order to communicate with clients, co-workers, and supervisors. Common on-the-job writing tasks include writing directions, reports, letters, explanations, and memos. Being able to write well can mean the difference between promotion and being stuck in a low-level job.

## Spotlight on People

You don't have to be a professional writer to see the impact your writing can have. Lots of people use writing to draw attention to issues they think are important. Here is one example of a student who has done just that.

### Shoshana Nisbett

To draw attention to the difficulties of negotiating the campus in a wheelchair, Shoshana Nisbett sent a humorous e-mail to several prominent officials at her community college. Shoshana chose to use humor to make her point, and she succeeded in getting the attention of the school officials, who each responded to her e-mail, enabling her to open a dialogue about the difficulties she faces daily in order to attend classes. A few weeks later, she was leading a group of school officials on a tour of the campus. Why was the tour so successful? In part because Shoshana had them all ride in wheelchairs so they could experience firsthand the difficulties of negotiating closed doors and bumpy sidewalks. Shoshana says, "I wanted to raise awareness, and I think I managed to do that."

### Make Yourself Heard

E-mail us stories of how you have used writing to draw attention to a problem, to voice your opinion, or to get something done. Also, e-mail us with ideas on things you'd like to see included in this textbook, with accounts of how you've used the textbook successfully and, of course, with any errors you've found in the textbook. You may contact us by sending an e-mail to: **julie.writersresources@gmail.com**.

## What Is Voice?

Each of us has had different experiences, and those experiences have helped shape who we are and how we see the world. A writer's ability to communicate his or her personality and vision of the world in writing is

called *voice*. Voice is something you probably haven't heard much about in your other English classes, but it has to do with expressing in your writing your ideas, views, and even something of your personality.

Developing your voice in writing doesn't mean writing the way you speak. It means learning to use language effectively to communicate your unique vision of the world. It enables each individual to become a spokesperson for his or her personal or cultural perspective on life.

Voice is one of the ingredients that makes the personal essay interesting and engaging. One of the pleasures of reading personal essays is getting to know the writer and coming to see the world as he or she does. We tend to respond more positively to writing that comes from a real person than we do to writing that is faceless or general. Of course, voice is most appropriate in personal essays. It usually would not be appropriate on a history exam or in a factual report. You will get lots of experience with both personal and academic writing as you read and work through the exercises in *Writer's Resources*.

## Developing Your Voice

### READING GOOD WRITING IS ONE WAY TO DEVELOP AWARENESS OF LANGUAGE

Being aware of how others use language effectively is a good way to develop your own writing. As you read professional and student essays in *Writer's Resources* and elsewhere, think about how the writer expresses his or her vision of the world. The four student peers, introduced at the end of this chapter, are good examples of voice because they write about topics that interest or concern them, topics that come from their worlds, and a sense of their personality comes across in their writing. In time, you will be able to guess which one of the student peers wrote each of the model paragraphs and essays that you read.

### WRITING IN A JOURNAL IS ANOTHER WAY TO DEVELOP YOUR VOICE

One of the most fundamental pieces of advice professional writers give aspiring writers is "Write about what you know." That same advice holds true for you, whether or not you aspire to write for a living; practice writing about things that interest you, that you know about, and that you care about in your journal, and you'll be working toward developing your voice. Think about what makes you unique, what experiences you've had that others haven't had. For more information on journals, see the appendix on Using Journals (page 505).

## Meet the Peers

We'd like to introduce the four student peers who share their advice, their experiences, and their writing with you throughout *Writer's Resources*. Because one of the best ways to learn how to write is to see clear models, Beth, Tony, Alicia, and Dan share their journals, their writing process, their paragraphs, and their essays. Their writing is not as sophisticated as the professional essays generally seen in textbooks, but they provide examples of writing that is attainable. All of you can learn to write as clearly and as



persuasively as they do, especially when you learn to take ownership of your writing and to care about what you say and how clearly you communicate your ideas.

To get to know the peers, read the following essays, which they wrote to introduce themselves to their instructor and classmates. The peers are only the beginnings of your learning community. You should also get to know your classmates; they can help you succeed in the course by helping you generate ideas, by sharing their writing, and by giving you feedback on your writing.

## A Second Chance

This isn't my first time in college. Since my parents expected me to go to college after graduation, I never really gave it much thought. I just went. Unfortunately, it was the first time I ever had any freedom, and school was nowhere near the top of my list of priorities. I made a lot of choices that didn't help me do well in school, but I don't like to view anything as a mistake. They are just character-building exercises to me. Before I bombed out of college, though, I met a nice guy, and we decided to get married. My parents were disappointed about my decision to drop out of college, but they didn't pressure me or disown me.

After I got married, I worked in a video store for a while and then in a camera store. I didn't like either job because I had to work long hours, often evenings and weekends, and there was nothing particularly exciting about the work I was doing. It wasn't hard for me to decide to stop working when I got pregnant. I was lucky that my husband's salary made it possible for me to stay home and raise my son Kyle and my daughter Kristi. Unfortunately, nothing lasts forever, and my marriage was destined not to last either. One day my husband came home and informed me that he was in love with someone else and that he wanted a divorce.

After the divorce, I had to go back to work, but the cost of daycare for two kids just about canceled out my paycheck. Every night I came home exhausted from standing on my feet all day, and I had to fix dinner, take care of the house, and play with the kids. The more exhausted I was, the more depressed I got. I knew something had to change. Even though my ex-husband was helping with child support, there was no way I could support my family on the salary I was making. I was working a dead-end job and was just barely making ends meet.

That's when my parents stepped in and suggested I go back to school. My dad offered to help with tuition, and my mom offered to look after the kids when I needed study time. Their support and encouragement helped me make up my mind to give college a try. I have to confess that I'm scared to death because I've been out of school for so long, and I'm not sure I'm smart enough for college. Now that I've started classes I'm at least relieved to find out I'm not the only older student in the class. Everyone seems friendly, and I know I'm going to give it my best shot. I still sometimes hear that little voice in my head saying, "Forget it, you're not smart enough to be here," but I'm trying to shut that part of me up. I know going to college is important to my future and to my children's future, and I'm determined to work hard and see how far I can go. I wish I had woken up in high school and realized how important an education was, but it's never too late, and at least I realize it now.



## Beth Kamiski

**Age:** 28

**Hometown:** Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Family:** Two children—Kyle, 8, and Kristi, 5

**Hobbies:** Raising two kids

**Work experience:** Salesclerk in camera shop and a video store

**Major:** Nursing



## Alicia Martinez

**Age:** 19

**Hometown:** Just south of Los Angeles, California

**Family:** Mother and two sisters

**Work experience:** Three years of experience as a sales associate at Sophisticated You, a clothing store in the Valley View Mall

**Major:** Business

## Influences

**M**y mother never pushed me to go to college, not because she doesn't love me, but because she doesn't view college as a necessity. No one in my family has ever gone to college, and even though my mom doesn't have a degree that has never stood in her way. She has managed to support her family through her work as a beautician. I'm proud of my mom because even though we were never rich, we always had what we needed, and my sister and I always had the latest hairstyles for every school function. For lots of kids in my high school, it wasn't cool to study. Most of my friends thought more about clothes and cars and sports than about making anything out of themselves after high school. The three things that helped me be different were watching my mom struggle, my ninth-grade English teacher, and my work experience.

Watching my mother struggle to support three kids helped me decide I wanted something better out of life. I love and respect my mom deeply for all the work she has done for us, but I don't want to have to work as hard as she has had to. She had us kids when she was young, so she never had a chance to go to college or get a better job. I want to have a family too someday, but I want to wait until I'm out of college before I think about settling down and having kids. Lots of the girls I knew got pregnant in high school, but I knew I wanted something different. I don't want to have to struggle to make ends meet, I don't want to have to stand on my feet all day like my mother does, or have to worry about the car breaking down and not being able to fix it. I want a job that will give me a good salary and give me respect for what I do. I also want to do something that will challenge me to do my best and will allow me to use my special talents.

Another big influence on my decision to go to college was Susan Singleton, my ninth- and tenth-grade English teacher. In my first year in high school when I felt lost, Mrs. Singleton took an interest in me and encouraged me to get involved in school activities as a way to meet people and develop my interests. I joined the Environmental Club and a student service organization. Not only did joining those clubs help me fit in and make friends, but the clubs also got me involved in school and community service projects like recycling aluminum cans, cleaning up parks, and helping needy families during the holidays. The next year Mrs. Singleton encouraged me to join Chain Reaction, a youth leadership organization, which gave me the opportunity to become a volunteer tutor and mentor to younger children. Mrs. Singleton helped me learn that getting involved and helping others is a good way to help myself and others. She taught me to have high expectations of myself and to always do my best. She encouraged me to get serious about school and aim for college. Thanks to her encouragement, I stayed involved in school and school activities. I was a representative to student council, I was a cheerleader, and I was a member of the National Honor Society.

When I was a junior in high school, I got a job at Sophisticated You, a women's clothing store in the mall, and my work experience also helped encourage me to come to college. I went to work because I knew my mother couldn't afford

to send me to college, and even if I were lucky enough to get a scholarship, I knew I would need money to live on. Sophisticated You was the perfect place for me because the manager was willing to work around my school hours. Another reason the job was perfect is that I love nice clothes, and the employee discount allowed me to buy some really smart clothes for my mom to pay her back for all she has done for me. As soon as I started working, I discovered I was good at sales. I had a knack for showing customers clothes that would flatter them, and my manager saw my potential and encouraged me. She said I had an eye for fashion and for color, and she used me as a model in two local fashion shows, which was great experience for me. The longer I worked, the more interested I was in the business. My manager recognized my ambition and encouraged me to learn all the parts of the business, from bookkeeping and advertising to customer relations. By the time I was a senior, she was letting me design the front window displays, and as soon as I graduated from high school, she made me assistant manager.

Because I worked twenty hours a week through my junior and senior years, I didn't have time to party or get into trouble. I don't regret missing out on parties because working helped me discover something that I am good at and helped me save the money I needed to start school. After three years working in retail sales, I still like what I do and I know I'm good at it, but I also know I don't want to be a salesperson the rest of my life. Someday I'd like to be a fashion buyer for a large retail organization, or I'd like to own my own store. Either way, I know I need a degree to make my dreams come true.

I'm in college because I know I can be successful if I try hard enough. I want to set a good example for my younger brother and sister, and I want to make something of myself and, I hope, make enough money so that my mother won't have to stand on her feet all day when she's fifty years old, and my sisters won't have to work as hard as I will to put themselves through school. If I live at home and keep working twenty hours a week, I should be able to get my degree in fashion design and marketing in two years. Then I'll decide if I want to go on for a four-year degree in business or marketing.



## Tony Anderson

**Age:** 25

**Hometown:** Atlanta, Georgia

**Family:** Mother, father, and two sisters

**Work experience:** U.S. Marines, bike mechanic, camp counselor

**Major:** Psychology

## My Road to College

In high school I was an average student. I got mostly Bs and Cs. The crowd I hung out with wasn't serious about school, and we mostly just hung out together playing music and having a good time. Because I didn't have any definite plans for my future, I mostly drifted. As a result, when I graduated, I didn't have the grades or the scores to get into college, but I didn't have any other plans either. I knew that if I got a job waiting tables and continued to hang out with my high school friends, I'd end up in trouble. They were serious partyers and none of them wanted to do anything but hang out and have a good time. I knew that I had to get out of town if I was going to make anything of myself. I had always wanted to travel, and the Army offered me the opportunity to do just that.

My tour of duty in the Army fulfilled my desire to see the world and helped me to grow up. My first duty assignment was in Berlin, Germany. During my two-and-a-half-year stay, I had the chance to visit many European countries and to learn firsthand about different cultures and people. My stay in Germany was the most exciting experience in my life. Not only did I have a chance to visit places I'd seen in magazines, but also the Army helped me believe in myself and my own abilities. I attained the rank of sergeant and was progressing quickly in my career. Unfortunately, the advantages were not without a price. My job was demanding both physically and emotionally, and I often had to work sixty-hour weeks.

When my tour of duty was over, I volunteered for a duty assignment with the 82nd Airborne Division. I spent my second tour in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and in Panama. Even though I benefited from and enjoyed my time in the Army, I decided not to reenlist for a third tour. I had gained what I could from the Army, and it was time to move on. I couldn't advance very far without a degree, but the Army helped me gain valuable work experience and confidence in my abilities. I knew I was able to take responsibility, I had a good head on my shoulders, and I could achieve almost anything if I set my mind to it. After six years in the military, I felt I had developed the discipline and work habits to be successful in school, and I decided to give college a try.

Unfortunately, my family didn't have the confidence in me that I did. Maybe they remembered too well some of my high school behaviors such as skipping school. My parents both said I was crazy to give up a successful career in the military to go back to school. They seem convinced that I'll bomb out of school and end up on the streets. All I can do is show them they are wrong. The one person in my family who supports my decision is my sister, who manages a restaurant in Atlanta. She believes in me and supports my decision one hundred percent.

When I first decided to return to school, I thought I wanted to major in one of the medical technology fields. Now I think I want to do something to help kids who have trouble believing in themselves just as I did. Maybe I should be a teacher or a counselor so that I can reach kids before it's too late and they make decisions that can ruin their lives forever. Right now, I don't know which career I'll end up in, but I know that I'm going to make it. Even if no one else in the world believes in me, I'm going to make it.

## Career Change

The idea of going to college never crossed my mind when I was in high school. I was mostly interested in girls and racing cars. When I graduated, I took a job working construction because that was about the best job available in my hometown. Unfortunately, in New York construction can be pretty seasonal work because a lot of it dries up in the winter. I worked construction for five years, and I learned skills that have come in handy plenty of times since. I've helped my in-laws rebuild their front porch and add a deck, and I've added two rooms to our house. However, once I got married and we had a baby, I realized that construction was too physically demanding and too irregular to depend on in the long run.

I took a job in an auto parts store and worked there for five years, but chances for promotion were limited. When I had a chance to move to an electronics store, I did. After only a year with the company, I was promoted to assistant manager, but I was assistant manager for three years, and there wasn't any place to go from there. My manager was only a few years older than I was, and he was not about to take another job or retire anytime soon, especially since I was doing most of the work and he was getting most of the credit. It was clear to me that no matter how good I was at what I did, without a degree I wouldn't be able to advance the way I wanted to.

In my years in retail, I saw computers take over inventory, bookkeeping, and sales. I knew firsthand just how dependent businesses were on the computers running properly. I could see the potential for someone in computer programming or repair because people are going to become more and more dependent on computers in the future. Leaving a secure job, even one with limited potential, was a big risk. But I knew if I was ever going to make a change in my life, it had better be while I was still young enough to do it.

Luckily, my family was supportive of my decision to return to school. We had a family conference and discussed the good and bad points of my going back to school, and they all encouraged me to go for it. My wife has a good job at a bank, so her salary can cover our expenses while I'm in school. We'll have to give up our once-a-year vacation at the beach, and there won't be any new cars in the picture anytime soon, but in the long run, it will be worth it. My kids understand that money will be tight for a while, but they are willing to make sacrifices, and it's good for them to learn to economize and live on a budget.

Now that I've started classes, I realize it won't be as easy as I imagined. At first I was angry that I had to take two college prep classes (writing and reading) because it would take me that much longer to get my degree. However, when I thought about it, I calmed down. I'm not really surprised that I need prep English because I was never good in English in high school, and I'm sure I will need writing skills if I am going to be successful in business. Second, I want to set a good example for my children, and I know I've developed good work habits in my fifteen years of experience in the workforce. I'm going to give college my best shot, and I am hopeful it will make a difference in my life.



## Dan Tribble

**Age:** 35

**Hometown:** Upstate New York

**Family:** Wife and two kids

**Hobbies:** Building model planes, hunting and fishing, listening to baseball

**Work experience:** Mostly retail (electronics)

**Major:** Something to do with computers

## Writing Assignment



Write a two-page paper in which you tell the story of how you came to college. Do not worry about the format. You are simply writing to introduce yourself to your instructor.

Here are some questions to think about and respond to as you write: What were you like in high school? Who were your friends? What were you doing outside of school? What issues or ideas were you thinking about? Was there a particular person (parent, teacher, counselor, minister) who encouraged or discouraged you from attending college? Did your family expect you to go to college? Did you think college was a good idea for you? Why or why not? If you worked or went into the military before attending college, what were your experiences like? How did they help make up your mind to attend college?

# Chapter 2

## The Challenge Ahead

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Most students come to college because they want a better life. Each of us has dreams of the way we would like our lives to be. As you begin college, you are starting one of the greatest adventures and one of the greatest challenges of your life. You are leaving behind one life and starting a new life that will require new skills, attitudes, and behaviors.

Succeeding in this class is the first step toward achieving your goals. This class is important both because it will help you establish the habits that will make you a successful college student and because it will give you the language skills needed to succeed in college and in life.

In our experience, students come into a beginning writing course filled with a mixture of hope and fear. Being a student is one of the most difficult jobs in the world. Every day you are confronted with what you don't know. Learning can be hard on the ego because it means being in the uncomfortable position of not being good at what you are doing. It means being willing to challenge yourself every day and being willing to accept the failure that comes with the challenge of learning new skills. An athlete must miss the ball numerous times before he or she learns to hit it correctly, but the secret to success is the willingness to keep trying. Those who give up after missing the ball a couple of times or a couple of hundred times will never learn to hit it.

Read the following short essay about how Michael Jordan confronted not being good at baseball and how his attitude and determination help make him successful.

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## Discussion Questions

1. What does the author think is the secret to Michael Jordan's success?

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2. What lessons does Michael Jordan teach us about how to live successfully? How might you use his example to succeed in college?

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## Succeeding in College

Improving your language skills will take time and effort, but most of all, it will take developing the right attitude and developing the habits that will help you be successful. We have guided over twenty thousand students through the material you will use this term. Through our experience, we have developed a set of principles that we would like to share with you as you begin your writing course.

### Develop the Right Attitude

Attitude is the single biggest determiner of success. People who believe they can succeed do succeed. People who don't believe in themselves don't succeed because they don't keep trying. You must not be discouraged by the obstacles you encounter. Everyone encounters obstacles, large and small. The difference between those who succeed and those who fail is that those who succeed keep trying despite the obstacles.

### Get Organized

Even if you have the right attitude, you will need to translate your attitude into action. Successful people develop habits that will help them succeed. The habits listed below will help you succeed in this and any class.

#### USE A NOTEBOOK

Buy a loose-leaf notebook and dividers for this class. Set up dividers for handouts, class notes, writing assignments, and any other divisions your instructor suggests. Every time your instructor gives you a handout, date it, hole punch it, and put it in your notebook. Most important assignments, dates, and concepts are covered on handouts, and the best way to be sure you don't lose any important information is to keep all handouts in your notebook.

#### TAKE NOTES

Taking notes in class will help in two ways: it will ensure that you don't miss important information, and it will help you stay focused during class.

For every class you attend, date a piece of notebook paper, and write down the following:

- Everything your instructor writes on the board.
- Any directions for assignments, definitions, procedures, and so on that your instructor covers in class.

## SCHEDULE STUDY TIME

Most first-time college students are not used to having to do significant amounts of schoolwork outside of class, and few students have the luxury of going home to uninterrupted study time. In fact, most students must balance the demands of school, work, family, and social life. It takes real effort to schedule study time and then to follow that schedule, but it is absolutely essential to your success in college.

You should plan to study from thirty minutes to an hour outside of class for every hour you spend in class. Scheduling regular study time will mean making sacrifices. You may need to cut down on the number of hours you work or the number of hours you watch TV or the number of hours you spend with friends and family, but in the end, the trade-off will be worth it.

## Practice Your Writing Skills

Another key factor in learning to write well is practice. Like anything else—like learning to play basketball, for example—the more you practice, the better you get. Developing the skill of writing is like developing any skill. It takes a combination of isolated drills to develop certain muscles and performance practice to hone the skill of writing. You can't learn to write simply by doing drills on individual skills, any more than you can learn to play basketball by practicing shooting free throws. But that practice at the free throw line can certainly help your performance when you are under pressure. And given the number of states that are requiring exit testing from writing classes, performing under pressure is the name of the game. The more you work with and manipulate language, just like the more you handle a ball, the more adept and coordinated you will become.

## Use Your Resources

Successful students are active students. They use the resources that are available to help them succeed. Following are the most important resources for your success.

## INSTRUCTOR

Your instructor is your single best resource for success. It's important that you develop a good relationship with your instructor because he or she will coach you through the process of becoming a better writer. You have to listen to your coach if you are going to improve your performance. Coaches give you feedback, not to make you feel bad but to help you improve. If you don't know what you are doing wrong, how can you possibly improve?

Be sure you know your instructor's name, office hours, office phone, and e-mail address. If you have questions about the course or about your progress, don't hesitate to ask your instructor. If you are not available during your instructor's office hours, talk with him or her before or after class or e-mail him or her with questions. Instructors want to answer student questions, but they won't be able to help if you don't ask for help.

It's always a good idea to notify your instructor in advance if you will miss class, and you should always inform an instructor when you will miss an exam. Many instructors will not allow students to make up missed work or exams unless the instructor has been notified in advance.

### CLASSMATES

Your classmates will also be a valuable resource in helping you succeed in this course. First, your peers can be valuable tutors and study partners. Many students set up out-of-class study groups to learn material and review for tests. Your classmates can also be a resource if you miss class. Get the phone number and/or e-mail address of several students in your class who are willing to be a resource for you (and vice versa) if any of you should miss class.

### STUDENT RESOURCES

Get to know your classmates and swap phone numbers and e-mail addresses with a couple of students so that you can get missed assignments.

Name	Phone Number	E-mail Address
<hr/>		
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### WORKING WITH CLASSMATES

Learning to work effectively with others is important both in school and in the workplace. Employers consistently rate the ability to get along with others as one of the most valued characteristics in an employee. This semester you will have the opportunity to work with your classmates in groups and in pairs.

Here are some guidelines for effective cooperation.

1. Treat your classmates as you would like to be treated—with respect. Listen when they speak, and don't interrupt. Try to appreciate their viewpoints or experiences, even if different from your own.
2. If you are working in a group, divide the tasks equally among group members. Each group member will be expected to contribute his or her fair share of the final project.

### LABS

Many schools have resource centers or labs where students can get individual help or tutoring if they are having trouble in a class. Find out the location and hours of the writing center or lab on your campus, and visit the lab to find out what services it offers students.

Writing center location:

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Writing center hours:

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## YOUR TEXTBOOK

*Writer's Resources: From Paragraph to Essay* can help you succeed in your English class, especially if you use it effectively. Write in your book: highlight, underline, and write notes and questions in the margins; but most important, be sure you complete your assignments before you go to class. After each skill rule, you will find a short exercise that enables you to see whether you understand the rule and can apply it. The answers to odd-numbered exercises are located in the back of the book (page 487). Doing the exercises after each skill and checking your answers will help you gauge whether or not you are “getting it,” absorbing the skills you are trying to learn.

## ONLINE PRACTICE

Additional practice tests are available online through ThomsonNOW™, Blackboard, or WebCT. Your instructor will tell you if he or she requires or recommends that you access online practice tests and how to do so.

What lessons does the article earlier in this chapter on Michael Jordan teach us about how to live successfully? How might you use Jordan's example to succeed in college? Which of the resources described in this chapter will be part of your plan for succeeding in this class?

A graphic for a writing assignment. It features a light blue rectangular background with a white box on the right side containing the text "Writing Assignment" in blue. To the left of the text are several horizontal blue lines, suggesting a writing area. The entire graphic is outlined in a thin green border.

Writing  
Assignment

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# Part II

## Writing Paragraphs and Essays

### College Writing

College demands a very particular kind of writing. You will be required to write paragraphs and short essays both in class and out of class. You will be graded on how correct your writing is, as well as on the content of your writing. In this section of the textbook, you will learn to write the paragraphs and short essays that will be required of you in your first years of college.

#### **The Formats for College Writing: The Paragraph and the Essay**

The paragraph and the essay are the formats you will use to write college papers. The paragraph is the building block for all college writing. The essay is comprised of a number of paragraphs. You must understand the structure of the paragraph before tackling the essay. In fact, the structure of the paragraph and essay are similar. Both state a main idea and support the main idea. The paragraph focuses on a main idea that can be developed or explained in five or more sentences, while the essay focuses on a main idea that requires a number of paragraphs to develop. You will sometimes be able to explain an idea in one paragraph, especially on short answer exams. More often, you will be asked to develop your idea in an essay of four or more paragraphs. The length of your writing is determined by your main idea, the amount of support you will use to explain the main idea, and your instructor's assignment as to the length of the paper.

#### **Structure of the Paragraph and the Essay**

- Main idea (topic sentence or thesis)
- Support for the main idea (a number of supporting details in a paragraph or a number of paragraphs in an essay)
- Conclusion (summary of the main points of support for the main idea)

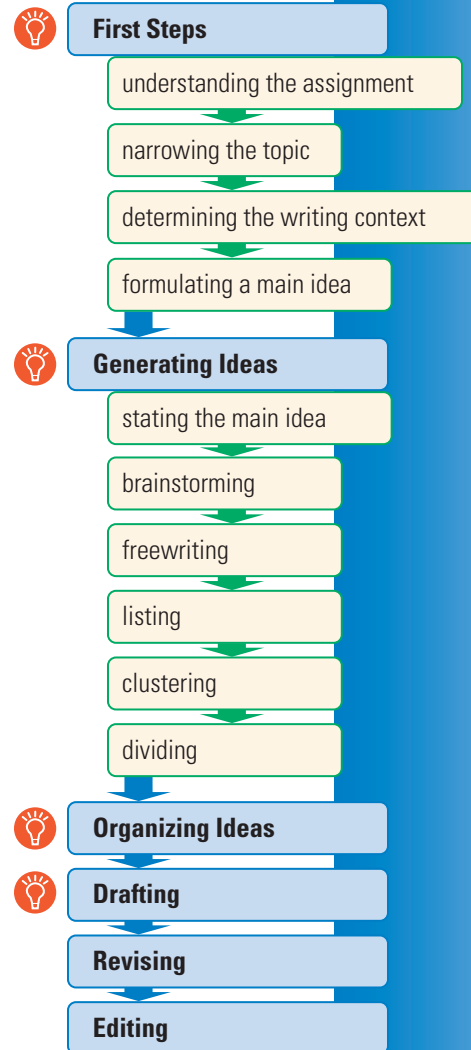


## The Writing Process for Paragraphs and Essays

The first steps in writing a paragraph or an essay are important to understand before you begin writing. Most beginning writers assume that good writers have some magic “folder” in their brains that they can open when they are given a writing assignment and pull out a completed “A” paper without having to agonize or struggle to produce it. Nothing is further from the truth. Over the years, successful writers have developed an effective writing process—how they come up with ideas, organize ideas, and produce a finished product. At first, this process may seem time-consuming and awkward. The truth is that good writers follow these same steps to develop a successful piece of writing. They adapt the steps to fit the assignments and their deadline. They use the process during in-class writings too.

It helps to think of writing as a process like any other—like baking bread or building a house. When you see the finished product—a loaf of bread or a house or an “A” paper—it’s hard to imagine all the steps that went into producing it. Nevertheless, good writing is the product of a process, and you won’t succeed if you skip important steps in the process any more than a recipe would succeed if you left out ingredients or a construction project would succeed without a blueprint. The writing process describes the steps successful writers follow from the time they get an assignment until the time they turn in the final draft. The first steps involve determining what to write about and generating ideas to use in the writing. The next step is organizing the ideas you have generated, followed by writing a draft of the paragraph or essay. Finally, good writers revise their writing to improve the communication and edit their writing to make it correct.

You will learn to use the writing process in the following chapters. “First Steps: Generating Ideas” (Chapter 3) will introduce you to the writing process and show you a number of techniques for generating ideas. “Writing a Paragraph” (Chapter 4) will show you how to use the writing process to write a paragraph. “The Structure of the Paragraph” (Chapter 5) will explain the parts of the paragraph and how to use them to write strong paragraphs. “Writing an Essay” (Chapter 6) will show you how to use the writing process to write an essay. “The Structure of the Essay” (Chapter 7) will explain the parts of the essay and how to use them to write successful essays.



# Chapter 3

## First Steps: Generating Ideas

In this chapter, we describe the first steps in the writing process:

- Understanding the Assignment
- Choosing a Topic
- Narrowing the Topic • Using a Narrowing Tree • Brainstorming
- Determining the Writing Context • Purpose • Audience • Tone
- Formulating a Main Idea
- Generating Supporting Ideas • Brainstorming • Freewriting • Listing • Clustering • Dividing

The biggest mistake most beginning writers make is to start writing on the topic they have been given without doing the mental work necessary to ensure a successful outcome. Nothing is worse than getting halfway through an assignment only to find out that your writing is off topic, too general, or not adequately developed. Don't jump the gun!

Experienced writers know that before they can begin writing they have to examine the topic carefully to make sure they understand what is being asked. They must then narrow the topic; determine the writing context (which includes deciding on purpose, audience, and tone); formulate a main idea; and, finally, generate supporting ideas for developing the topic successfully. We illustrate these first steps of the writing process by following one of the student peers, Beth, as she tackles an assignment. The topic she has been given, “modes of transportation,” is a very general one, and she demonstrates both individual and group brainstorming techniques to narrow her topic. Beth also tries out each of the techniques for generating ideas in order to illustrate how the techniques differ. **We suggest that you follow Beth's example and try each of the techniques with your own topic so that you get a “feel” for each method.**

Remember that you are learning to use a process to construct a piece of writing, perhaps for the first time. Don't let yourself get bogged down with what you don't know or with details. (Later you will learn in detail about the structure of the paragraph and essay in Chapters 5 and 7.) Your

focus in these writing process chapters should be on completing each step and becoming comfortable with the process. There is no better way to learn the writing process than by doing it. Also, remember that you will come back to the writing process with each assignment you complete, and each time you will understand more about the paragraph or essay form and how to develop and refine your writing.

Once you have completed the initial steps of the writing process described in “First Steps,” you will continue the process in “Writing a Paragraph” in Chapter 4 or “Writing an Essay” in Chapter 6, depending on the assignment you have been given. Beth continues to develop her topic as both a paragraph and an essay in those chapters, and you may continue developing your topic, too. Afterward, we advise you to read the chapter on the structure of the paragraph or the structure of the essay (Chapters 5 or 7) to learn more about the structure for the kind of college writing you are doing.

## Understanding the Assignment

It's important that you understand your assignment before you begin writing because each college assignment is likely to have different requirements.

First, make sure you are clear on requirements such as:

- due date
- length
- format of paper
- topic restrictions

## Choosing a Topic

Usually you will be given a writing topic, or a choice of topics, to write about. Instructors choose topics that lead to good papers. It is your job to think carefully about the topic and find an area of the topic that you can write about. Sometimes the writing topic is a word or phrase such as “modes of transportation,” and sometimes the topic is a writing prompt or discussion question such as “Discuss a mode of transportation that you are familiar with.” Understanding the following words, commonly used in assignments, will help you focus your writing:

**Analyze:** Examine one or more of the parts of a topic.

**Compare:** Examine the similarities and differences in two topics, with the emphasis on similarities.

**Contrast:** Examine the differences in two topics.

**Discuss:** Present various sides of, focus on, or explain one topic.

**Explain:** Make clear, give the reasons for, or analyze a topic in a step-by-step fashion.

**Prove:** Provide evidence to persuade the reader that a statement is true.

**Summarize:** Restate the main points of an issue or article in a shortened form.

**Writing Topics**

Modes of transportation

A place of business that you are familiar with

An electronic device such as a computer, cell phone, or PDA

**Writing Prompts or Discussion Questions**

Choose a mode of transportation, and explain its advantages or disadvantages.

Discuss a place of business in your community.

Prove that an electronic device, such as a computer, cell phone, or PDA, is useful.

“ I am going to write about a mode of transportation. In this chapter, I will show you how I narrowed the topic to a tentative main idea. In Chapter 4, I will use the writing process to write a paragraph, and in Chapter 6, I will use the writing process to write a short essay. ”

**Writing topic or prompt:** modes of transportation**Length (paragraph or essay):** a paragraph (shown in Chapter 4) and an essay (shown in Chapter 6)**Due date:** next Friday**Peer Example****Beth**

Using one of the writing topics above or a topic assigned by your instructor, determine the following for your topic:

**Writing topic or prompt:** \_\_\_\_\_**Length (paragraph or essay):** \_\_\_\_\_**Due date:** \_\_\_\_\_**Writing Practice 1****Narrowing the Topic**

Depending on your assignment, your first step may be to narrow the topic. If you are given a general topic such as “modes of transportation,” you will want to narrow the topic to a subject you can develop in a paragraph or short essay. The following brainstorming techniques for narrowing the topic will help you get your mind working. Use scrap paper to record your ideas, and don’t worry about what you write down. This is a process or exploration, so nothing is right or wrong. Just relax, focus on the topic, and explore what you know and discover what you want to write about.

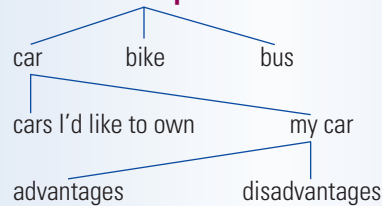
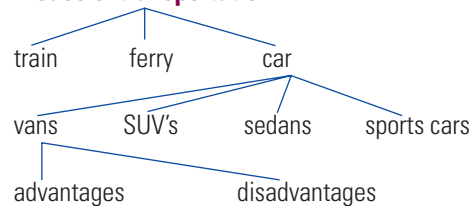
**Using a Narrowing Tree**

Use a **narrowing tree** to divide a general topic or subject into more specific parts until you find a specific topic of interest.

## Peer Example

Beth

“My instructor gave us a general topic—modes of transportation—and asked us to narrow it before we went any further. I started by thinking of different modes of transportation, but with two kids, I never ride a bike or take the bus, so I quickly focused on cars. From there I daydreamed briefly about the kind of car I’d like to own (dream on), and then turned my attention to the car I’m stuck with, an ancient Plymouth station wagon. It wasn’t hard to decide I’d have plenty to say if I focused on the specific topic of the disadvantages of my car.”

**Modes of transportation****Modes of transportation**

Different people will narrow the same topic in different ways. The important thing is to arrive at a specific topic you are interested in or have knowledge about and that you can develop in the assignment you are given.

**Brainstorming**

Another way to narrow a general topic is to work individually or in a group to **brainstorm** a more specific topic. Working alone, you can narrow a topic by thinking of the aspects of the topic or of specific examples and writing down all the ideas that come to mind. Similarly, two or more people can help narrow a topic together. Each individual contributes his or her ideas, which in turn stimulate other ideas. In the world of work, groups often brainstorm creative solutions to problems.

## Peer Example

Beth's Individual Brainstorming Session

Beth

“Modes of transportation, let’s see. What do I know about transportation? I haven’t taken the bus in years because I’ve had a car since I got out of high school. My car is a pain right now because it’s such a junker—it’s always breaking down and I can’t depend on it. I guess I could write about the disadvantages of my mode of transportation, my car.”

**TONY:** So we need to narrow the topic, “modes of transportation.” Any ideas?

**ALICIA:** Well, there’s mass transit—trains and boats and planes.

**TONY:** I used to take MARTA to school, and the service was pretty good, so I suppose I could write about using the metro. How about the rest of you? (Silence)

OK, so we need to narrow to something we can all write about, something that we know more about.

**BETH:** Why not focus on the form of transportation each of us uses, the advantages or disadvantages of however we get around. For me that would be my car, and it won’t be hard for me to decide to write about disadvantages because something is always going wrong with it.

**ALICIA:** I ride the bus. There are advantages because it’s cheap, but there are disadvantages, too, because it takes so long, so I don’t know which I would focus on.

**BETH:** You might make a list of advantages and disadvantages and see which seems stronger.

**TONY:** I ride a bike most of the time, so I wouldn’t have any trouble coming up with reasons and details about why I like it. Or I could try to persuade students to ride their bikes safely by wearing helmets and obeying traffic laws.

**DAN:** There are lots of ways to narrow “bikes.” I just read this article in the newspaper about expanding the city’s bike paths and making the city more bike-friendly to encourage more people to use bikes. I could write something trying to persuade the city to improve bike lanes.

**BETH:** Alicia, if you’re focusing on the bus and you decide you want to write about disadvantages, you could direct it toward the bus company or the city to try to make them improve the service.

**ALICIA:** Good idea! As a student rider, I’ve got lots of suggestions for improvements.

**BETH:** Does everyone have a narrowed topic? I’m doing the disadvantages of my car. Dan, what did you decide on?

**DAN:** I’m going to try to convince the city to improve bike paths.

**TONY:** And I’m going to focus on the advantages of bikes for students.

**ALICIA:** I’m going to do something about improving bus service for students.

## Peer Example

### Group Brainstorming Session



## Group

“I’m comfortable writing about my car because I know so much about it and will have an easy time coming up with ideas.”

**Topic:** Modes of transportation

**Narrowed topic:** Disadvantages of my car

## Peer Example

## Beth

## Writing Practice 2

Use either a narrowing tree or group or individual brainstorming to narrow your topic to one that can be developed to fit the length of your assignment.

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrowed topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Determining the Writing Context

Determining the writing context means examining your purpose in writing, your audience, and the tone you wish to use. As the writer, you have lots of options to choose from in how to present your ideas.

Ask yourself questions such as these:

- Do you want to inform your readers or persuade them?
- Is your audience predetermined or can you choose who you want your readers to be?
- Do you want this to be a serious piece or a humorous one?

### Purpose

Your purpose includes why you are writing, what your goals are, and what you hope to accomplish. Understanding your purpose will help you determine what to include and what to leave out of your writing and will help you shape your topic sentence or thesis. The purpose of most college writing is to **inform**, to **persuade**, or to **entertain**.

If your topic is “a place of business” and your purpose is to inform, you might provide factual information on a particular business such as a restaurant and provide its name, location, type of food, hours of operation, and prices.

**Topic:** Place of business

**Purpose:** To inform

#### Ernesto’s Restaurant

Ernesto’s Restaurant, located at 2100 South University Avenue, specializes in Mexican food. Some of the most popular dishes are fajitas, burritos, chimichangas, and chiles rellenos, and the prices for entries range from four to six dollars. Ernesto’s also offers a children’s menu (priced two to three dollars) with items such as chicken bites, hamburgers, and grilled cheese sandwiches. The restaurant is decorated with tropical plants and travel posters of Mexico. The atmosphere is casual, and the clientele is mostly students and families.

If your purpose instead is to persuade, you might wish to convince your audience that the restaurant you have chosen is a good or bad place to go. You might include much of the same information, but you would also include details that slant the information as either positive or negative.

Notice in the following example how the favorable adjectives and adverbs help persuade the reader that this is a good restaurant.

**Topic:** Place of business

**Purpose:** To persuade

#### A Great Mexican Restaurant

Ernesto's Restaurant, located at 2100 South University Avenue, offers superb Mexican cuisine. Ernesto's specializes in authentic south-of-the-border dishes such as sizzling fajitas, ample burritos, succulent chimichangas, and flavorful chiles rellenos. The portions are large and delivered to the table piping hot. All entrées are reasonably priced, between four and six dollars. In addition, the kids' menu, priced between two and three dollars, offers traditional kid favorites such as chicken bites, hamburgers, and grilled cheese sandwiches. The restaurant is tastefully decorated with lush tropical plants and travel posters of exotic Mexican locations; mariachi music completes the atmosphere. Ernesto's casual atmosphere makes it a popular spot with both students and families. Word of mouth has quickly spread about this great dining establishment.

## Audience

Your audience is the reader or readers with whom you are communicating. We tend to be more aware of audience when we speak than when we write because the audience for the spoken word is right in front of us. We make decisions unconsciously about what to say and how to say it, tailoring our statements to the person or group to whom we are speaking. Although we have plenty of experience in choosing words for an audience, we sometimes forget this intuitive knowledge when it comes to writing—which we usually do alone rather than face to face with our audience.

Good writers tailor what they have to say and how they say it to fit what they know about their audience. Keep in mind your audience's interests, concerns, values, educational backgrounds, and attitudes in determining what information to include and how to present it.

“Here's a paragraph on bikes that I am directing toward an **audience of students**. Determining my audience helped me narrow my topic and helped me pick the supporting ideas I would use, for example, cost and convenience.”

#### Free Wheeling

Riding my bike to school is a great alternative to driving a car. First, the purchase price of my brand-new, top-of-the-line touring bike, \$800, was well within my budget compared to the thousands I would have had to spend to purchase even a dilapidated secondhand car. Second, my bike saves me money

## Peer Example



Tony



every day on maintenance costs because I don't have to pay for insurance, repairs, or gas. It's also convenient to ride my bike because I don't have to purchase a parking decal or spend twenty minutes hunting for a parking place; I can park my bike next to my class and not have to fight the homicidal crowds in the parking lot. Next, riding my bike is a great form of exercise since it provides a cardiovascular workout, burns fat, and tones my muscles at once. Lastly, riding my bike is enjoyable because it puts me in touch with the beauty of nature in a way that I never would be if I were shut up inside a car with the windows rolled up. Riding my bike benefits me and benefits the environment, and that makes me feel good.

### Peer Example



Dan

“Here’s my paragraph that began with the same general topic of bikes, but the selection of **the city as my audience** helped me narrow my focus and build an argument that would appeal to the interests and concerns of city officials, for example, improving safety, saving money, and attracting new businesses.”

#### The Advantages of Bike Paths

The city should strive to improve its bike paths. By constructing more bike paths, the city could reduce the number of bike-related injuries and fatalities, thereby improving the health and safety of its citizens. Improved bike paths would encourage more citizens to bike to and from work, and fewer cars on the road would help reduce congestion and reduce the amount of money the city spends on road widening projects and road maintenance. In addition, the construction of bike paths and greenways encourages citizens to get out and appreciate their neighbors and their community, thus improving the overall livability of a city. A city with bike paths is also attractive to new businesses looking for a pleasant environment for their workers. Moreover, bike paths and greenways can help revitalize downtown businesses by encouraging use without increasing the need for parking places. Bike paths are an economical way to improve safety, stimulate business, and keep voters happy.

### Exercise 1

Suppose that you have been given the topic “technological training for employees” and that your purpose is to persuade your audience of its importance. From each list of ten items below, select the five strongest ones that you think would be appropriate for the given audience. **In other words, which five items would be most likely to persuade the given audience that technological training is important?**

#### Audience 1: Business Managers

- |                                       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. more stable society                | 4. increased competitiveness |
| 2. higher potential employee salaries | 5. more stable workforce     |
| 3. reduced cost of prisons            | 6. increased profits         |

- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 7. increased product innovation    | 9. greater chance of being hired    |
| 8. greater employee accountability | 10. reduced cost of social services |

**Audience 2: Educators**

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. more stable society                | 6. increased profits                     |
| 2. higher potential employee salaries | 7. reduced cost of prisons               |
| 3. increased enrollment               | 8. education relevant to workplace       |
| 4. increased competitiveness          | 9. greater chance of student being hired |
| 5. reduced cost of social services    | 10. ease of adjustment to workplace      |

**Audience 3: Government**

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. more stable society             | 6. increased profits                    |
| 2. reduced cost of prisons         | 7. increased enrollment                 |
| 3. lower crime rate                | 8. more stable workforce                |
| 4. reduced cost of social services | 9. more competitive salary negotiations |
| 5. ease of adjustment to workplace | 10. greater efficiency on job           |

**Audience 4: Students**

- |                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. more stable society             | 6. increased profits          |
| 2. higher potential salary         | 7. reduced cost of prisons    |
| 3. increased enrollment            | 8. lower crime rate           |
| 4. greater chance of being hired   | 9. better salary negotiations |
| 5. ease of adjustment to workplace | 10. greater efficiency on job |

## Tone

*Tone* means the writer's attitude toward the subject or audience. We tend to be more aware of tone when we are speaking or listening to other people than when we are writing. Their tone of voice tells us a lot about their meaning. For example, if someone says, "Nice weather," in the middle of a blizzard, we know he or she is being sarcastic. Tone can range from serious to sarcastic or from angry to humorous.

Writers should consider the effect their tone will have on the intended audience. Tones that could be described as dismissive, condescending, demeaning, insensitive, or strident are not likely to be well received by an audience.

### SERIOUS TONE EXAMPLE

The following is a fairly straightforward description of how to carve a jack-o'-lantern. The paragraph makes the process seem pretty easy if you follow the instructions given. Compare the tone of this paragraph to the tone of the next paragraph on the very same subject.

### How to Carve a Jack-o'-Lantern

The process of carving a jack-o'-lantern is a relatively simple one. The first step is selecting and preparing the perfect pumpkin. Choose a deep orange, uniformly shaped fruit that fits the look you have in mind. Then cut a hole in the top of the pumpkin large enough to fit your hand through and remove the seeds. The next step, creating a design for your pumpkin, is the most artistically challenging. I recommend experimenting on a sheet of paper until you are satisfied with your design. Once you have perfected your design, transfer it to the surface of the pumpkin by tracing the outline with a pencil or a knife, making sure that the design is imprinted on the pumpkin. The final step, actually carving the pumpkin, requires a steady hand and lots of patience. Insert the knife along your design line and use a sawing motion to cut away the sections to be removed. When you are finished, place a lighted candle inside the pumpkin, and stand back and admire your masterpiece.

### SARCASTIC TONE EXAMPLE

Does the following paragraph prove that carving a jack-o'-lantern is relatively easy? No. In fact, it proves that the exact opposite is true. It makes carving a jack-o'-lantern sound like an impossible job. The tone is ironic or sarcastic, which means it is proving the exact opposite of what it says it's proving.

#### Easy as Pie

The process of carving a jack-o'-lantern is a relatively simple one. The first step is selecting the perfect pumpkin from the hundreds you will find piled in small mountains outside of most grocery stores. While you're at it, you might want to bring home a couple dozen extras in case your first few prototypes have design flaws. The next step, creating a design for your pumpkin, is the most artistically challenging. Do you want your pumpkin to look like Minnie Mouse or an M. C. Escher print? You should probably experiment on a sheet of paper until you are satisfied with your design—that is, unless you want to have a few hundred ruined pumpkins littering your kitchen. Next comes the simple task of transferring your two-dimensional design to the irregular, curved surface of the pumpkin. For this step, I strongly recommend a degree in design engineering. Before you begin the final step of actually carving the pumpkin, you may want to take out an insurance policy that covers severed fingers. To execute your design, simply insert the knife into the rock-hard pumpkin and carve away the sections to be removed. What could be easier? When you are finished, have friends and family come admire your work, and assure them there was nothing to it.

Read each paragraph and then select the audience, purpose, and tone from the list that follows.

## Exercise 2

1. Technological training for employees is important. In order to remain competitive, businesses need to ensure that employees are on the cutting edge of technological advancements. Rather than hiring new employees to fill this ever-changing need for expertise in current technology, employers should supply technological training for current employees. Promoting increased technological skills among employees would help increase innovation and productivity, which would in turn help businesses remain competitive in the marketplace. Helping an employee develop new skills not only helps a business remain competitive but also helps the employee feel more secure in his position and in his value to the company. This sense of security will help improve employee morale and loyalty. Countless studies have shown that satisfied workers tend to change jobs less frequently and tend to be more productive. A stable workforce saves the business money; therefore, it is in a business's best interest to invest in technological training for its employees.

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Tone</b>
Employees	Persuade	Serious
Employers	Entertain	Humorous
Government	Inform	Sarcastic

2. Remaining abreast of current technological innovations is important in order to prepare students for the demands of the job world. Technology is revolutionizing the workplace, and job candidates who are familiar with current technology have an advantage when looking for jobs. Familiarizing students with the technology they will be expected to use on the job therefore gives them an advantage. For example, engineering instructors who fail to teach students how to use AutoCAD fail to prepare them for the reality of a work world in which they will be expected to use AutoCAD to design structures. Similarly, graphic designers who do not know how to use the latest graphics software and accountants who do not know how to use spreadsheets and accounting programs are at a disadvantage in the workplace. Technological training is an essential part of the discipline-specific knowledge that instructors have a responsibility to teach their students.

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Tone</b>
College students	Persuade	Serious
College instructors	Entertain	Humorous
Government	Inform	Sarcastic

## Formulating a Main Idea

Once you have determined your purpose, audience, and tone, try to formulate a main idea about your narrowed topic. Think about the direction you might be heading in or what you might write about. Stating a *tentative* main idea will help you generate ideas about your narrowed topic more effectively. This main idea is tentative (meaning temporary) because once you finish generating ideas, you may wish to revise the main idea statement to better express the ideas you have generated.

## Peer Example

Determining the Writing Context/Formulating a Main Idea Example

Beth

“ I am directing my paper to other students like myself, parents who are struggling to make ends meet while they go to school and who don't have the money to buy a new car. My tone will be serious, and I have tried to state my main idea as clearly and simply as I could. ”

**Purpose:** To persuade

**Audience:** Students like myself

**Tone:** Serious

**Tentative main idea:** My car has lots of disadvantages.

## Writing Practice 3

For the topic you narrowed in Writing Practice 2, decide on your purpose, audience, and tone, and then formulate a tentative main idea.

**Purpose:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Audience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tentative main idea:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Generating Supporting Ideas

Generating supporting ideas is an important stage in the writing process because it helps you think of enough ideas or specific details to develop your topic. If you've never consciously tried to write down ideas before you begin writing the assignment itself, this stage in the process may seem a bit artificial at first, but the more you practice generating supporting ideas with one of the techniques we show you, the more natural and useful it will seem. All of the techniques we demonstrate help you to focus on your topic in different ways—and focusing on your topic is the key, because once you start thinking about your topic, you will start getting ideas. Don't worry about whether or not those ideas will be useful in the long run; just jot them down as they pop into your head. At this stage in the writing process, your job is to come up with as many ideas and images as possible. You can evaluate them later.

We suggest that you begin by trying each of the techniques described here. You may find that some work better for you than others, or that some feel more natural than others. As a general rule, if you try one technique and don't come up with enough ideas, try another. Some techniques work with one topic, and other techniques are more successful with a different topic.

## Brainstorming

As with brainstorming to narrow the topic, in brainstorming to generate supporting ideas, you allow as many ideas as possible to pop into your head. One idea leads to another, and you write down anything that comes to mind related to the topic. Brainstorming is like priming a pump; once the ideas start coming, they come faster and faster. Again, brainstorming to generate ideas can be done individually or in a group.

### INDIVIDUAL BRAINSTORMING

One person can generate supporting ideas on a narrowed topic by focusing on the topic and writing down all the ideas that come to mind. Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, or grammar at this point. Most people get ideas about their topic by visualizing the topic or picturing it in their minds. Try to be aware of all the senses—sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Imagine what the person, place, or thing looks like. Imagine you are in the scene. Imagine you are walking through it or experiencing it.

“Here’s an example of my brainstorming ideas on the topic of the disadvantages of my car. I tried to picture my car and the experience of driving it, and I wrote down everything that came to mind. The more I focused on my car, the more ideas I came up with.”

**Topic:** Disadvantages of my unreliable car

ugly  
 unreliable  
 always breaking down  
 stuck in the rain or on the way home  
 safety  
 towing  
 mechanic  
 what’s wrong with it?  
 how much will it cost?  
 embarrassing my kids  
 I wish I could afford a new car.

### Peer Example

Beth

### GROUP BRAINSTORMING

Two or more people can help each other generate ideas by brainstorming together. The group focuses on each individual’s narrowed topic and tentative main idea statement, and everyone contributes as many ideas as possible. One person’s ideas might stimulate other ideas, and before you know it, the group has generated enough ideas to get the writer started. The group then focuses on another writer’s tentative main idea statement next, and so on. We suggest you take notes as the group helps you brainstorm ideas. When it comes to generating ideas, two heads are definitely better than one.

## Peer Example



## Group

**TONY:** My narrowed topic is the advantages of riding a bike for students. Help me generate ideas to support my narrowed topic.

**DAN:** Bikes are cheap. You can buy a good one for a couple hundred bucks.

**TONY:** A really good one would cost more than that, but you can buy a good used bike for around a hundred.

**BETH:** And it can't cost much to maintain a bike. There's no gas or insurance. You could do most repairs yourself.

**DAN:** And you don't have to pay for a parking decal, or get to school a half hour before your class to get a parking place.

**ALICIA:** How about it also helps the environment? You're not using gas or polluting.

**BETH:** Or using all the natural resources it takes to make a car. Anything else?

**TONY:** It's good exercise. Riding helps keep me in shape.

**ALICIA:** There you go; you can save on the cost of membership at a gym.

**BETH:** I imagine it must also be kind of enjoyable, at least on nice days. You're out in nature and you can see trees and flowers and things better than people can in cars. So what do you have so far, Tony?

**TONY:** I've got that they're inexpensive, good for the environment, good exercise, and enjoyable. I think I can make two supporting ideas out of cost because I can say they're inexpensive to purchase and inexpensive to maintain. Hey, thanks for all your help in brainstorming supporting ideas for my topic.

cost

purchase (\$100–\$400)

maintenance (no gas, no insurance, no expensive repairs)

convenience  
no parking decal  
saves timehelps environment  
no pollution  
use less gas

saves metal

exercise  
stay fit

no gym membership

enjoyable  
see trees and flowers

## Freewriting

Freewriting is another way of generating ideas where you focus on the topic and write down everything that comes to mind, no matter how important or unimportant. Write as much and as fast as you can, without worrying about spelling or grammar.

“ As I freewrote about the disadvantages of my car, I wrote everything that came to mind when I thought about my car. I didn’t worry about writing correctly, so there are fragments and grammar errors in my freewriting. The important thing is to get ideas on paper without stopping to think about or be distracted by what is correct or incorrect. ”

I hate my car. Always afraid of breaking down and being late for work and then not being able to pay to get it towed or get it fixed. I hate dealing with mechanics and never knowing whether to trust what they’re telling me about what is wrong with the car and what needs to be fixed. The worst part is the fear of being stranded on the road by myself or with one of the kids, and these days it’s not paranoia, but a realistic fear. The kids would say, you worry for nothing mom. For them the worst part is the way the car looks, rusted fenders and scratched paint, not shiny and new like most of their friends parents cars.

## Peer Example

Beth

## Listing

Another way to generate ideas is listing. Don’t worry about trying to write in sentences; just list words or phrases that come to mind when you focus on your topic. Focus on your topic by visualizing it, and write a list of everything that comes to mind. Try to see the topic in your mind’s eye and be aware of all the senses—sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch.

“ Here is an example of the list I came up with for the topic “the disadvantages of my car.” ”

- breaking down—late for work
- Mr. Rains angry at me and not believing my car broke down
- then having to deal with the car
- towing it
- the cost, and where to take it
- which garage to trust—who to believe when I don’t know if it’s the ignition or a hose
- fear of being stranded
- long dark road home
- afraid of crazy person
- kids embarrassed when I drop them off at school
- they want new car
- I can’t afford the payments

## Peer Example

Beth



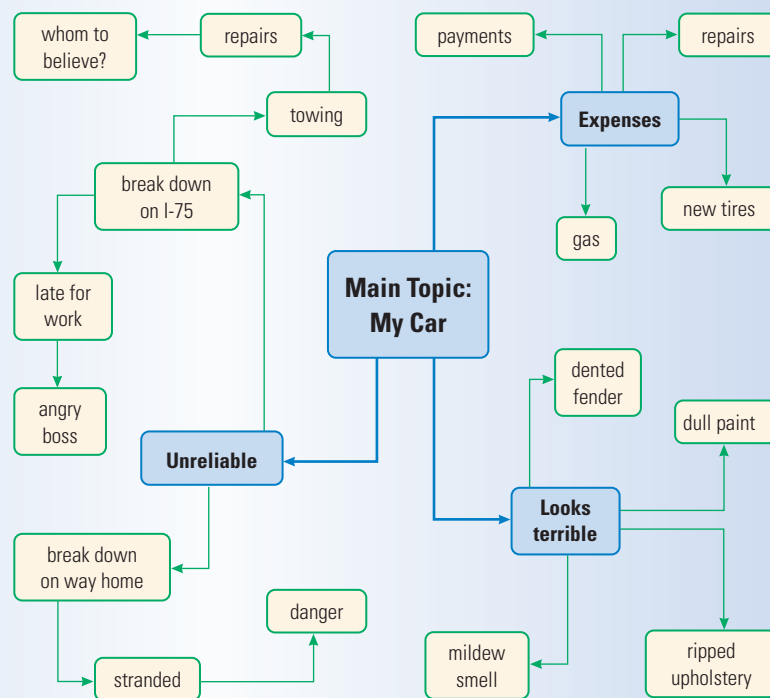
## Clustering

Clustering is a visual representation of ideas. Because you cluster related ideas together, clustering begins the process of grouping or organizing your ideas. Many writers begin by freewriting or listing and then cluster those ideas into related groups that generate further ideas. When you cluster, you write down words or images you associate with your topic. These words may be parts of your topic. Then cluster related ideas together by drawing lines between them.

### Peer Example

Beth

“I seemed to have three major complaints about my car: how unreliable it is, how expensive it is, and how terrible it looks. Once I came up with those three areas, I was able to generate specific details or problems I'd had in each of those areas.”



## Dividing

Dividing generates ideas by breaking the topic into its component parts. Use the journalistic questions of **who**, **what**, **where**, **when**, **why**, and **how** in order to divide a topic.

Ask yourself, “What are the parts of my topic?” One technique is to imagine yourself in your topic—at school, on the job, playing a sport—and move through the event or the experience chronologically. What happens first, second, third? What issues do you have to face at each moment of the task or situation? Dividing a topic is useful in generating supporting ideas for your main idea.



You have now completed the first steps in the writing process. You should continue the writing process for the type of writing you are doing. In Chapter 4, you will follow Beth through the rest of the steps of writing a paragraph. In Chapter 6, you will follow Beth's example in writing an essay. You can learn about the structure of the paragraph in Chapter 5 and the structure of the essay in Chapter 7.

For a template of the paragraph and essay writing process prompts, see Rules and Tools (pages 545 and 549).

# Chapter 4

## Writing a Paragraph

The steps in the writing process described in this chapter are

- Stating the Main Idea
- Organizing Supporting Ideas • Mapping • Outlining
- Drafting
- Revising • Peer Feedback • Instructor Feedback • Self-Evaluation
- Editing

This chapter will lead you through the process of organizing, drafting, revising, and editing a paragraph. It is intended as an overview of the process for writing a paragraph and not as detailed instruction on the parts of the paragraph. Chapter 5, “The Structure of the Paragraph,” analyzes each part of the paragraph and provides practice exercises and multiple student examples. In this chapter we use one example, Beth’s paragraph “Ready for the Junk Heap,” to illustrate the steps of the writing process. **Because the best way to learn the writing process is to practice it, we suggest that for each step of the process, you respond to the prompt in Writing Practice to develop a topic you have chosen or been assigned.**

### Stating the Main Idea

The main idea of a paragraph is expressed in a **topic sentence**. In this sentence you state simply and clearly the main point of your paragraph.

To generate a topic sentence, you must narrow your writing topic, formulate a tentative main idea, and brainstorm supporting ideas for the main idea (all covered in Chapter 3). Once you have a good idea of what information you will use in your paragraph, you should revise your tentative main idea statement into a topic sentence.

As you formulate and refine your main idea statement, keep your assignment, audience, purpose, and tone in mind. Make sure your main idea statement is appropriate for the length and type of assignment you

are completing and for the audience to whom you are directing your writing. Make sure your topic sentence indicates your purpose, whether it is to inform, persuade, or entertain. Also, make sure your topic sentence matches your desired tone, whether it is serious, sarcastic, or humorous.

## Turning a Discussion Question into a Topic Sentence

Many college writing assignments are given in the form of discussion questions. A discussion question can often be turned into a topic sentence. There are many ways to use the important words in the discussion question in a topic sentence.

**Assignment:** Analyze the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

**Topic sentence:** Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast.

OR

There were two primary effects of Hurricane Katrina.

**Assignment:** Explain the advantages or disadvantages of a car you own.

**Topic sentence:** My car has lots of disadvantages for me.

OR

I enjoy the advantages of my car.

### Writing Prompts or Discussion Questions

Choose a mode of transportation, and explain its advantages or disadvantages.

Discuss a place of business in your community.

Prove that an electronic device, such as a computer, cell phone, or PDA, is useful.

### Writing Practice 1

Using the tentative main idea you developed in Chapter 3 or one of the discussion questions above, formulate a topic sentence for your paragraph.

---



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## Generating Ideas to Support the Topic Sentence

You will develop your topic sentence with a number of sentences that support the main idea. The process for writing supporting sentences begins

with generating ideas using the techniques we discussed in Chapter 3 of brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, and dividing. You should generate three to seven supporting ideas.

On scrap paper, use a brainstorming technique to generate ideas to support or develop your topic sentence. (You may use the ideas you generated in Chapter 3.)

## Writing Practice 2

## Organizing Supporting Ideas

Organizing your ideas before you start writing is a crucial step in creating a successful paragraph. First, you must make sure that your topic sentence can be developed with the ideas that you have generated. Sometimes you will need to revise the topic sentence to make sure it covers all the supporting ideas that you want to use. Other times you may need to brainstorm more supporting ideas before you begin writing.

Secondly, you should think carefully about each supporting idea and write down specific details such as concrete information and examples that you may want to use in your paragraph. You may also want to consider how each supporting idea relates to or helps develop the topic sentence. (Information about specific details and their relation to the topic sentence are discussed in Chapter 5.)

Using a **map** or **outline** can help you plan your supporting sentences so that you don't leave out important ideas or wander away from your main idea. Some writers like to use a map because it shows supporting ideas on one line. Others are familiar with the outline form and prefer it. What matters is that you find a way to plan and organize your ideas before you start writing.

As you work on creating a map or outline for your paragraph, you may find that you haven't generated enough ideas to support your topic sentence adequately. If so, use one of the generating techniques described in Chapter 3 to generate additional ideas and details to support your main idea.

### Mapping

A paragraph map is like a road map; it shows you how to get from point A to point B without getting lost. A map can take many forms, but in it you plan and order your supporting ideas and details. A map takes only a few minutes to complete, and yet it can make the difference between a well-organized paragraph and a disorganized one.

A basic paragraph map consists of a topic sentence, a list of supporting ideas in the order they will be presented, and a list of the specific details that will be used to develop each supporting idea. A more detailed map may contain an indication of the reasoning behind each support or a statement of how or why your supports relate to the topic sentence. Making your reasoning explicit ensures that both you and the reader clearly understand how your supporting ideas relate to your topic sentence.

### Paragraph Map

Supporting Ideas	Specific Details	Relation to Topic Sentence
1.		
2.		
3.		

#### Peer Example

##### Beth's Map



Beth

“ I started my map by placing my topic sentence at the top and listing my supporting ideas in the order I plan to use them. ”

**Topic sentence:** My car has lots of disadvantages for me.

#### Supporting Ideas

1. reliability
2. expenses
3. appearance

Next, I included some of the details I came up with when I generated ideas.

Supporting Ideas	Specific Details
1. reliability	breakdowns
2. expenses	tires, brakes headlights, gas
3. appearance	dented door rusted fender

Then I tried to spell out for myself and for the reader how each supporting idea will prove my topic sentence by explaining the disadvantages.

Supporting Ideas Sentence	Specific Details	Relation to Topic
1. reliability	breakdowns	anxiety, safety
2. expenses	tires, brakes headlights, gas	hard on budget
3. appearance	dented door rusted fender	kids embarrassed

### Outlining

An outline is a formal structure that helps you organize topics of support and subtopics. Outline form is broken down into main headings (I, II, III, IV); supporting idea headings (A, B, C); and details (1, 2, 3). Use as many main headings, supporting idea headings, and details as you need to develop your topic. However, each heading that is broken down should have at least two subheadings. For example, if you have an A, you need a B; if you have a 1, you need a

2. Remember that the number of main topics, supporting ideas, and details is up to you and will vary depending on the ideas you have generated.

Many students find it difficult to outline a paragraph because outline form is somewhat rigid. You should adapt the form presented here to fit the ideas you are presenting. The form will help you incorporate both specific details and a relation to the topic sentence if one is appropriate.

### Paragraph Outline

Topic sentence:

- I. Supporting idea #1
  - A. Specifics
  - B. Relation to topic sentence
- II. Supporting idea #2
  - A. Specifics
  - B. Relation to topic sentence
- III. Supporting idea #3
  - A. Specifics
  - B. Relation to topic sentence
- IV. Supporting idea #4
  - A. Specifics
  - B. Relation to topic sentence

**Topic sentence:** My car has a lot of disadvantages for me.

- I. Reliability
  - A. Breakdowns, noises
  - B. Safety
- II. Cost
  - A. Tires, brakes, gas
  - B. Hard on budget
- III. Appearance
  - A. Dented door, rusted fender
  - B. Kids embarrassed

Peer Example  
Beth's Outline

Beth

1. Examine the ideas you have generated and consider revising your tentative topic sentence.
2. Select your strongest supporting ideas and place them in the map or outline template in the order you would like to use them. Do more brainstorming if you do not have enough supporting ideas to develop your topic sentence.
3. Generate specific details for each of your supports.
4. You may wish to state how each supporting idea relates to or proves the topic sentence.

Writing Practice 3



## Map Template

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Ideas

Specific Details

Relation to Topic Sentence

1. _____ _____	_____	_____
2. _____ _____	_____	_____
3. _____ _____	_____	_____
4. _____ _____	_____	_____
5. _____ _____	_____	_____

## Outline Template

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I. Supporting idea #1: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specific details: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation to topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

II. Supporting idea #2: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specifics: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

III. Supporting idea #3: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specifics: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Supporting idea #4: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specifics: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

## Drafting

Once you have organized your ideas, you're ready to write a first draft. To write a first draft, you follow your map or outline, putting your ideas into sentences. In a first draft, you focus on presenting your ideas as clearly as possible, without worrying about mechanical errors such as spelling.

### Using a Map or Outline to Write a Draft

Try to use the words in your map or outline as you write a draft of your paragraph. Be sure to include all the important ideas you have planned to use.

“ I wrote a draft of my paragraph by writing a sentence or two for each supporting idea on my map. ”

**Topic sentence:** My car has lots of disadvantages for me.

Supporting Idea	Specific Details	Relation to Topic Sentence
1. reliability	breakdowns	anxiety, safety

**Draft:** I'm constantly afraid of breaking down on the interstate on the way to school or on the long dark road home at night. Because it's always making strange noises, I feel like I can't rely on it to get me where I'm going safely. These days breaking down could mean more than being late for work and getting yelled at by the boss; it could mean never showing up for work, period.

Supporting Idea	Specific Details	Relation to Topic Sentence
2. expenses	tires, brakes	hard on budget headlights, gas

**Draft:** My car is a constant drain on my budget because I'm always having to repair the lights or brakes, and gas is expensive too.

### Peer Example

Beth

Supporting Idea	Specific Details	Relation to Topic Sentence
3. appearance	dented door rusted fender	kids embarrassed

**Draft:** Worst of all, my car looks so bad with its dented door and rusted fender that my kids are embarrassed to be seen in it.

## Writing Practice 4

Write a draft of your paragraph by creating a sentence or sentences for each supporting idea on your map or outline. Incorporate your specific details and, where appropriate, the relation to the topic sentence.

## Revising

Revising is the process of examining the content and organization of your writing to see how they could be improved. Whenever possible, it's a good idea to let someone else read your first draft and give you feedback on what works and what doesn't work, what is and isn't clear. If you can't get feedback, use the Paragraph Revision Checklist on page 50 to help you revise your own writing. In revising, you focus on developing and clarifying your ideas. You may decide you need more supporting details, or you may decide to delete details that don't relate to your topic sentence.

When you revise, you also work on polishing the presentation of your ideas. You may want to consider using precise language and appropriate vocabulary. The more specific your writing, the better. Therefore, you want to avoid general nouns such as *people* and *things*, and avoid weak verbs such as *is/are*, *has/have*, *does/do*. It's much more effective to use specific, concrete nouns and active verbs. Chapter 23, "Word Choice," provides instruction on improving your word choice.

Polishing your writing may also mean improving your sentence structure. It's a good idea to vary the length and pattern of your sentences. Try to alternate long and short sentences, and try to use a variety of sentence types. For example, use some compound and some complex sentences (see Chapter 31, "Sentence Variety"). Writing, like music, depends on rhythm, and varying the rhythm of your sentences can help you both convey your ideas effectively and keep the reader's attention.

## Peer Feedback

Your peers can give you a good idea of what is and isn't working in your draft. If anything in your draft isn't clear to a reader, you will probably want to go back and re-examine or revise it. Listen carefully to the comments of your peer reviewers, but remember that in the end you are the one who decides what to include or not include in your paper. If questions about the assignment or mechanical errors arise, consult your instructor or use the chapters in Part IV, "Writing Elements and Skills." For example, if

you aren't sure whether your reviewer was right to say you need a comma before an *and* in your paragraph, look it up in Chapter 32, "Commas."

**Note to peer reviewers:** When giving feedback on someone else's paragraph, remember that you are trying to help the writer communicate his or her ideas as clearly and effectively as possible. It won't help the writer to be polite and say only that everything is fine, especially if you have trouble following the meaning or the logic of the paragraph. It's your responsibility to pay careful attention as you read or listen to your classmate's draft and then to be as helpful as possible. The questionnaire below (and in Rules and Tools) can help you let the writer know where you have trouble following the ideas or logic in the paragraph.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the paragraph carefully and answer the following questions as specifically as possible. Remember, your goal is to help your peer improve his or her paper.

1. Is the topic sentence clear? Restate it in your own words.
2. Does the paragraph adequately explain or develop the topic sentence? List the supporting ideas used.
3. Does the order of supporting ideas seem logical?
4. Is there enough information or supporting ideas to develop the topic sentence? What additional information or supporting ideas could the writer have included?
5. What did you like most about the paragraph?
6. What seemed most unclear about the paragraph?
7. Did you notice mechanical errors in the paragraph?

## Peer Review Questionnaire: Paragraph



## Instructor Feedback


Whenever possible, get feedback on the draft of your paragraph from your instructor. You may have an opportunity to submit a draft for review, or you may be able to use your instructor's office hours to get feedback. Instructors generally comment on the strength or weakness of the content and structure of a piece of writing. They may or may not mark errors or list the types of errors they've noticed in your paragraph. Know your instructor's grading symbols (the marks he or she uses to indicate mechanical errors in your writing). If you don't understand your instructor's comments (whether verbal or written), ask him or her to explain. Both seeking feedback on your draft and making sure that you understand it show your instructor that you are serious about improving your writing.

## Self-Evaluation

If peer or instructor feedback isn't available, or if you prefer self-evaluation, you can use the Paragraph Revision Checklist below (and in Rules and

Tools) to get ideas on how to revise your paragraph. First, it's a good idea to give yourself some distance from what you've written by putting your paragraph aside for as long as you can before coming back to revise it. You may be able to put it aside for an hour or two, or overnight, but if you're writing an in-class paper, you may only have a minute or two before you need to start revising. However much time you have, getting some distance from your ideas will help you spot problems more easily. In revising, you should read your paragraph as critically as possible, looking for areas that could be improved.

## Paragraph Revision Checklist



### 1. Form

**Title:** Are the major words (including the first and last words) capitalized?

Does the title reveal the topic and slant of the paragraph?

Does it catch the reader's attention?

Is the first sentence indented?

Does the paragraph have the required number of sentences?

Does the paragraph have the required organizational pattern?

### 2. Topic Sentence

Does the topic sentence fit the assignment?

Is it appropriate for the intended audience and purpose?

Is the main idea clear?

### 3. Supporting Sentences

Are there enough supporting sentences (three to five supporting, depending on the assignment) to explain or prove your topic sentence?

Does each supporting sentence clearly relate to or develop the topic sentence?

Are there enough specific details, facts, and examples to convince the reader?

Are any supporting ideas repeated?

Does anything in the paragraph not relate to the main idea?

Is the relationship between supporting sentences clear?

Are there clear transitions within and between sentences?

Is the order of supporting sentences clear and logical?

Are the sentences varied in length and structure?

Is appropriate vocabulary used?

Is the language clear and precise? (Are there strong verbs, specific nouns, colorful adjectives and adverbs?)

## 4. Conclusion

Does the conclusion tie together the paragraph?

Does it introduce any new ideas or arguments that might confuse the reader?

*Identify make/year*  
**Original Draft**  
 I hate my car because its a pain. Its so unreliable. I'm constantly afraid of breaking down on the interstate on the way to school or on the long dark road home at night. Because it's always making strange noises, I feel like I can't rely on it to get me where I'm going safely. These days breaking down could mean more than being late for work and getting yelled at by the boss; it could mean never showing up for work, period. My car is a constant drain on my budget because I'm always having to repair the lights or brakes, and gas is expensive too. Worst of all, my car looks so bad with its dented door and rusted fender that my kids are embarrassed to be seen in it.

*Review topic sentence guidelines*  
*Review its/it's*

### Peer Example Beth's Revision

Beth

*Add specific details*

“ Here's a revision of my paragraph on the disadvantages of my car. I tried to respond to my instructor's comments by adding more specific detail and further explaining the drawbacks of my car. ”

### Revision (Changes are italicized)

*My car, a 1990 Plymouth sedan, has lots of disadvantages.* I'm constantly afraid of breaking down on the interstate on the way to school or on the long dark road home at night. Because it's always making strange noises, I feel like I can't rely on it to get me where I'm going safely. These days breaking down could mean more than being late for work and getting yelled at by the boss; it could mean never showing up for work *at all*. Not only is my car unreliable, but it's a constant drain on my budget. *In the last two months, I've had to fix the brakes, buy new tires, and replace a headlight. Even when my car isn't eating up money in repairs, it costs me between thirty and fifty dollars a week to cover insurance, maintenance, and gasoline. My dinosaur of a car only gets twelve miles to the gallon and burns a quart of oil a week, so I'm always pumping money into it.* Worst of all, my kids are embarrassed to be seen in our car *because of the dented door, rusted fender, and the trunk tied down with a bungee cord. Maybe it's time to start shopping for a late-model used car.*

Revise your paragraph. If possible, get feedback on your paragraph from peers or your instructor. If your peers or instructor are not available to give feedback, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your paragraph using the paragraph revision checklist.

## Writing Practice 5

## Editing

One of the most important skills in writing is editing. All too often, writers receive low grades on their work because they have neglected to edit carefully. No one intends to turn a paragraph in with errors, but finding errors takes time and attention to detail. Using an editing checklist like the one below can help you catch and correct errors in your English. When you edit, you should read your paragraph five or six times, focusing on one type of error each time—fragments, verb errors, comma errors, spelling errors, and so on—paying particular attention to errors you have had trouble with in the past.

One reason it is so hard to spot errors is that we tend to read what we *intended* to write down rather than what is actually on the page. A technique that you might want to try is reading your paragraph backward, starting at the bottom and moving to the top. Reading backward forces you to focus on the words rather than on the content.

Another technique that may be helpful is called tracking. Tracking means using a pencil to point to each word as you read it. Tracking can help slow your reading down and help you focus on one word at a time.

All of these techniques are intended to help you find errors so that you can correct them before you turn in your paragraph.

### Editing Checklist



As you learn about the following skills, add them to your editing checklist.

1. Check for run-ons and fragments. Is there one complete sentence—and no more than one complete sentence between every two periods? (Identify the subject and the verb, and make sure the word group makes sense.)
2. Check every verb. Do subjects and verbs agree? Is proper verb tense used? Be sure to check the problem phrases such as *there is/there are* and pay attention to singular subjects such as *everyone*.
3. Use the dictionary or computer spell check to catch capitalization errors and misspellings. Remember, however, that the spell check will not catch errors with problem words such as *there/their*.
4. Remember your personal list of errors. Check your writing for any of these errors.
5. Check for apostrophes in contractions and possessives.
6. Check commas.
7. Check pronouns. Do they agree with their antecedents? Is the reference clear?
8. Look for any missing words or letters by reading the writing slowly from the last sentence to the first.
9. Check for parallelism in pairs, series, and comparisons.
10. Check for dangling and misplaced modifiers.
11. Check semicolon and colon use.

## Beth's Editing

Beth edits the first half of her paragraph for the errors on her personal error list. This type of editing would typically come after the basic steps outlined above.

My car, a 1990 Plymouth sedan, has lots of disadvantages. I'm constantly afraid of breaking down on the interstate on the way to school, or on the long dark road home at night. Because it's always making strange noises, I feel like I can't rely on it to get me where I'm going safely. These days breaking down could mean more ~~then~~ <sup>than</sup> being late for work and getting yelled at by the boss; it could mean never showing up for work at all. Not only is my car unreliable, but it's a constant drain on my budget. In the last two months, I've had to fix the brakes, buy new tires, and replace a headlight. Even when my car isn't eating up money in repairs, it costs me between thirty and fifty dollars a week to cover insurance, maintenance, and gasoline. My dinosaur of a car only gets twelve miles to the gallon and burns a quart of oil a week, so I'm always pumping money into it. Worst of all, my kids are embarrassed to be seen in our car, because of the dented door, rusted fender, and the trunk tied down with a bungee cord. Maybe it's time to start shopping for a late-model used car.

### Peer Example Editing

Beth

Use the Editing Checklist above to proofread your paragraph for errors.

### Writing Practice 6

As you write future paragraphs, refer to Rules and Tools (page 540) for a copy of the Paragraph Writing Process Prompts.

## Getting the Paragraph Back

Contrary to popular belief, the process isn't over when you get your graded paper back from your instructor. Part of the process of improving your writing is learning from your mistakes. The last thing most students want to do when they get back a paper is pay attention to the errors that have been marked, but figuring out what you did wrong is the key to improving your performance. Just as in sports, you need to listen to your coach if you hope to play your best. Think of your instructor's marks and comments as a way of helping you improve.

First, you need to make sure you understand the errors your instructor has marked. If you don't understand the marks, ask your instructor to explain them. Next, you need to know how to correct the errors. One way to do this is to look up each one in Part IV, "Writing Elements and Skills." Detailed instruction and practices are available for the common grammar and punctuation errors.

Next, record the errors your instructor has marked in your paragraph on a **personal error list**. Recording your errors will help you keep track of the types of errors you have made so that you can avoid repeating them.



Although it may take several minutes to record errors on your personal error list, learning to correct past errors is the best way to avoid making those same errors again. **A template for your personal error list is available in Rules and Tools at the end of this book (page 548).** Your completed personal error list also serves as a great way to review before a test or before an in-class writing assignment. Simply take your error list out and review it for a few minutes before you begin writing. That way your past errors are fresh in your mind and you are less likely to repeat them.

#### Sample Error List

Error	Correction	Explanation/Rule
1. recieved	received	spelling
2. use to go	used to go	problem word
3. alot	a lot	spelling
4. Always being late for class.	I am always late for class.	fragment

## Chapter 5

# The Structure of the Paragraph

A paragraph is a unit of thought made up of a set of related sentences. All the sentences of the paragraph work together to develop a single idea. A paragraph can stand alone as an independent discussion of one idea, or paragraphs can be put together into a larger unit such as an essay.

While Chapter 4 explains the step-by-step process that writers use to develop a topic, this chapter shows you the parts of the paragraph and how they work together. You will explore many paragraphs written by the four student peers (Beth, Tony, Alicia, and Dan) on topics similar to ones you may be asked to write about. The practices and exercises in this chapter will make you familiar with the parts of the paragraph and the requirements for each part. Learning to write paragraphs will prepare you for writing essays and compositions by teaching you how to organize ideas and present them clearly and logically.

### The Parts of the Paragraph

The paragraph contains three parts. The **topic sentence** states the main idea of the paragraph. Sentences in the body of the paragraph **support** the main idea with specific details. The **conclusion** summarizes the ideas in the paragraph. All the parts of the paragraph work together.

## Peer Example



Dan

“Here is a paragraph I wrote in my writing class. I’ve labeled the different parts to give you an idea of how the paragraph is structured. My friends and I will share a number of our paragraphs in this chapter.”

topic sentence **Read All About It** controlling idea

The daily newspaper provides a valuable source of information. As everyone knows, a town’s daily paper reports the news from around the world. Readers gain knowledge of world affairs by reading about wars starting and stopping, the national economy, and tragedies that befall people everyday like auto accidents and home fires. Readers also acquire basic information that is needed to be an informed citizen such as the workings of Congress and the geography of places all around the world. For instance, when the Pope visited Cuba, Americans learned about the history and geography of the island. Just as important to many readers, the newspaper reports on the world of sports and entertainment. Many subscribers eagerly await the morning paper to find out the latest box scores of favorite teams or the television and movie listings for the day. Also, the newspaper predicts the weather, and the advertising helps readers save money by publishing information on the latest sales. Most important, the newspaper connects us to our community by publishing important announcements like births, deaths, weddings, and the events occurring in town like fairs and government meetings. Reading the newspaper helps us develop our intelligence as citizens by providing us with important information about our world.

Supporting sentences

Conclusion

## The Topic Sentence

The topic sentence is the most important part of the paragraph because it creates the focus for the rest of the sentences. It states the **main** or **controlling idea** that the rest of the paragraph will develop or support.

The daily newspaper provides *a valuable source of information*.

Trout Pond holds *special meaning to my family*.

I’m *lucky to have my roommate*, Bud.

The interior of the new Supra minivan is *designed for the driver’s safety and comfort*.

### Exercise 1

Underline the words that express the controlling idea of each topic sentence.

1. Credit cards can get consumers into trouble.
2. Computers are becoming an important part of the modern home.
3. Raising a child alone is a challenge.
4. My next-door neighbor is one of the kindest people I’ve ever known.
5. There should not be a required attendance policy in college.

## Exercise 2

Underline the words that express the controlling idea of each topic sentence.

1. Rissoto's serves delicious Italian food.
2. My high school coach, Mrs. Vinson, gave me valuable guidance in choosing a college.
3. I got a bargain when I bought my present automobile.
4. German shepherds are easy to train.
5. Casino gambling should not be legalized in our state.

## Statement of Opinion

The topic sentence should express a main idea that can be developed with stated reasons. This statement is usually an **opinion, feeling, attitude, belief, or point of view** about the topic. It should *not* be a statement of fact that needs no development.

**These facts do not need a paragraph to develop them.**

**Fact:** The Air and Space Museum is in Washington, DC.

**Fact:** The Marshalls are my neighbors.

**Fact:** More Americans are obese than ever before.

**These opinions need a paragraph to develop or explain them.**

**Opinion:** Visiting the Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC, was the best part of our trip.

**Opinion:** I really enjoy having the Marshalls as my neighbors.

**Opinion:** The health risks of obesity should not be ignored by overweight Americans.

## Exercise 3

Identify these statements as fact (F) or opinion (O).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. There are more students enrolled in college this year than any year in the past decade.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Woodstoves provide an economical alternative to gas and electric home heating.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The campus police are here to serve the college community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. My grandparents came to the United States from Lebanon.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The plane we took to New York was a turboprop.

## Exercise 4

Identify these statements as fact (F) or opinion (O).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. My family has lived next to the Parkers for more than twenty years.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Parkers are very friendly neighbors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Tigers are the top ranked team in the state this year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The Tigers should win the championship this year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. My car is unsafe to drive.

## Focus

Because the topic sentence determines what the rest of the paragraph will develop, the topic sentence must create an **adequate focus** for the paragraph. The topic sentence should be explained or developed in five to ten sentences. If the main idea is too broad, it cannot be adequately developed in one paragraph; if it is too narrow, an entire paragraph is not needed to develop it.

✗ **Too broad:** The causes of the Civil War are complex.

The focus of this topic sentence is too broad because it will take more than three to ten sentences to support it. It deserves an entire book. The writer should narrow the focus to one element of the Civil War.

✓ **Adequate focus:** The Battle of Bull Run had a number of strange coincidences.

The writer has narrowed the focus of the Civil War to one battle. This topic sentence can be supported with three to four examples of strange coincidences.

---

✗ **Too narrow:** My daughter has a beautiful smile.

The focus of this topic sentence is too narrow because the writer will have trouble finding three to four examples to support this sentence. This statement would work well as a supporting sentence in a paragraph more broadly focused on the daughter's overall beauty.

✓ **Adequate focus:** My daughter is very attractive.

This topic sentence can be developed with three to four reasons.

---

## Exercise 5

Given an assignment to write one paragraph, tell whether the focus of each topic sentence below is either adequate (A), too broad (B), or too narrow (N).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The car I own has been very expensive to maintain this year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Everyone needs an education.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Steroids do more harm than good.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Goats will eat almost anything.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. John Irving is one of my favorite authors.

## Placement

The **placement** of the topic sentence should aid the reader in understanding the ideas being developed. The topic sentence is usually the first sentence of the paragraph so that the reader will know immediately what main idea the paragraph will develop. However, the topic sentence can be placed anywhere in the paragraph. In order to create a different process of understanding for the reader, sometimes writers place the topic sentence in the second or third sentence or at the end of the paragraph.

“ I placed the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph because I wanted the reader to find this main point at the end of the description of the road, just as I find my girlfriend after experiencing the long and winding road. ”

### A Difficult Destination

My girlfriend, Sally Jenkins, lives at the end of a long and winding and narrow dirt road that takes me forever to travel. There are so many potholes and tree roots that I have to creep along at under ten miles per hour so I don't break an axle. It is even worse after a hard rain when the puddles hide the potholes and force me to inch along the shoulder of the dirt road, or else my truck and I are in danger of drowning. When the weather is dry, I have to be careful that my truck's tires don't lose traction in the loose sand and get stuck. The worst time is at night when I'm in danger of getting lost because I have trouble picking out the landmarks that tell me where I am, and there is no street sign for the dirt lane that feeds into her driveway. **Picking up my girlfriend for a date is a real challenge!**

### Peer Example



Tony

“ I decided to give some background with my first two sentences, so my topic sentence is the third sentence of the paragraph. ”

### My Sanctuary

As a child growing up with six brothers and sisters, I never had much time or space to myself, so I promised myself that when I grew up I would have a space I could call my own. Today I'm lucky enough to have that dream come true. **The workshop at the back of our 1890s Victorian house is the place I enjoy spending time by myself.** I relax in my workshop by building model planes that I fly in competitions. I feel comfortable here because this space is the one organized place in my life. I have my tools hanging on the wall so I can find anything I need quickly. Moreover, the room contains the equipment I need for my hobby such as a paddle fan to help clear the air of the fumes from the glue I use and a sink to wash up in when I make a mess. As I work, I can listen to my favorite music, a Yankees game, or an Olde Time Radio show without bothering anyone and without being told to turn it down. I also enjoy being able to light up an occasional cigar without causing a major fight with the woman of the house. This tiny work area gives me a place to relax and be myself.

### Peer Example

Dan

## Exercise 6

Identify the topic sentence that would best express the main idea of the paragraph.

Because seat belt use is required by law in most states, drivers can be ticketed for failing to use restraining devices. Those who use seat belts regularly not only avoid being ticketed for breaking the seat belt law but may avoid other tickets as well because an officer who stops a driver for a traffic infraction such as speeding is more likely to be lenient if he sees that the driver is wearing a seat belt. Not only are those who consistently wear seat belts less likely to be ticketed, but also they are less likely to be injured if an accident should occur. Seat belts prevent passengers from hitting the dashboard or flying through the windshield when a collision occurs; therefore, they prevent serious injury and they save lives. The mandatory seat belt laws in many states have dramatically decreased the number of automobile fatalities in the United States each year. With ever-increasing numbers of cars on the road and with speed limits once again rising, motorists have more reason than ever to buckle up before they leave their driveways.

- \_\_\_ A. Seat belts are required by law to be used.
- \_\_\_ B. Seat belts prevent injuries in accidents.
- \_\_\_ C. Motorists have more reason than ever to buckle up before they leave home.
- \_\_\_ D. Seat belt laws have made the roads safer for motorists.

## Generating a Topic Sentence

In college writing classes, you will generate a topic sentence from the topic you are given by your instructor. The writing topic may be a word or phrase (such as “smoking,” “a good friend,” or “college pressures”), or the topic may be a discussion question or prompt (such as “Explain why you like or dislike your job”). Often, you can use the words in the writing topic to help generate a topic sentence that expresses your opinion or point of view about the topic.

You should determine your purpose and your audience before generating a topic sentence. Sometimes the purpose is stated or implied in the discussion prompt with words like *convince* or *explain*. The audience can be the general reader, meaning someone like you, or it could be stated in the discussion prompt: “Convince your parents to help you buy a new car.” For a detailed discussion of audience, purpose, and tone, see Chapter 3.

**Topic:** a good friend

**Topic sentence:** José Morales is a good friend to me.

**Topic:** college pressures

**Topic sentence:** A freshman feels a lot of pressures when starting college.

**Topic:** Explain to a new employee why you like or dislike your job.

**Topic sentence:** I enjoy my job as a cashier at Handy’s very much.

## Writing Practice 1

Generate a topic sentence for each topic.

1. Choose a sport you enjoy or don't enjoy watching or playing and explain why.

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2. Choose a course you are taking and explain why you like or dislike it.

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3. Whom do you admire most and why?

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## Supporting Sentences

The body of the paragraph provides support for the main idea expressed in the topic sentence. **Supporting sentences** develop the main idea or controlling idea in the topic sentence by **proving, illustrating, explaining,** or **defining** the main idea. The number of supporting sentences can vary. Most paragraphs contain a minimum of three.

“Here is a paragraph I wrote about the minivan my parents helped me buy last summer. In order to prove the main idea—that my new van is designed for the driver's safety and comfort—I got into my van and examined all the different features. Of course, I included information about the instrument panel, but I also looked for other features, such as the mirrors, that would help me prove my main idea.”

*topic sentence*

### A Luxury Ride

*controlling or main idea*

The interior of the new Supra minivan is designed for the driver's safety and comfort. When a motorist enters the vehicle, she is offered choices for adjusting the seat's height, distance from the steering wheel, and lower back support, which ensures that every driver is properly positioned to operate the vehicle

## Peer Example



Beth

*Supporting ideas*  
1. Seats



2. instrument panel

3. console

4. computerized voice

5. mirror

straining, stretching, or hunching down. In front of the driver, there is a beautifully displayed instrument panel with a digital display that is lit in bright colors for easy reading. Moreover, the console next to the driver anticipates her needs with its cup holders and organizer tray for tapes or CDs. When the van is moving, a computerized voice warns of unlocked doors or seat belts that are not fastened, which puts a driver at ease when carrying a vanload of kids. The driver can even control the mirror on the passenger door to get a better look at the lanes of traffic, and the mirror on the back gate lets the driver feel confident when backing into a parking space. The Supra's interior makes driving a pleasure.

## Specific Detail

In order to develop, explain, or prove the topic sentence, good writers provide lots of specific details in their supporting sentences. Topic sentences are best supported by concrete information that readers can verify as true. Effective specific details in sentences of support include **examples, facts, statistics,** or other **concrete information.**

## Relation to Topic Sentence

The specific details should relate directly to the main idea. Supporting sentences often explain how the specific detail proves the topic sentence. However, an actual statement explaining how the specific detail relates to the topic sentence is not always necessary in the paragraph, but by reasoning out the relationship, the writer can make the logic clear to the reader.

### Peer Example

Tony

“ In my paragraph, I wanted to give lots of details about Trout Pond, and I also was careful to explain how each detail develops the main idea in the topic sentence. ”

#### Save the Pond

relation to topic sentence

Trout Pond holds special meaning for my family. First, Trout Pond was dug by hand over a century ago by my ancestors as a place to wash clothes, but as the years have passed, it has come to mean much more than a wash place. This twenty-by-seventy-foot oval body of water a quarter mile from the family farm has always served as a quiet retreat for members of my family. Whenever relatives need to think or pray or maybe just cry a little, they just sneak away to the oak-shaded banks of the little pond. In addition, this still body of water is an oasis for wildlife that attracts birds, otter, and deer. It also holds lots of rich memories for my entire family; for example, my father proposed to my mother under the live oak that stretches over the northern rim of the pond, and he was sitting under that same tree when he heard a cry to come quickly because my pregnant mother's water had broken and I was on my way. Trout Pond has also helped my family survive by providing fish and game for our dinner when times were tough. The history of Trout Pond and the history of my family are intertwined, and I hope my children and their children can continue to enjoy it in the future.

specific detail

relation to topic sentence

specifics

Example

## Unity

If sentences don't directly relate to the topic sentence, then the reader can become distracted and confused. In order for the paragraph to achieve **unity**, every sentence in the body of the paragraph should support the topic sentence.

- ✗ I'm lucky to have my roommate, Bud. *I haven't had a roommate in a long time.* I enjoy Bud because he has the same priorities I do. . . .

This sentence does not support the topic sentence. It simply adds extra information that does not contribute to the controlling idea of "lucky to have my roommate."

- ✓ I'm lucky to have my roommate, Bud. *Although I haven't had a roommate in a long time, I enjoy Bud because he has the same priorities I do.*

Sometimes the extra information can be combined with another supporting sentence so as not to interrupt the unity of ideas.

Cross out the sentence that does not support the topic sentence because it does not prove or explain why the topic sentence is true.

## Exercise 7

- Topic sentence:** A child should have a pet.

**Supporting sentences:**

  - Owning a pet teaches a child to accept responsibilities.
  - Having a pet helps a child learn to respect all animals and their rights.
  - Most pets take very little time to care for.
  - Pets are cute and cuddly.
- Topic sentence:** Trees are a valuable resource.

**Supporting sentences:**

  - The roots of trees help to prevent soil erosion.
  - Trees provide oxygen for all animals to breathe.
  - There are many different sizes and shapes of trees and their leaves.
  - Many trees provide fruits and nuts for people and animals to eat.
- Topic sentence:** Being sick can be expensive.

**Supporting sentences:**

  - The cost of pills can reach five dollars apiece.
  - If an employee misses work, he can lose pay.
  - A visit to the doctor may cost as much as \$150.
  - I don't like to spend money unnecessarily.

4. **Topic sentence:** In this country, many people have trouble eating a balanced diet.

**Supporting sentences:**

- A. Many people skip meals to lose weight.
  - B. If you don't eat a balanced diet, you should take extra vitamins and minerals.
  - C. Many people are used to having a burger and fries for their main meal.
  - D. Canned foods do not have all their natural nutrition, and many people eat canned vegetables instead of fresh ones.
5. **Topic sentence:** Living in the northern United States during the winter can be very difficult.

**Supporting sentences:**

- A. The temperature in some northern areas goes down below freezing.
- B. When the streets are covered with snow, traffic moves very slowly, and driving may be dangerous.
- C. It costs much more to heat a house in the north than in the south because it is so much colder in the north.
- D. Harsh snow and ice storms can wipe out electricity for days.

## Building Strong Supporting Sentences Using a Map or an Outline

Good writers build strong sentences by brainstorming ideas and then organizing these ideas on paper before they begin writing their paragraph. They plan their supporting sentences using a map or an outline. They brainstorm ideas to support their main idea, add details to their ideas, and then figure out the reason that this information supports the topic sentence. Once they have this information organized, they can write strong supporting sentences.

### MAP

A basic paragraph **map** consists of a topic sentence, a list of supporting ideas in the order they will be presented, and a list of the specific details that will be used to develop each supporting idea. A more detailed map may contain an indication of the reasoning behind each supporting idea or a statement explaining how or why the statement supports the topic sentence.

**Topic sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Supporting Idea</i>	<i>Specific Details</i>	<i>Relation to Topic Sentence</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

**Example**

**Topic sentence:** Trout Pond holds special meaning to my family.

<b>Supporting Idea</b>	<b>Specific Details</b>	<b>Relation to Topic Sentence</b>
1. created by ancestors	dug by hand	for washing clothes
2. place to get away	to think, pray, cry	a retreat
3. attracts wildlife	birds, otter, deer	oasis for animals as area gets built up
4. family history	dad's proposal & my delivery	rich memories
5. provides food	fish & game	supported us when times were tough

**OUTLINE**

Another way to organize the same information is with an **outline**. As explained in Chapter 4, an outline is a formal structure that helps you organize support topics and subtopics. The outline will help you incorporate both specific details and a relation to the topic sentence if one is appropriate.

**Topic sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

- I. Supporting idea #1
  - A. Specific details
  - B. Relation to topic sentence
- II. Supporting idea #2
  - A. Specific details
  - B. Relation to topic sentence
- III. Supporting idea #3
  - A. Specific details
  - B. Relation to topic sentence
- IV. Supporting idea #4
  - A. Specific details
  - B. Relation to topic sentence
- V. Supporting idea #5
  - A. Specific details
  - B. Relation to topic sentence

**Topic sentence:** Trout Pond holds special meaning to my family.

- I. Created by ancestors
  - A. dug by hand
  - B. for washing clothes
- II. Place to get away
  - A. to think, pray, cry
  - B. a retreat
- III. Attracts wildlife
  - A. birds, otter, deer
  - B. oasis for animals as area gets built up
- IV. Family history
  - A. dad's proposal & my delivery
  - B. rich memories
- V. Provides food
  - A. fish & game
  - B. supported us when times were tough

Generate ideas for supporting the topic sentence using the outline below.

**Writing Practice 2**

**Topic sentence:** This writing course I am taking can be challenging.

I. Supporting idea #1: Tests

A. Specific information: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation to the topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Supporting idea #2: Completing Assignments

A. Specific information: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation to the topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

## III. Supporting idea #3: Meeting Deadlines

A. Specific information: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation to the topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

## Coherence

Once you have made a map or outline of your supporting ideas for your topic sentence, you are ready to put them into a logical order and begin writing sentences. Effective supporting sentences are organized logically in order for the paragraph to achieve **coherence**.

Two tools that help make paragraphs coherent are **transitions** and **repeated key words**. Using transitional words and phrases can help you clarify the relationship between ideas. Similarly, repeating key words or concepts introduced in earlier supporting sentences can help you show the relationship between ideas and thus tie the paragraph together. However, be careful not to overdo the repetition; vary the descriptive phrases in which the key words appear so that you maintain coherence without making your writing boring.

### Peer Example

Tony

“When I wrote my paragraph about Trout Pond, I didn’t like the way I was repeating *Trout Pond* over and over again in each supporting sentence. My instructor pointed out that the repeated references to the pond helped create coherence in the paragraph, but she encouraged me to use different descriptive phrases to keep the repeated references to the pond from becoming dull.

Please take a look again at my paragraph to see how I used repeated key words with different descriptive phrases (in boldface type) for the pond. I also use a number of transitions (in italics) to achieve coherence. ”

#### Save the Pond

Trout Pond holds special meaning for my family. *First*, **Trout Pond** was dug by hand over a century ago by my ancestors as a **place** to **wash** clothes, but as the years have passed, it has come to mean much more than a **wash place**. **This twenty-by-seventy-foot oval body of water** a quarter mile from the family farm has always served as a quiet retreat for members of my family. Whenever relatives need to think or pray or maybe just cry a little, they just sneak away to the oak-shaded banks of **the little pond**. *In addition*, **this still body of water** is an oasis for wildlife that attracts birds, otter, and deer. It *also* holds lots of rich memories for my entire family; **for example**, my father pro-

posed to my mother under the **live oak** that stretches over the northern rim of **the pond**, and he was sitting under that **same tree** when he heard a cry to come quickly because my pregnant mother's water had burst and I was on my way. Trout Pond has also helped my family survive by providing fish and game for our dinner when times were tough. The history of Trout Pond and the history of my family are intertwined, and I hope my children and their children can continue to enjoy it in the future.

## Organization of Supporting Sentences

There are many logical ways to organize supporting statements. The most common are

- Time relation.
- Space relation.
- Order of importance.

Supporting sentences organized by time are ordered from **past to present** or **present to past**.

“ My supporting sentences are organized by time, from past to present. I wanted to explain how General Colin Powell is an excellent role model by using the facts of his life from his beginnings until he left the armed services. The first support sentence explains how and where General Powell grew up, and then the rest of the supporting sentences tell of his career from college to retirement and beyond. The words related to time are in boldface type. ”

### Peer Example

Tony

#### The General

Colin Powell is an excellent role model for African-American men. Although General Powell rose to the highest rank in the military as the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces, he had to overcome his modest **beginnings** as the son of poor Jamaican immigrants who lived in a lower-middle-class neighborhood in Brooklyn. Instead of dropping out of school as many of his peers did, he worked hard and went to college, where he discovered ROTC. **In the Army**, his hard work paid off as he **rose steadily** through the ranks. His success as commander-in-chief shows black men that they can be successful and effective as leaders in America. Not only has General Powell been successful in his career, but he has been a good family man and a good human being as well. He has been married to the same woman for **decades**, and they have two children. His respect for his wife was demonstrated when he followed her advice and didn't run for vice president **in 1996**. **From 2000 to 2004**, Colin Powell was Secretary of State. **Now** that General Powell is retired from the government, he has turned his attention to the well-being of young people by becoming a spokesman for literacy campaigns and anti-drug

campaigns. He also lectures around the country encouraging young people to work hard, stay in school, and get ahead. **Looking ahead**, many people believe that he could be elected president of the United States of America, which demonstrates that there are paths of opportunity open to black men who possess the drive and determination to succeed in America in other endeavors besides sports and entertainment.

Supporting sentences can be organized by words that indicate **space relations**.

### Peer Example

Beth

“ I tried to draw the readers a picture of my minivan by organizing my paragraph’s supporting ideas spatially, from entering the van to the driver’s controls. The words that indicate space relations are in boldface type. ”

#### A Luxury Ride

The interior of the new Supra minivan is designed for the driver’s safety and comfort. When a motorist **enters** the vehicle, she is offered choices for adjusting the seat’s height, distance from the steering wheel, and lower back support, which ensures that every driver is properly positioned to operate the vehicle without straining, stretching, or hunching down. **In front of** the driver, there is a beautifully displayed instrument panel with a digital display that is lit in bright colors for easy reading. Moreover, the console **next to** the driver anticipates her needs with its cup holders and organizer tray for tapes or CDs. When the van is moving, a computerized voice warns of unlocked doors or seat belts that are not fastened, which puts a driver at ease when carrying a vanload of kids. The driver can even control the mirror **on** the passenger door to get a better look at the lanes of traffic, and the mirror **on** the back gate lets the driver feel confident when backing into a parking space. The Supra’s interior makes driving a pleasure.

Supporting sentences can be organized by **order of importance**.

### Peer Example

Dan

“ Since building model planes is the most enjoyable time I spend in my workshop, I used it as my first supporting statement in the paragraph I wrote about my favorite place. Smoking a cigar is the least important and therefore comes last. ”

#### My Sanctuary

As a child growing up with six brothers and sisters, I never had much time or space to myself, so I promised myself that when I grew up I would have a space I could call my own. Today I’m lucky enough to have that dream come

true. The workshop at the back of our 1890s Victorian house is the place I enjoy spending time by myself. **I relax in my workshop by building model planes that I fly in competitions.** I feel comfortable here because this space is the one organized place in my life. I have my tools hanging on the wall so I can find anything I need quickly. Moreover, the room contains the equipment I need for my hobby such as a paddle fan to help clear the air of the fumes from the glue I use and a sink to wash up in when I make a mess. As I work, I can listen to my favorite music, a Yankees game, or an Olde Time Radio show without bothering anyone and without being told to turn it down. **I also enjoy being able to light up an occasional cigar without causing a major fight with the woman of the house.** This tiny work area gives me a place to relax and be myself.

Often the **strongest supporting sentences come first and last**, with less important supports in between.

“ In this paragraph, I discuss the most important functions of the newspaper in my first and last supporting sentences. ”

#### Read All About It

The daily newspaper provides a valuable source of information. As everyone knows, a town's daily paper reports the **news from around the world.** Readers gain knowledge of world affairs by reading about wars starting and stopping, the national economy, and tragedies that befall people every day like auto accidents and home fires. Readers also acquire basic information that is needed to be an informed citizen such as the workings of Congress and the geography of places all around the world. For instance, when the Pope visited Cuba, Americans learned about the history and geography of the island. Just as important to many readers, the newspaper reports on the world of sports and entertainment. Many subscribers eagerly await the morning paper to find out the latest box scores of favorite teams or the television and movie listings for the day. Also, the newspaper predicts the weather, and the advertising helps readers save money by publishing information on the latest sales. **Most important, the newspaper connects us to our community** by publishing important announcements about births, deaths, weddings, and the events occurring in town like fairs and government meetings. Reading the newspaper helps us develop our intelligence as citizens by providing us with important information about our world.

#### Peer Example

Dan



**Exercise 8**

For each supporting idea, circle the letter of the sentence that most effectively supports the topic sentence.

**Topic sentence:** Raymundo's, a steakhouse on the town square, is a great place to take a family out to dinner.

1. **Supporting idea #1: Food**
  - A. This restaurant serves a marvelous array of fresh hot rolls, juicy roast beef, crispy chicken, and offers a monster salad bar filled with luscious fruits and vegetables.
  - B. While waiting for the food to be served, the aroma of the piping-hot food would cause a person's mouth to water.
  - C. With entrées including everything from New York strip steaks to hamburgers, and a "mega bar" that houses a huge selection of salad items, chicken wings, and numerous pasta dishes, Raymundo's is able to satisfy any family member's appetite, no matter how extreme.
2. **Supporting idea #2: Service**
  - A. The waiters at Raymundo's are very polite and are also willing to get a customer anything he may need to make his meal more enjoyable.
  - B. The fast and friendly service enables parents to feed their children quickly, and this allows the parents to eat their meal without having to fuss with hungry kids.
  - C. Most of the time, Raymundo's has lots of servers on duty who provide special services for all family members.
3. **Supporting idea #3: Atmosphere**
  - A. The atmosphere is lightly scented with hickory smoke and oven-fresh baked breads.
  - B. The wonderful atmosphere makes my family feel right at home.
  - C. The atmosphere at Raymundo's is family-oriented, so parents don't have to worry if the kids start to cry because Raymundo's has its own clown to cheer them up.
4. **Supporting idea #4: Cleanliness**
  - A. Even with hundreds of little mess makers passing through Raymundo's doors each day, the bus-boys do an incredible job of keeping the dining area spotless, and this makes each family feel like they are the first people to have eaten in the restaurant.
  - B. Raymundo's tables are always wiped to a shine, and the china and utensils are immaculate.
  - C. Raymundo's keeps such a clean and well-organized restaurant that it makes customers feel comfortable about eating food there.
5. **Supporting idea #5: Prices**
  - A. The sale prices on meals for a family are so cheap that they save any size family a lot of money.
  - B. The price range at Raymundo's may be a little higher than at fast-food places, but the quantity and quality of food more than make up for the slightly higher price.
  - C. Since the average meal costs a mere \$6.95, a family of four can eat dinner out and not break its budget.

## The Conclusion

The conclusion is the last sentence of the paragraph. It either sums up the paragraph by reminding the reader of the main idea or interprets the significance of the supporting ideas. It should *not* start a new argument.

Look again at Dan's paragraph on page 69 about newspapers.

**Inappropriate conclusion:** Since the newspaper is so valuable, I believe that everyone should be required to subscribe. (starts new argument)

**Appropriate conclusion:** Reading the newspaper helps us develop our intelligence as citizens by providing us with important information about our world. (sums up paragraph)

## The Title

Most writers choose to make a title for their paragraphs when the paragraph stands alone as an independent piece of writing. The title gives the reader a clue as to the topic of the paragraph and the main idea. It is a sentence fragment, or sometimes a question, and is written above the paragraph in the middle of the page. The title is capitalized according to standard rules (see Chapter 22). Remember that the title that accompanies your own writing should not be underlined, italicized, or placed within quotation marks.

### Correct Title Form:

Read All About It  
A Luxury Ride  
Save the Pond

### Incorrect Title Form:

Read all about it  
"A Luxury Ride"  
*Save the Pond*

**W**rite a paragraph for one of the following topics. To view writing process prompts for writing the paragraph, turn to Rules and Tools, page 545. Begin by generating a topic sentence; then map or outline supporting sentences. Once you have all your ideas on paper, write the paragraph and make sure it has five to ten sentences.

1. Explain how an important technological innovation like the computer, the microwave oven, the telephone answering machine, the cell phone, or e-mail has changed the way we live.
2. Write about the benefits of a certain sport or recreational activity.
3. Argue that a product you can buy should be banned.
4. Discuss the best ways to prepare for a test.
5. Choose a well-known person and prove that this person is either a good or a bad role model.

Writing  
Assignment

6. If you could choose one experience in your life to relive, what would it be? Why do you choose it?
7. Where do you like to relax? Explain the attraction a particular place has for you as a place for relaxation.
8. Argue how one of your major roles in life (spouse, student, parent, employee) is difficult.

# Chapter 6

## Writing an Essay

The steps in the writing process described in this chapter are

- **Stating the Main Idea**
- **Outlining the Essay** • Generating More Ideas • Using Outline Form
- **Drafting** • Drafting Body Paragraphs • Drafting the Introduction and Conclusion
- **Revising** • Peer Feedback • Instructor Feedback • Self-Evaluation
- **Editing**

This chapter will lead you through the process of organizing, drafting, revising, and editing an **essay**. It is intended as an overview of the writing process for an essay and not as detailed instruction on the parts of the essay. Chapter 7, “The Structure of the Essay,” analyzes each part of the essay in detail and provides practice exercises and multiple examples. In this chapter we use one example, Beth’s essay “Ready for the Junk Heap,” to illustrate the steps of the writing process. Because the best way to learn the writing process is to practice it, **we suggest that for each step of the process, you respond to the prompt in Writing Practice to develop a topic you have chosen or been assigned.**

### Stating the Main Idea

In a paragraph the main idea is stated in a topic sentence, but in an essay, the main idea statement is generally called a **thesis** or **thesis statement**. The thesis is the main point your writing will communicate. Everything in your essay should support your thesis statement.

To generate a thesis statement, you must narrow your writing topic, formulate a tentative main idea, and brainstorm supporting ideas for the main idea (all covered in Chapter 3). Once you have a good idea of what information you will use in your essay, you should revise your tentative main idea statement into a thesis statement.

As you formulate and refine your thesis statement, keep in mind your assignment, audience, purpose, and tone. Make sure that your main idea statement is appropriate for the length and type of assignment you are

completing and for the audience to whom you are directing your writing. Make sure your thesis statement indicates your purpose, whether it is to inform, persuade, or entertain. Also, make sure your thesis statement matches the tone you plan to use in your essay, whether it is serious, sarcastic, or humorous.

You may want to use a **blueprinted thesis**, which is a thesis that includes the main areas of support in the order you will introduce them and thus acts as a blueprint for the essay.

### Peer Example



Beth

“ A blueprinted thesis for my essay would include the main supports I intend to develop. They should be listed in the same order I plan to introduce them in the body of my essay. ”

**Blueprinted Thesis:** My car has lots of disadvantages because it is unreliable, expensive, and unattractive.

## Turning a Discussion Question into a Thesis Statement

Many college writing assignments are given in the form of discussion questions. A discussion question can often be turned into a thesis statement. There are many ways to use the important words in the discussion question in a thesis statement.

**Assignment:** Discuss a place of business in your community.

**Thesis Statement:** Henry’s Department Store is a wonderful place to shop.

**Blueprinted Thesis Statement:** Henry’s Department Store is a wonderful place to shop because of its quality merchandise and helpful customer service.

**Assignment:** Prove that an electronic device, such as a computer, cell phone, or PDA, is useful.

**Thesis Statement:** Computers are very useful to students.

**Blueprinted Thesis Statement:** A personal computer helps students do their schoolwork, communicate with professors and friends, and entertain themselves.

### WRITING PROMPTS

Choose a mode of transportation, and explain its advantages or disadvantages.

Discuss a place of business in your community.

Prove that an electronic device, such as a computer, cell phone, or PDA, is useful.

## Writing Practice 1

Using the tentative main idea you developed in Chapter 3 or one of the discussion questions above, formulate a topic sentence for your paragraph.

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## Generating Ideas to Support the Thesis Statement

You will develop your main idea in the body of the essay with a number of paragraphs that support the thesis statement. The process for writing supporting paragraphs begins with generating ideas using the techniques we discussed in Chapter 3 of brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, and dividing. You should generate ideas for two, three, four, or more supporting paragraphs. Remember that each supporting paragraph must include a number of supporting sentences, so your ideas for the supporting paragraphs should justify a paragraph of development.

## Writing Practice 2

On scrap paper, use a brainstorming technique to generate ideas to support or develop your topic sentence. (You may use the ideas you generated in Chapter 3.)

## Outlining the Essay

Once you have formulated a tentative thesis, you must begin organizing your ideas to illustrate, support, or prove your main idea. If you don't organize your ideas before you start writing, your writing will have a tendency to wander. Because an essay is more complex than a paragraph, we recommend using a formal outline. The outline of your essay is like the framework of a house; without it, the house won't stand, and without a plan or outline, your essay won't hold together. In planning or outlining your ideas, you decide which supporting ideas you will use to illustrate or prove your thesis. You also decide the order of your supporting ideas and what details will develop each supporting idea.

### Using Outline Form

An essay outline contains a thesis statement and an outline of the body or supporting paragraphs. Introductions and conclusions are included on the outline but generally are not specified or explained. (Many students prefer to generate ideas for the introduction and conclusion after they have written a draft of the body paragraphs.)

Outlines can be done in phrases or complete sentences, depending on your instructor's preference. If your instructor requires you to turn in your

outline, you will want to check your outline for spelling errors. Otherwise, do not be overly concerned at this point about mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.); you will check for correctness later, at the editing stage.

### OUTLINE FORM

An outline is a formal structure that helps you organize support topics and subtopics.

Outline form is broken down into main headings (I, II, III, IV, V);

support headings (A, B, C);

and details (1, 2, 3).

Use as many main headings, support headings, and details as you need to develop your topic. However, each heading that is broken down should have at least two subheadings. For example, if you have an A, you need a B; if you have a 1, you need a 2. Remember that the number of main topics, supporting ideas, and details is up to you and will vary depending on the ideas you have generated.

- I. Introduction  
Thesis:
- II. Main topic
  - A. Support topic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
  - B. Support topic
  - C. Support topic
- III. Main topic
  - A. Support topic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
    - 3. Detail
  - B. Support topic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
    - 3. Detail
- IV. Main topic
  - A. Support topic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
    - 3. Detail
  - B. Support topic
    - 1. Detail
    - 2. Detail
    - 3. Detail
  - C. Support topic
- V. Conclusion

### Peer Example Beth's Phrase Outline

**Beth**

- I. Introduction  
Thesis: My car has a lot of disadvantages.
- II. Reliability
  - A. Breaks down
    - 1. On dark road home
    - 2. In rain
  - B. Makes noises
  - C. Safety issue
- III. Expenses
  - A. Repairs
    - 1. Brakes
    - 2. Ignition
    - 3. Air conditioner

- B. Maintenance
  - 1. Oil changes
  - 2. Tires
  - 3. Gas
- IV. Appearance
  - A. Exterior
    - 1. Rust
    - 2. Dents
    - 3. Trunk
  - B. Interior
    - 1. Upholstery ripped
    - 2. Carpet stained
    - 3. Headliner falling down
  - C. Embarrassment
- V. Conclusion

- I. Introduction
 

Thesis: My car has a lot of disadvantages.
- II. The biggest problem with my car is that it's not reliable.
  - A. Because it's always making strange noises, I feel like I can't rely on it to get me where I'm going safely.
  - B. Last week, I broke down in a rainstorm, and as a result, I got to work soaked and late, and got yelled at by my boss.
  - C. I'm constantly afraid of breaking down in places where it would not only be an inconvenience, but downright dangerous—on the interstate or on the long dark road home at night. These days breaking down could mean more than being late for work; it could mean never showing up for work at all.
- III. Not only is my car unreliable, but it is also a constant drain on my budget.
  - A. In the last two months, I've had to fix the brakes and replace the ignition. Now the air conditioner has given out, and I can't afford the \$700 it will cost to repair it.
  - B. Even when my car isn't eating up money in repairs, it costs me between thirty and fifty dollars a week to cover maintenance costs such as insurance, oil changes, and tune-ups.
  - C. My dinosaur of a car only gets twelve miles to a gallon and burns a quart of oil a week, so I'm always pumping money into it.
  - D. Sometimes I wonder how a car this worthless can be so expensive. I might as well be making payments on a car I can rely on.
- IV. Worst of all, my kids are embarrassed to be seen in our car because it looks so terrible.
  - A. Exterior
    - 1. The once shiny paint is now dull and bleached from road salt and there are patches of rust around the wheel wells and fenders.
    - 2. There is a dent in the passenger door that someone left while I was grocery shopping last year, and ever since another student hit my car in the school parking lot, the trunk latch hasn't worked and I've had to tie it down with a bungee cord.

### Peer Example

#### Beth's Sentence Outline

Beth



- B. The interior of my car is no better than the exterior. The upholstery and carpet are stained from years of carrying around two kids and a dog and the headliner is coming loose in several places.
- C. Who can blame my kids for not wanting their friends to ride in such a car?
- V. Conclusion

## Creating an Outline

1. Begin by filling in your thesis.
2. Next, select the main ideas you will use to support your thesis. Remember that you will develop one main idea in each body paragraph of the essay.
3. Generate additional ideas if you don't have enough main topics to support your thesis.
4. Using the Outline Template found below, write a tentative topic sentence for each body paragraph (next to each Roman numeral).
5. Generate ideas to develop each body paragraph.
6. Decide which supporting ideas to use and the order in which to present them. Add them to your outline.
7. Revise your thesis statement to fit the ideas you will develop in the essay. If you intend to use a blueprinted thesis (one that includes the main topics of support), you should list the topics of support in the order you will introduce them in the essay.

## Generating More Ideas

As you work on creating an outline for your essay, you will probably find that you need to generate additional ideas to support your thesis or to support the topic sentences of your body paragraphs. Generate ideas by brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, or dividing (see Chapter 3)—whichever seems most appropriate for the topic you have selected and/or that you feel most comfortable with. You should understand that generating additional ideas is a normal part of several stages of the writing process.

### Writing Practice 3

Create a phrase or sentence outline for the topic you are developing using the steps above.

Essay Outline Template

(**Note:** Use as many main topics, support topics, and specific supports as necessary.)

I. Introduction

Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- II. Main topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 A. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 C. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_
- III. Main topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 A. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 C. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_
- IV. Main topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 A. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_  
 C. Support topic: \_\_\_\_\_
- V. Conclusion \_\_\_\_\_

## Drafting

Many writers find it easiest first to draft the body paragraphs, and then to go back and write an introduction and conclusion that seem appropriate. Others prefer to draft the introduction first. Either way, you will probably find that you need to generate additional ideas for your body and introduction.

### Drafting Supporting Paragraphs in the Body of the Essay

Writing a first draft is easier if you have a well-developed outline. If you've done a phrase outline, all you need to do is to write a sentence or two for each supporting idea on your outline. If you've done a sentence outline, transfer your sentences into paragraphs. Write one body paragraph at a time, incorporating the information from your outline into your paragraph.

“ In writing my first draft, I focused on trying to get as much information from my outline into my sentences as possible. I wanted to get it all out on paper so I could evaluate what I had and what I needed. ”

#### Outline:

- II. The biggest problem with my car is that it is unreliable.  
 A. Strange noises  
 B. Break down in rain  
 C. Fear, safety issue

The biggest problem with my car is that it's unreliable. Because it's always making strange noises, I feel like I can't rely on it to get me where I'm going

Peer Example  
 Draft of Supporting  
 Paragraph

Beth

safely. Last week I broke down in a rainstorm, and I got to work soaking wet and late, and got yelled at by my boss. I'm constantly afraid of breaking down in places where it would not only be an inconvenience, but downright dangerous—on the interstate or on the long dark road home at night. These days breaking down could mean more than being late for work; it could mean never showing up for work at all. At some point I have to start asking myself how much my safety and peace of mind are worth.

## Drafting the Introduction

The introduction to an essay should get the reader interested in the topic, provide background information about the topic, and state the thesis of the essay.

The introduction is the most important part of the essay because it establishes the reader's attitude toward the topic and toward the writer. An interesting introduction will make the reader want to read the rest of the essay. Essays generally don't begin immediately with the thesis. Instead, they start gradually by getting the reader ready for the thesis. Background information, like background music in a movie, gets the reader in the mood to read the essay.

Chapter 7, "The Structure of the Essay," provides specific techniques and examples that can be used to get the reader's attention and provide background information.

### Peer Example Draft of Introduction

Beth

“ Since my paper is personal, I decided to introduce myself and establish how important a car is to me. A car is a necessity to most people nowadays, so readers should be able to identify with me. ”

My car is indispensable to me. I'm a single mother of two children and I live ten miles out of town, also I work twenty hours a week and I'm taking classes at the community college. Without a car, I'd be lost. Lots of the kids I see at school have new cars, but I don't see how they can afford them. I know I can't even though nothing would make me or my kids happier than owning a new car. My car has lots of disadvantages because its unreliable, costs me too much for repairs, and its appearance.

## Drafting the Conclusion

When you have finished the introduction and body, read through your draft before writing the conclusion. Some writers like to generate ideas for the introduction and conclusion together so that the introduction and conclusion serve as bookends that hold the essay together. Whichever way you choose, spend a few minutes thinking through how you want to end your essay before you begin writing.

The purpose of the conclusion is to bring the essay to a close. The length of the conclusion depends on the length and complexity of the essay.

These two techniques are most common for conclusions:

- Refer back to the story, problem, question, or quote that began the introduction.
- Emphasize the important points: remind the reader of the essay's thesis and how its major details are developed.

“ Since my essay is about me, perhaps my conclusion should refer back to me and to what I've concluded as a result of writing the paper, which is that I desperately need a new car. ”

My car is a junker. Even though I hate the thought of spending the money, I guess it's about time to start looking for a later model used car. I'll have to work more hours to make the payments, but it'll be worth it to have a car that I'll feel safe in. I'd also like a car that won't cost an arm and a leg in repairs and that my kids won't be embarrassed to be seen in.

Peer Example  
Draft of Conclusion

Beth

## Writing Practice 4

### Body

Write a draft for each of your supporting paragraphs, incorporating the information from your outline into your sentences. Focus on communicating your main ideas as clearly as possible.

### Introduction

Use a technique such as brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, or dividing to generate ideas for your introduction. How can you get your reader's attention? Can you think of a story or anecdote to dramatize the point of your essay? What background information does the reader need to understand your thesis?

### Conclusion

Generate ideas for your conclusion. Can you refer back to something in your introduction to conclude your paper? Can you emphasize or restate the main points of your essay?

## Revising

Revising is the process of examining the content and organization of your writing to see how they could be improved. Whenever possible, it's a good idea to let someone else read your first draft and give you feedback on what works and what doesn't work, what is and isn't clear. If you can't get feedback, use the Essay Revision Checklist on page 85 to help you revise your own writing. In revising, you focus on developing and clarifying your ideas. You may decide you need more supporting details, or you may decide to delete details that don't relate to your main idea.

When you revise, you also work on polishing the presentation of your ideas. You may want to consider using precise language, active verbs, appropriate vocabulary, and transitions. The more specific your writing, the better. Therefore, you should try to avoid general nouns such as *people* and *things*, and avoid weak verbs such as *is/are*, *has/have*, *does/do*. It's much more effective to use specific concrete nouns and active verbs. Chapter 23, "Word Choice," provides instruction on improving your word choice.

Polishing your writing may also mean improving your sentence structure. It's a good idea to vary the length and pattern of your sentences. Try to alternate long and short sentences, and try to use a variety of sentence types. For example, use some compound and some complex sentences (see Chapter 31, "Sentence Variety"). Writing, like music, depends on rhythm, and varying the rhythm of your sentences can help you both convey your ideas effectively and keep the reader's attention.

### Peer Feedback

Your peers can give you a good idea of what is and isn't working in your draft. If anything in your draft isn't clear to a reader, you will probably want to go back and re-examine or revise it. Listen carefully to the comments of your peer reviewers, but remember that in the end you are the one who decides what to include or not include in your paper. If questions about the assignment or mechanical errors arise, consult your instructor or use the chapters in Part IV, "Writing Elements and Skills." For example, if you aren't sure whether your reviewer was right to say you need a comma before an *and* in your essay, look it up in Chapter 32, "Commas."

**Note to peer reviewers:** When giving feedback on someone else's essay, remember that you are trying to help the writer communicate his or her ideas as clearly and effectively as possible. It won't help the writer to be polite and say only that everything is fine, especially if you have trouble following the meaning or the logic of the paragraph. It's your responsibility to pay careful attention as you read or listen to your classmate's draft and then to be as helpful as possible. The questionnaire below can help you let the writer know where you have trouble following the ideas or logic in the paragraph.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the essay carefully and answer the following questions as specifically as possible. Remember, your goal is to help your peer improve his or her paper. Wherever possible, provide suggestions for improvement.

Peer Review  
Questionnaire:  
Essay



1. Is the introduction well developed? \_\_\_\_\_

Interesting? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Is the thesis clear? \_\_\_\_\_

Restate it in your own words. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. For each body paragraph, indicate whether or not there is a clear topic sentence that supports the thesis. Restate the main idea in your own words.

Topic sentence #1:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic sentence #2:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic sentence #3:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic sentence #4:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Are body paragraphs well developed? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What additional information or supporting ideas could the writer have included? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Does the essay develop in a logical order? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Does the essay adequately develop the thesis? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What did you like most about the essay? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. What seemed most unclear about the essay? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. What mechanical errors did you notice in the essay? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Instructor Feedback

Whenever possible, get feedback on the draft of your essay from your instructor. You may have an opportunity to submit a draft for review, or you may be able to use your instructor's office hours to get feedback. Instructors generally comment on the strength or weakness of the content and structure of a piece of writing. They may or may not mark errors or list the types of errors they've noticed in your paragraph. Know your instructor's grading symbols (the marks he or she uses to indicate mechanical errors in your writing). If you don't understand your instructor's comments (whether verbal or written), ask him or her to explain. Both seeking feedback on your draft and making sure that you understand it show your instructor that you are serious about improving your writing.

## Self-Evaluation

If peer or instructor feedback isn't available, or if you prefer self-evaluation, you can use the Essay Revision Checklist below to get ideas on how to revise your essay. First, it's a good idea to give yourself some distance from what you've written by putting your essay aside for as long as you can before coming back to revise it. You may be able to put it aside for an hour or two, or overnight, but if you're writing an in-class paper, you may only have a minute or two before you need to start revising. However much time you have, getting some distance from your ideas will help you spot problems more easily. In revising, you should read your essay as critically as possible, looking for areas that could be improved.

### 1. Introduction

	Yes	No
Is the background information interesting? Does it engage the reader?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it prepare the reader for the thesis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the introduction provide a logical progression toward the thesis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it focus on, provide background for, or lead into the thesis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the introduction adequately developed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Thesis:

Is the thesis a clear statement of the main idea of the essay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it fit the assignment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2. Body Paragraphs

#### Organization:

If there is a blueprinted thesis, do the body paragraphs develop points in the same order as they are listed in the thesis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Even if the thesis is not a blueprint, do the body paragraphs follow a logical order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Essay Revision Checklist





Yes No

Is the relationship between paragraphs clear?  Are appropriate transitions used between paragraphs?  **Topic Sentences:**

Is each topic sentence clear? Does it make one point that supports the thesis?

Topic Sentence #1  Topic Sentence #2  Topic Sentence #3  **Supporting Sentences:** If you check No, explain where in the essay the problem occurs.Are there enough supporting sentences (three to five supporting sentences, depending on the assignment) to explain or prove the topic sentences?  Does each supporting sentence clearly develop the topic sentence?  Do any supporting sentences wander away from the topic?  Are any supporting ideas repeated?  Is the relationship between supporting sentences clear?  Are there clear transitions between sentences?  Is there enough specific detail in each sentence to convince the reader?  Is the order of supporting sentences clear and logical?  Are the sentences varied in length and structure?  Is the vocabulary appropriate?  Is the language clear and precise? (Are there strong verbs, specific nouns, colorful adjectives and adverbs?)  **3. Conclusion**Does the conclusion summarize or tie together the essay?  Does it relate back to the hook or story used in the introduction?  Does it introduce any new ideas or arguments that would confuse the reader?  **4. Entire Essay**Does the essay make sense?  Does the essay develop in a logical order?  Does the essay adequately develop the thesis?  Does the essay deliver everything promised in the thesis?  Does the essay repeat itself?

### Draft

My car is indispensable to me. I'm a single mother of two children and I live ten miles out of town. I also work twenty hours a week, and I'm taking classes at the community college. Without a car, I'd be lost. Lots of the kids I see at school have new cars, but I don't see how they can afford them. I know I can't even though nothing would make me or my kids happier than owning a new car. My car has lots of disadvantages because its unreliable, costs me too much for repairs, and its appearance.

The biggest problem with my car is that it's unreliable. Because it's always making strange noises, I feel like I can't rely on it to get me where I'm going safely. Last week I broke down in a rainstorm, and I got to work soaking wet and late, and got yelled at by my boss. I'm constantly afraid of breaking down in places where it would not only be an inconvenience, but downright dangerous on the interstate or on the long dark road home at night. These days breaking down could mean more than being late for work; it could mean never showing up for work at all. At some point I have to start asking myself how much my safety and peace of mind are worth.

Next, my car is expensive. In the last two months, I've had to fix the brakes and replace the ignition. Now the air conditioner has given out, and I can't afford the \$700 it will cost to repair it. Even when my car isn't eating up money in repairs, it costs me a lot to cover maintenance. My car only gets twelve miles to a gallon and burns a quart of oil a week, so it's expensive. Sometimes I wonder how a car this worthless can be so expensive.

My car's appearance is pathetic. There are patches of rust around the wheel wells and fenders. There is a dent in the passenger door that someone left while I was grocery shopping last year. Ever since another student hit my car in the school parking lot, the trunk latch hasn't worked, and I've had to tie it down with a bungee cord. Also, the upholstery and carpet are stained from years of carrying around two kids and a dog and the headliner is coming loose in several places. Who can blame my kids for not wanting their friends to ride in such a car?

My car is about ready for the junk pile. Even though I hate the thought of spending the money, I guess it's about time to start looking for a later model used car. I'll have to work more hours to make the payments, but it'll be worth it to have a car that I'll feel safe in. I'd also like a car that won't cost an arm and a leg in repairs and that my kids won't be embarrassed to be seen in.

### Peer Example

#### Beth's Draft

Beth

## Peer Example

Revision

Beth

“ In revising my essay, I eliminated material that didn’t seem to fit, added new material, and improved the parallelism of my thesis. I also tried to add more specific detail and added transitions to relate ideas within and between the paragraphs. Changes are italicized. ”

## Ready for the Junk Heap

*Because of the way most people today live, cars are no longer luxuries but necessities.* I’m a single mother of two active children, and I live ten miles out of town. I also work twenty hours a week and take classes at the community college. *Needless to say, without a car, I’d be lost. Unfortunately, my car is no longer as reliable as it once was, and the older it gets, the more of a cause of anxiety and concern it becomes. It was originally a wedding present from my folks ten years ago, but now that my husband and I are divorced, it’s an unhappy reminder of the past. But that’s just the beginning of the drawbacks to my old clunker of a car.* My car has lots of disadvantages because it is *unreliable, expensive, and unattractive.*

The biggest problem with my car is that it is unreliable. Because it is always making strange noises, I feel like I can’t rely on it to get me where I’m going safely. Last week, I broke down in a rainstorm, and *as a result,* I got to work *soaked* and late, and got yelled at by my boss. I’m constantly afraid of breaking down in places where it would not only be an inconvenience, but *also* downright dangerous—on the interstate or on the long dark road home at night. These days breaking down could mean more than being late for work; it could mean never showing up for work at all. At some point I have to start asking myself how much my safety and peace of mind are worth.

*Not only is my car unreliable, but it is a constant drain on my budget.* In the last two months, I’ve had to fix the brakes and replace the ignition. Now the air conditioner has given out, and I can’t afford the \$700 it will cost to repair it. Even when my car isn’t eating up money in repairs, it costs me between thirty and fifty dollars a week to cover maintenance *costs such as insurance, oil changes, and tune-ups.* My *dinosaur of a car* only gets twelve miles to a gallon and burns a quart of oil a week, *so I’m always pumping money into it.* Sometimes I wonder how a car this worthless can be so expensive. *I might as well be making payments on a car I can rely on.*

*Worst of all, my kids are embarrassed to be seen in our car* because it looks so terrible. *The once-shiny paint is now dull and bleached from road salt* and there are patches of rust around the wheel wells and fenders. There is a dent in the passenger door that someone left while I was grocery shopping last year and ever since another student hit my car in the school parking lot, the trunk latch hasn’t worked and I’ve had to tie it down with a bungee cord. *The interior of my car is no better than the exterior.* The upholstery and carpet are stained from years of carrying around two kids and a dog and the headliner is coming loose in several places. Who can blame my kids for not wanting their friends to ride in such a car?

My car is about ready for the junk pile. Even though I hate the thought of spending the money, I guess it’s about time to start looking for a later model used car. *Even if I have to work more hours to make the payments, it’ll be worth it to have a car that won’t leave me stranded,* that won’t cost an arm and a leg in repairs, and that my kids won’t be embarrassed to be seen in.

## Writing Practice 5

If possible, get feedback on your essay from peers or your instructor. If you cannot get feedback from someone else, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your essay by using the Essay Revision Checklist.

## Editing

Once you are satisfied with the content and form of your writing, edit your essay for mechanical errors. Editing is one of the most important skills in writing. All too often, writers receive low grades on their work because they have neglected to edit carefully. No one intends to turn an essay in with errors, but finding errors takes time and attention to detail.

Using an editing checklist like the one below can help you catch and correct errors in your English because it can help you focus on one type of error at a time. When you edit, you should read your essay five or six times, focusing on one type of error each time—fragments, verb errors, comma errors, spelling errors, and so on—paying particular attention to errors you have had trouble with in the past.

One reason it is so hard to spot errors is that we tend to read what we *intended* to write down rather than what is actually on the page. A technique that you might want to try is reading your paragraph backward, starting at the bottom and moving to the top. Reading backward forces you to focus on the words rather than on the content.

Another technique that may be helpful is called *tracking*. Tracking means using a pencil to point to each word as you read it. Tracking can help slow your reading down and help you focus on one word at a time.

All of these techniques are intended to help you find errors so that you can correct them before you turn in your essay.

As you learn about the following skills, add them to your editing checklist.

1. Check for run-ons and fragments. Is there one complete sentence—and one complete sentence only—between every two periods? (Identify the subject and the verb, and make sure the word group makes sense.)
2. Check every verb. Do subjects and verbs agree? Is proper verb tense used? Be sure to check the problem phrases such as *there is/there are* and pay attention to singular subjects such as *everyone*.
3. Use the dictionary or computer spell check to catch capitalization errors and misspellings. Remember, though, that the spell check will not catch errors with problem words such as *there/their*.
4. Remember your personal list of errors. Check your writing for any of these errors.
5. Check for apostrophes in contractions and possessives.
6. Check commas.
7. Check pronouns. Do they agree with their antecedents? Is the reference clear?

## Editing Checklist



8. Look for any missing words or letters by reading the writing slowly from the last sentence to the first.
9. Check for parallelism in pairs, series, and comparisons.
10. Check for dangling and misplaced modifiers.
11. Check semicolon and colon use.

### Peer Example

Beth Edits One Body Paragraph

Beth

Worst of all, my kids are embarrassed to be seen in our car because it looks so terrible. The once-shiny paint is now dull and bleached from road salt and there are patches of rust around the wheel wells and fenders. There is a dent in the passenger door that someone left while I was grocery shopping last year and ever since another student hit my car in the school parking lot, the trunk latch hasn't worked and I've had to tie it down with a bungee cord. The interior of my car is no better than the exterior. The upholstery and carpet are stained from years of carrying around two kids and a dog and the headliner is coming loose in several places. Who can blame my kids for not wanting their friends to ride in such a car?

### Writing Practice 6

Use the Editing Checklist to edit your essay for errors.

As you write future essays, refer to Rules and Tools (page 549) for a copy of the Essay Writing Process Prompts.

## Getting the Essay Back

Contrary to popular belief, the writing process isn't over when you get your graded paper back from your instructor. Part of the process of improving your writing is learning from your mistakes. The last thing most students want to do when they get back a paper is pay attention to the errors that have been marked, but understanding your mistakes is the key to improving your performance. Just as in sports, you need to listen to your coach if you hope to play your best. Think of your instructor's marks and comments as a way of helping you improve.

First, you need to make sure you understand the errors your instructor has marked. If you don't understand the marks, ask your instructor to explain them. Next, you need to know how to correct the errors. One way to do this is to look up each one in Part IV, "Writing Elements and Skills." Detailed instruction and practices are available for common grammar and punctuation errors.

Next, record the errors your instructor has marked in your essay on a **personal error list** (found in Rules and Tools, page 554). Recording your errors each time you get a paper returned will help you keep track of the types of errors you have made so that you can avoid repeating them.

Although it may take several minutes to record errors on your personal error list, learning to correct past errors is the best way to avoid making those same errors again. **A template for your personal error list is available in Rules and Tools at the end of this book.** Your completed personal error list also serves as a great way to review before a test or before an in-class writing assignment. Simply take your error list out and review it for a few minutes before you begin writing. That way your past errors are fresh in your mind and you are less likely to repeat them.

### Sample Error List

Error	Correction	Explanation/Rule
1. recieved	received	spelling
2. use to go	used to go	spelling
3. alot	a lot	spelling
4. Always being late for class.	I am always late for class.	fragment

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## Chapter 7

# The Structure of the Essay

This chapter will show you how the essay follows the same format as the paragraph. You will learn about the parts of the essay and investigate lots of examples written by student peers and professional writers. These examples will help you use the essay form in your writing.

Most of the writing you do in college will be in the format of an essay. The word “essay” comes from a French word meaning “to attempt or try.” The essay is an attempt at developing a main idea in a number of paragraphs. An essay can be four or five paragraphs long or it can be as long as an entire book. Although there is nothing special about the five-paragraph essay, short essays of from four to seven paragraphs are commonly used in college because they can be written in a class period.

Most beginning college writers dread the idea of having to write an essay. They fear that they won’t have enough to say to fill up four or more paragraphs, and they worry that they won’t know how to organize their writing. As you go through the lessons in this chapter, you will notice a number of differences between the student essays and the professional essays used as examples. The classic five-paragraph essay is a good learning tool, but in order to interest their audience and make their point, professional writers usually use shorter paragraphs and a less formal organization that lacks overt thesis statements and topic sentences. Writers and editors deliberately keep the paragraphs in newspaper and magazine articles short because the column format makes short paragraphs easier to



read. Academic writing, however, in which students practice supporting and developing their ideas, requires longer, more structured paragraphs.

#### Academic Essays

formal structure  
thesis overt  
topic sentences overt  
paragraphs well developed

#### Professional Essays

informal structure  
thesis sometimes implied  
topic sentences sometimes implied  
short paragraphs used to retain attention

## From Paragraph to Essay

The overall design or **form of the essay** is similar to the paragraph. Both the essay and the paragraph develop a main idea with supporting ideas and end the writing with a conclusion. However, the essay uses paragraphs to support the main idea and conclude the writing whereas the paragraph uses sentences. Moreover, the essay presents the main idea or thesis statement at the end of the first paragraph, which is called the **introduction**. The support for the main idea comes in paragraphs in the **body** of the essay. Finally, the essay is summed up in the last paragraph, called the **conclusion**.

Paragraph	Structure	Essay
Topic sentence (one sentence)	←——— MAIN IDEA ———→	Thesis (1–2 sentences at the end of the introduction)
Supporting sentences	←——— BODY ———→	Supporting paragraphs
Conclusion sentence	←——— CONCLUSION ———→	Conclusion paragraph

### Peer Example



Dan

“ I wrote an essay on the newspaper by expanding ideas in my paragraph about the importance of the newspaper. I used the same main idea in my essay that I used in my paragraph, and I chose as body paragraphs the three areas from my paragraph that seem the most important kinds of information that the newspaper provides. I was then able to give much more specific detail about these kinds of information than I was in the one paragraph I wrote about the newspaper. Read my paragraph, and then see how I expanded it into the essay that follows. ”

#### Read All About It

**The daily newspaper provides a valuable source of information.** As everyone knows, a town’s daily paper reports the **news** from around the world. Readers gain knowledge of world affairs by reading about wars starting and stopping, the national economy, and tragedies that befall people everyday like auto accidents and home fires. Readers also acquire **background information** that is needed to be an informed citizen such as the workings of Con-

Topic Sentence  
(Main Idea)

Supporting Ideas:  
News  
Background info

gress and the geography of places all around the world. For instance, when the Pope visited Cuba, Americans learned about the history and geography of the island. Most importantly, the newspaper **connects us to our community** by publishing important announcements like births, deaths, weddings and the events occurring in town like fairs and government meetings. Reading the newspaper helps us develop our intelligence as citizens by providing us with important information about our world.

Supporting Ideas:  
Connection to  
community

Conclusion

### Our Daily Tutor

Around six o'clock in the morning, a loud thump can be heard at many front doors. For millions of Americans, it is one of the most cherished sounds of the day, for it heralds the arrival of the daily newspaper. Some of us enjoy the ritual of reading the paper as we sip our coffee while others take the paper to work and read it along the way. A few even have the patience to wait until they come home from work at the end of the day. Of course, not every American reads the paper every day, but most of us do spend the twenty-five cents to one dollar when some important event occurs. In fact, newspaper readership has been falling steadily for many years. Many people avoid the news because they find it depressing. However, what all Americans should realize is that citizens of a democracy need to be informed in order to make intelligent choices at the ballot box and to participate in the public debates that help shape our country's course. **The daily newspaper provides a valuable source of information.** Not only does it report the news, but it provides valuable background information that helps us understand how our world works, and it connects us to our community and culture.

Introduction

Thesis  
(Main Idea)

Supporting Paragraph #1:  
The News

Reading the daily news makes us better citizens by informing us about what is happening in the world around us. First, the international news alerts us to developments around the world that may have profound consequences. For example, when another country tests a nuclear weapon or a region erupts in violence, the news may not be pleasant, but our understanding is crucial because such events affect all of us and perhaps even the future of the planet. In addition, our awareness of current events can get us involved in causes such as stopping the spread of nuclear weapons or righting the wrongs that create regional hatreds. Second, the national news keeps us in touch with events closer to home. We learn of political developments in Washington that may change the way we live, and we make judgments about our leaders' actions that will influence the way we vote in the next election. Last but not least, the state and local news keeps us in touch with our regional politicians and with issues like economic development that affect our area. All this information goes into our personal data bank and informs our voice in the great chorus of American democracy.

Supporting Paragraph #2:  
Background Information

Almost as important as the news is the background information the newspaper supplies in order to give the news an understandable context. We are shown detailed maps of regions that are experiencing a conflict or natural disaster, and we are given the historical background to news events like the fighting in the Middle East. When the El Niño weather system emerged, newspapers ran detailed accounts of the weather system's causes, effects, and possible future. In addition, the workings of government institutions like Congress and the Supreme Court are regularly explained. New scientific developments like

### Supporting Paragraph #3: Connection to Community

vaccines for AIDS and the cloning of animals are also explained in language all of us can understand. The newspaper gives us not only the information but also the understanding we need to make sense of developments in our world.

Most importantly, the newspaper offers us a vivid connection to our community. By reading the paper, we learn of important civic meetings that offer us the opportunity to get involved on the local level to help improve our neighborhoods. Moreover, our local newspaper helps give our town an identity and connects us to our neighbors. We keep abreast of the activities of local clubs and teams, and we learn of births, marriages, and deaths in our town. We read letters to the editor that tell us what our neighbors think of issues big and small, and we also participate in the pride of ownership when we read of local residents who win awards or gain recognition for outstanding accomplishments. After reading the paper over breakfast, we walk out the door feeling more engaged in our community.

### Conclusion

Our world is becoming more complex each day, and it is often a struggle to make sense of such rapidly changing times. Luckily, we have an ally in the newspaper that is delivered to us every morning. The daily newspaper deserves our time and attention, for it brings us the information we need to better understand our world and to be engaged citizens. Armed with knowledge of current affairs, the background information to make sense of the affairs, and appreciation for our community, we are better equipped to participate as responsible citizens in a democratic nation.

## The Introduction

Because it establishes the reader's attitude toward the topic and toward the writer, the **introduction** is the most important part of the essay. An interesting introduction will make the reader want to read the rest of the essay.

The **introduction** to an essay should

- Get the reader **interested in the topic** (attention-getter).
- Provide **background information** about the topic (factual material).
- State **the thesis** of the essay (main idea).

In the following example, professional writer John E. Obedzinski creates interest by telling about a family he counseled who was not the sort of happy family that he will define in his article. This anecdote raises readers' curiosity about what makes a happy family. (The complete essay is on page 465.) Remember that professional writers often prefer a number of short paragraphs to grab the reader's attention. In an academic essay, the attention-getter is usually located at the beginning of the introductory paragraph.

### From "Why Happy Families Are Different"

By John E. Obedzinski, M.D.

- 1 The couple in my office looked bewildered. Well-educated, they had raised their children according to the most "progressive" thinking. Emphasizing feelings rather than behavior, the parents allowed the kids to express themselves openly and loudly, offered them an equal voice in family decisions and gave

them freedom to pick their clothes, friends and TV shows. They sprang to their children's defense when the kids collided with school authorities, and absolved them of household chores.

- 2 Sitting with the couple were the results of all that dedicated effort—a sullen, arrogant 15-year-old boy and a totally self-absorbed 13-year-old girl. The four of them were the opposite of the strong, loving family the parents believed their attitudes were helping to build.

## The Attention-Getter and Background Information

Most essays don't begin immediately with the thesis. Instead, they start gradually by getting the reader ready for the thesis. Background information, like background music in a movie, gets the reader in the mood to read the essay. The introduction almost always begins with an attention-getter and background information about the topic to prepare for the thesis that will come afterward. Essays can begin with a specific fact in order to develop a general idea, or they can start with a generality and develop particular examples.

Attention-getters and background information can take many forms, some of which are listed below. You can use any of these strategies alone or in combination. Remember that the purpose of the introduction is to prepare the reader to read, understand, and agree with the thesis, so it's important to provide whatever information is necessary to get the reader on the same wavelength as the writer. Imagine you were going to read your essay—what would get you interested?

- **A story or anecdote**

A good story is like a picture, and as the old saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words. A story that illustrates the point you plan to make in the essay will get the reader interested and predisposed in favor of your slant on the topic.

**Peer Example:**

"Flintstone and Kramden," Dan Tribble (page 143)

**Professional Examples:**

"Why Happy Families Are Different," John E. Obedzinski (page 465)

"Not in Our Town," Edwin Dobb (page 413)

"What's Your Emotional I.Q.?" Daniel Goleman (page 433)

- **History, facts, or information about the topic**

Sometimes a topic is so complex that a review of what has happened legally, socially, medically, or politically with the topic must be reported before the reader can appreciate the significance of the thesis your essay will develop. Facts can also help define the significance and the implications of your topic.

**Peer Example:**

"Deadbeat Dads," Alicia Martinez (page 158)

**Professional Example:**

"Friends as Healers," R. Daniel Foster (page 419)

- **An appropriate quotation**

Sometimes a quote from a historical figure or an authority in the field can get the reader's attention.

**Peer Example:**

"How to End a Relationship," Alicia Martinez (page 136)

- **A problem the reader should know about concerning the topic**

Sometimes the reader needs to be alerted to a problem or to the scope of the problem in order to understand your thesis

**Professional Example:**

"A Brother's Murder," Brent Staples (page 482)

- **A question that limits your topic**

The answer to the question is your thesis.

- **A statement that popular ideas about your topic are wrong**

State popular ideas about your topic and show how you intend to disprove them.

**Peer Example:**

"Put Away the Paddle," Tony Anderson (page 182)

- **A reference to something historical, something in the news, a current event, or a literary work**

Establish common ground with the reader by referring to something well known that is related to the topic.

**Professional Example:**

"It's a Flat World, After All," Thomas L. Friedman (page 423)

- **A strong opinion**

Sometimes the writer gets the reader's attention by shocking him or her through a strong statement of opinion.

## Appeal to Audience

Effective background information addresses the audience of the essay. Because background information is directed at the reader, it is important to consider your audience and what will get readers interested in your essay. For example, what would get my mother interested in an essay about dating would be different from the kind of information that would get teenagers interested. Even among teenagers, boys would be interested in different background information than girls.

In this example by a professional writer, Grace Bennet appeals to her audience, which is clearly parents of young children, by telling a story that any parent can identify with. This technique gets readers involved and makes them want to find out why telling white lies to children is not a good idea. (The complete essay is on page 409.)

### From "Why White Lies Hurt"

By Grace Bennet

1 "Where's my doll? We lost Baby!" cried five-year-old Ariel Rosen of Millwood, New York. Ariel, her mom Shari, my daughter Anna, and I were standing

in line at a bagel place. Shari had apparently left Ariel's doll at our local community center, where the girls had just finished a late morning class. Now all hell threatened to break loose.

- 2 Then, as I watched, Shari pulled a cellular phone from her purse, pretended to dial the center, and embarked on a make-believe conversation with the "lady at the desk."
- 3 "You see my daughter's doll on the table? Oh, good. We'll come pick it up in a little while. Thank you. Bye! . . . You see, Ariel, they'll hold Baby for us until later." Ariel smiled broadly. Her whole body seemed to relax. Satisfied with her mom's fib, she was content enough now to sit down to lunch.
- 4 "That sure did the trick!" I commented.
- 5 "I'm the queen of white lies." Shari smiled, but she looked slightly embarrassed. "Anyway, I know exactly where we left the doll. I'm not worried about finding it later."
- 6 "Oh, you don't have to explain," I told her. "I've used white lies with Anna."
- 7 In fact, most parents can empathize with another mother's or father's decision to tell a "little white lie" to avoid an unpleasant scene with their preschooler, particularly in public. "It's important to pick your battles," more than one parent told me. And telling an occasional untruth seems like a small price to pay for family harmony.

## Length and Placement

How much background information to provide depends upon the length of the essay and the strategy the writer uses to get the reader prepared for the thesis. In general, an essay of five paragraphs should include three to six sentences of background *before* the thesis. *All* the background information must come before the thesis is presented to point the reader toward the main idea that the essay will develop.

“ In my essay about the newspaper (page 95), I was nervous about making the background too long because my essay is only five paragraphs. I wanted to begin with an attention-getter and decided to start by setting the scene of the paper arriving and people reading it at different times of the day. Then I explained why this topic should be important to the reader. I gave all the background information before I presented my thesis. ”

### Peer Example

Dan

## Thesis or Thesis Statement

The thesis or thesis statement of the essay presents the main idea that the essay will develop. The thesis creates a focus for the essay and should not be too broad or too narrow for the assignment. A thesis that is too broad is a statement that is too large to be adequately developed in the length essay you have been assigned. A thesis that is too narrow is a statement that is not large enough to be developed into an essay. A well-focused thesis presents a

main idea that can be adequately developed in the number of paragraphs or pages you have been assigned to write.

✗ **Too broad:** People are unhealthy for many reasons.

✓ **Adequate focus:** The diet of many American teenagers is unhealthy.

If you've been assigned to write a short essay, you wouldn't even be able to list all the reasons people are unhealthy. You'd be much better off focusing on a specific group of people and/or a specific reason or reasons why they are unhealthy.

✗ **Too narrow:** American teenagers consume too much salt.

✓ **Adequate focus:** The diet of many American teenagers is unhealthy.

While you might be able to develop a good paragraph about the diet of American teenagers being loaded with salt, unless you are taking a nutrition class that requires in-depth reporting, it's unlikely you'd have enough information to develop an entire essay around this topic.

## Blueprinted Thesis

A blueprinted thesis lists in a series the major points the essay will develop. The points should be listed in the order that they will appear in the body paragraphs. The list may appear in the thesis or in a separate sentence after the thesis. The major points in the series must be **parallel**. In other words, areas listed in the thesis should be expressed in the same grammatical form (see Chapter 38).

Because some instructors prefer a blueprinted thesis and some do not, you should check with your instructor to find out whether a list of main points should be included or not.

### Peer Example

Dan

“ In the introduction to my essay on Raintree, I state in one sentence my thesis and list the main points I use to develop the thesis. In the essay, I develop the points in the same order as I list them. All three points are nouns, and the pronoun “its” is repeated with all three elements to emphasize their symmetry. ”

Raintree is a great place to take the entire family out to dinner because of **its convenience, its menu, and its atmosphere.**

You should watch out for these common errors when writing an introduction.

- Avoid a boring or uninteresting introduction.
- Avoid placing the thesis before background information.
- Avoid a too broad or too narrow thesis.
- Avoid faulty parallelism in a blueprinted thesis.
- Avoid discussing main points in any order other than the order they are listed in a blueprinted thesis.



## Body Paragraphs

Each paragraph in the **body** of the essay develops **one main point** (topic sentence) that **supports the thesis** of the essay. The topic sentence should present an idea that can be developed in one paragraph, and the topic sentence should support the thesis of the essay.

The body paragraphs in an essay follow the traditional paragraph pattern of topic sentence, supporting sentences, and conclusion. Of course, not every paragraph begins with the topic sentence, especially in professional writing, but for most academic writing, it is a good idea to place the topic sentence first in order to make sure that there is no room for confusion as to the main idea of the paragraph.

Each body paragraph should directly support the thesis statement. In other words, each body paragraph is a separate reason why the thesis of the essay is true. A body paragraph usually has a minimum of three supporting sentences that develop the topic sentence. These supporting sentences are often developed with examples.

Most writers organize the ideas for their essay using an **outline**. As explained in Chapter 6, an outline is a formal structure that helps you organize support topics and subtopics. Outline form is broken down into main headings, support headings, and details. Use as many main headings, support headings, and details as you need to develop your topic. Main headings are indicated with Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V). Support headings are indicated with capital letters (A, B, C). Details are indicated with numbers (1, 2, 3). Each heading that is broken down should have at least two subheadings. If you have an A, you need a B; if you have a 1, you need a 2.

“ I wanted to explain in this essay how my new van meets my needs as a parent. I decided to cover three main points: the van’s exterior, the van’s interior, and the van’s performance. Each body paragraph covers one main point. I begin each body paragraph with a topic sentence that supports the essay’s thesis, and I supply at least three supporting details to develop or

### Peer Example



Beth



explain the topic sentence in each body paragraph. Notice that I ended each of my body paragraphs with a conclusion.

I've included my outline to the essay to show how I planned my ideas before writing.



### A Luxury Ride

- I. Introduction
  - A. Background Info
    - 1. Anecdote of son loving new van
    - 2. Story of Debbi, the old car
  - B. Thesis: **I realized how perfectly this new minivan meets my needs as a parent.**

- II. The exterior of my van offers me style, safety, and convenience.

- A. Style
- B. Safety
- C. Convenience

- III. The interior of new minivans are designed for the driver's safety and comfort.

- A. Seats
- B. Instrument panel
- C. Console
- D. Doors
- E. Mirrors

- IV. The van's performance features make it a pleasure to drive.

My son had a big grin on his face as I got ready to drive him to Cub Scouts yesterday. When I asked him what I did to deserve that smile, he pointed gleefully at our new vehicle. We had traded in Miss Debbi, an ancient station wagon that I received as a gift from my parents in the late 80s, for a sleek, teal green minivan. Even though I was grateful to our old car for getting me through those early years as a mother, as my babies became youngsters, Miss Debbi got creakier and rustier and uglier, and my son and daughter were plainly embarrassed to be seen in her. What took Miss Debbi to her grave, though, were the credit card bonus points that my father contributed toward a new vehicle. Dear old dad was the hit of our family when he suggested that we look for something larger and safer than my old clunker. As I gathered up my son and his gear to take him to scouts, **I realized how perfectly this new minivan meets my needs as a parent.**

First, the exterior of the van offers me style, safety, and convenience. Compared to my old clunker, the minivan is the height of **style** with its teal green exterior and sleek aerodynamic design. Surprisingly, the van is not much longer than my old sedan, and with the cab forward design, it has the appearance of a sleek bullet train. The steel frame and advanced bumpers offer **safety** in the event of a crash, and the latest development in impact resistant skin panels means my van won't get dented every time someone's shopping cart bounces against it in a parking lot. In addition, the van isn't much higher than my old sedan, which makes it **easy for me** to stash lawn chairs, cooler, and tent on the roof racks when we go camping. I also like the side door that slides wide open to load kids and dogs. For groceries, the hatch back allows me to stuff bags and cartons in the rear compartment without upsetting the kids camped in the middle seats. Finally, the keyless entry is a fabulous feature for a single woman with her arms full of packages and children.

Not only does the exterior of the new minivan perfectly suit my needs as a parent, but the interior is designed for the driver's safety and comfort. When a motorist enters the vehicle, she is offered choices for adjusting the **seat's** height, distance from the steering wheel, and lower back support, which ensures that every driver is properly positioned to operate the vehicle without straining, stretching, or hunching down. In front of the driver of a minivan, there is a beautifully displayed **instrument panel** with a digital display that is lit in bright colors for easy reading. Moreover, the **console** next to the driver anticipates her needs with its cup holders and organizer tray for tapes or CDs. When the van is moving, a computerized voice warns of unlocked **doors** or unfastened seat belts, which puts a driver at ease when carrying a vanload of kids. The driver can even control the **mirror** on the passenger door to get a better look at the lanes of traffic, and the mirror on the back gate lets the driver feel confident when backing into a parking space.

Finally, the van's performance features make it a pleasure to drive. The engine provides the power of **six cylinders**, which gives me the acceleration

to enter freeway traffic effortlessly. I also enjoy the **cruise control** out on the highway for my long drives from home to school. Last week, I discovered the benefits of the **anti-lock brakes** when I had to avoid a fender bender ahead. My old car's brakes would have locked up, and I would have skidded into that huge truck in my path. Instead, the van's brakes didn't grab, so I kept control and was able to maneuver around the crack-up. Probably the feature of my new van that I appreciate most often is the **fuel economy** because I'm not spending any more on fuel than I was on my old heap. The power and economy of my new minivan are an exceptional combination.

My son just informed me that he volunteered me to drive half his scout troop to its jamboree in our new van, which he has nicknamed Miss Betty, and he gave me a big hug. Outside sits the best gift I've ever received and one of the most important tools for a parent like me. My sleek new minivan is stylish and convenient outside, safe and comfortable inside, and powerful and economical on the road. Miss Betty is the best vehicle I could ever drive as a parent.

- A. Six cylinders for power
- B. Cruise control
- C. Anti-lock brakes
- D. Fuel economy

## The Conclusions in the Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs may end with a strong supporting detail or may end with a conclusion that sums up the ideas presented in the paragraph. The necessity for a conclusion, or summary statement, depends on the length and complexity of the paragraph. If a paragraph is short or the main idea of the paragraph is simple, a conclusion may not be needed.

## Transitions Within and Between Body Paragraphs

Effective body paragraphs use **transitions within** paragraphs to create coherence.

“ Because I had three primary supporting details in this paragraph, I signaled the move to each major supporting idea with the transitions *first*, *second*, and *last but not least*. Within the first supporting idea, I showed the relationship between the sentences with *for example* and *in addition*. ”

Reading the daily news makes us better citizens by informing us about what is happening in the world around us. **First**, the international news alerts us to developments around the world that may have profound consequences. **For example**, when another country tests a nuclear weapon or a region erupts in violence, the news may not be pleasant, but our understanding is crucial because such events affect all of us and perhaps even the future of the planet. **In addition**, our awareness of current events can get us involved in causes such as stopping the spread of nuclear weapons or righting the wrongs that create regional hatreds. **Second**, the national news keeps us in touch with events closer to home. We learn of political developments in Washington that

### Peer Example

Dan

may change the way we live, and we make judgments about our leaders' actions that will influence the way we vote in the next election. **Last but not least**, the state and local news keeps us in touch with our regional politicians and with issues like economic development that affect our area. All this information goes into our personal data bank and informs our voice in the great chorus of American democracy.

Effective body paragraphs also provide **transitions between** paragraphs of support.

## Peer Example

Beth

“ I used transitions at the beginning of each of my body paragraphs to help lead the reader through my essay. In the second paragraph, I announced my first supporting sentence with the word *first*. In my third paragraph, I referred back to the first point I had made and then introduced my second point, and in my fourth paragraph I announced my final support. ”

**Thesis:** As I gathered up my son and his gear to take him to scouts, I realized how perfectly this new minivan meets my needs as a parent.

**Topic sentence #1: First**, the exterior of the van offers me style, safety, and convenience.

**Topic sentence #2: Not only does the exterior** of the new minivan perfectly suit my needs as a parent, but the interior is designed for the driver's safety and comfort.

**Topic sentence #3: Finally**, the van's performance features make it a pleasure to drive.

## Number of Body Paragraphs

The number of body paragraphs in an essay will depend on the number of points needed to develop the thesis. The length of your essay may be determined by your assignment, or it may be left up to you. Even though we show you lots of five-paragraph essay models, the number of paragraphs in your essays may vary depending on what you have to say and how many points you wish to present.

## Order of Body Paragraphs

The body paragraphs should be presented in a logical order. You can choose to organize your body paragraphs in a number of ways; the important consideration is to make the order clear and logical to the reader. If the areas the essay will develop are spelled out in a blueprinted thesis, the body paragraphs should be developed in the same order that they are listed in the thesis.

The body paragraphs could be presented

- In **chronological order**,
- In **order of importance**,
- According to **some other structuring principle**, or
- With a **combination** of these plans.

“ In my essay about what happened on the night of my prom, I decided to organize my essay chronologically according to what happened first, second, and third that night. ”

**Thesis:** Unfortunately, my senior prom was a disaster.

**Topic sentence #1:** I thought I had everything arranged well **in advance** of the night of the prom.

**Topic sentence #2:** My date was forgiving enough until we arrived fifteen minutes **late at the four star French restaurant** where I had made reservations months in advance.

**Topic sentence #3:** By the time we **arrived at the prom**, my date was barely speaking to me.

### Peer Example

Example of  
Chronological  
Order



Tony

“ In my essay about reading the newspaper, all my points about the newspaper are important, so I chose to base the order of importance upon most obvious to least obvious importance. I started with the most obvious benefit of the newspaper, which most people would agree is the news. Less obvious, but just as important, is the background information the newspaper provides. Least obvious, but most important to me, is the connection to the community the newspaper provides. ”

**Thesis:** The daily newspaper provides a valuable source of information. Not only does it report the news, but it provides valuable background information that helps us understand how our world works, and it connects us to our community and culture.

**Topic sentence #1:** **Reading the daily news** makes us better citizens by informing us about international, national, and local news.

**Topic sentence #2:** Almost as important as the news is the **background information** the newspaper supplies in order to give the news an understandable context.

**Topic sentence #3:** Most importantly, the newspaper offers us a **vivid connection to our community**.

### Peer Example

Example of Order  
of Importance

Dan

### Peer Example

Example of Another Structuring Principle

## Beth

“ I suppose my essay was organized spatially. I started with the exterior of the van, then discussed the interior, and ended up with performance. ”

**Thesis:** As I gathered up my son and his gear to take him to scouts, I realized how perfectly this new minivan meets my needs as a parent.

**Topic sentence #1:** First, the **exterior** of the van offers me style, safety, and convenience.

**Topic sentence #2:** Not only does the exterior of the new minivan perfectly suit my needs as a parent, but the **interior** is designed for the driver's safety and comfort.

**Topic sentence #3:** Finally, the van's **performance** features make it a pleasure to drive.

### Peer Example

Example of a Combination of Structuring Principles

## Tony

“ In my essay on General Colin Powell, I chose to discuss General Powell's military career first because that's what he is best known for. His concern and affection for his family became known when, at his wife's urgings, he declined to run for vice president. His career as a statesman is his most recent and perhaps his most important success. So my essay is a combination of chronological order and order of importance. ”

**Thesis:** This distinguished man is an excellent role model for African-American men.

**Topic sentence #1:** Colin Powell's **military career** shows African-American males that they can succeed in a traditionally white institution like the armed services.

**Topic sentence #2:** Colin Powell serves as an example of the power a **strong family** has to anchor us in enduring values.

**Topic sentence #3:** After retiring from the military, General Powell has taken his place as a senior **statesman**, a new role for an African-American male.



You should watch out for these common errors when writing body paragraphs.

- Avoid topic sentences that don't support the thesis.
- Avoid topic sentences that are too broad or too narrow to be developed in a paragraph.
- Avoid poorly developed body paragraphs.
- Avoid body paragraphs that do not use transitions within and between paragraphs.
- Avoid body paragraphs that are not presented in logical order.

## The Conclusion

The conclusion to the essay is the **final paragraph** of the essay. If the essay is very long, the conclusion might be more than one paragraph, but essays of five to ten paragraphs generally have only one paragraph of conclusion.

The two most common techniques for concluding an essay are to

- **Refer back** to the story, problem, question, or quote that began the introduction.
- **Emphasize** the important points. Remind the reader of the thesis of the essay and how its major details are developed.

“ I decided to end my essay by referring back to the story I used in the introduction about taking my son to Boy Scouts. The fact that my son is volunteering me to drive and that he has named our new van says how he feels about this new member of our family. ”

### A Luxury Ride

My son just informed me that he volunteered me to drive half his scout troop to its jamboree in our new van, which he has nicknamed Miss Betty, and he gave me a big hug. Outside sits the best gift I've ever received and one of the most important tools for a parent like me. My sleek new minivan is stylish and convenient outside, safe and comfortable inside, and powerful and economical on the road. Miss Betty is the best vehicle I could ever drive as a parent.

### Peer Example

Beth

“ In my essay on the newspaper, I wanted to emphasize the points I make in the essay and show once again how important the information we get through the newspaper is if we are to participate responsibly in the decisions we have to make as voters. ”

### Daily Tutor

Our world is becoming more complex each day, and it is often a struggle to make sense of such rapidly changing times. Luckily, we have an ally in the newspaper that is delivered to us every morning. The daily newspaper deserves our time and attention, for it brings us the information we need to better understand our world and to be engaged citizens. Armed with knowledge of current affairs, the background information to make sense of the affairs, and appreciation for our community, we are better equipped to participate as responsible citizens in a democratic nation.

### Peer Example

Dan

## Length of the Conclusion

The conclusion is generally not as long as the introduction. The length of the conclusion depends upon the length and complexity of the essay. An

essay of five or six paragraphs should present a conclusion of three to ten sentences.



You should watch out for these common errors when writing conclusions.

- Avoid beginning the conclusion with *in conclusion*, *finally*, or *to summarize* because it is obvious to the reader that you are going to conclude your essay in the last paragraph.
- Avoid sounding mechanical in summarizing the essay; for example, do not repeat the thesis statement and list of major details word-for-word from the introduction.
- Avoid beginning a new argument in the conclusion.

## The Title

Like the title of a paragraph (see Chapter 5), the title of an essay gives the reader a clue as to the topic of the paragraph and the main idea. It is a sentence fragment, or sometimes a question, and is written above the essay in the middle of the page. The title is capitalized according to standard rules (see Chapter 22). Remember that the title that accompanies your own writing should not be underlined, italicized, or placed within quotation marks. Your title should not be the same as the subject or topic you have been assigned, but should be a unique name for your specific essay.

### Peer Example

Titles



Group

#### Our Daily Tutor

**DAN:** My focus in this essay is on how the newspaper teaches us, so as I wrote the first draft in the writing lab and heard someone call for a tutor, I knew I had my title.

#### A Luxury Ride

**BETH:** "Luxury" was a word I wanted in my title, and I played around with van in the title but decided to use A Luxury Ride.

## Review Exercise 1

Circle the best answer.

1. What is the main idea of an essay called?
  - A. introduction
  - B. topic sentence
  - C. thesis

2. Where is background information in an essay placed?
  - A. after the thesis
  - B. at the beginning of introduction before thesis
  - C. anywhere in the introduction
3. What is the main purpose of background information?
  - A. introduce the reader to the subject of the essay
  - B. present the thesis
  - C. give background about the writer
4. What should paragraphs in the body of the essay include?
  - A. at least five supporting details
  - B. a topic sentence
  - C. background about the paragraphs
5. How does the topic sentence in a body paragraph relate to the thesis statement?
  - A. It supports the thesis statement of the essay.
  - B. It states a fact about the subject of the essay.
  - C. It concludes the introduction.
6. The number of sentences within body paragraphs should be consistent throughout the essay.  
True      False
7. The number of body paragraphs in an essay may vary in number.  
True      False
8. The concluding paragraph should remind the reader of the thesis and the main points in the body of the essay.  
True      False
9. The title of your essay should be underlined.  
True      False
10. The first word and all important words in the title should be capitalized.  
True      False

Identify each paragraph as (I) for Introduction, (B) for Body paragraph, or (C) for Conclusion.

## Review Exercise 2

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. One of the best things about Raintree is its convenience. We live five minutes away, so it's easy to jump in the car at the last minute and be there in no time. I for one certainly appreciate not having to drive across town and fight traffic after a hard day at the office. The



restaurant also offers plenty of parking. I've never had to circle the lot looking for a parking space as I have in other restaurants. Best of all, the service is fast and friendly. We're generally seated immediately, and the waitress takes our orders quickly. She brings our drinks and bread before the kids have a chance to get antsy. She also checks in periodically throughout our meal to see if we need anything and to refill our drinks. All of these qualities make Raintree a hassle-free dining experience.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. We're lucky our whole family can agree on a restaurant we all like. I don't dare think about what their favorite restaurant may be when they're in their teens—The Hard Rock Cafe or some diner with waitresses on roller skates. For now, I'm grateful we can all agree on Raintree where we can enjoy a good meal, friendly service, and comfortable surroundings at a price I can afford. Raintree makes it easy to enjoy each other's company.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Going out to eat with kids can be an enjoyable or not so enjoyable experience depending on the kids and depending on the restaurant. When my two kids were little, the restaurants they liked were not exactly high on my wife Diane's and my list. For years, the only place they wanted to go was McBurger. My wife and I suffered through many Big Burger meals just to make the kids happy. Luckily, our kids have grown up, and their tastes have changed. Now when I ask where they want to go for dinner, they vote for Raintree, and Diane and I smile because we are as happy with their choice as they are. Raintree is a great place to take the entire family out to dinner because of its convenience, its menu, and its atmosphere.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The atmosphere in Raintree is one the whole family can enjoy. The lighting is low and peaceful and the music is low enough to provide background without being obnoxious. The restaurant has mostly booths, which provide intimate seating, unlike the barn-like dining rooms of some restaurants. The restaurant is decorated with sports and entertainment paraphernalia such as team pennants and movie posters, which gives it a casual but adult atmosphere. They also have TV monitors hung from the ceiling, so if anyone gets bored, they can watch a game. My kids like it because they think it's cool because they might run into one of their friends, and from our point of view, there is plenty to keep the kids amused during dinner. Anything that keeps them happy, keeps Diane and me happy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Not only is Raintree convenient, but it also has great food. The menu offers a variety of dishes to please the entire family. There are steaks, ribs, and fajitas for me; burgers, grilled cheese sandwiches, and fries for the kids; and all kinds of salads for Diane. The quality of the food is also excellent, and the portions are large. No one has ever complained about leaving Raintree hungry. Best of all, the bill won't break the bank. Kids' meals are under \$3, the sandwich platters and salads are around \$5, and full dinners are around \$8. Diane appreciates the fact that the kids get a nutritious meal that they like, and I appreciate not having to spend an arm and a leg on it.

Determine the correct order for the thesis, topic sentences, and conclusion by correctly placing the number for each sentence into the outline.

## Review Exercise 3

1. Not only is Raintree convenient, but it also has great food.
2. The atmosphere in Raintree is one the whole family can enjoy.
3. Raintree is a great place to take the entire family out to dinner because of its convenience, its menu, and its atmosphere.
4. We're lucky our whole family can agree on a restaurant we all like.
5. One of the best things about Raintree is its convenience.

I. Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

II. Topic sentence #1: \_\_\_\_\_

III. Topic sentence #2: \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Topic sentence #3: \_\_\_\_\_

V. Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

Determine the correct order for the thesis and topic sentences of the body paragraphs by placing 1 next to the thesis and 2, 3, and 4 next to the topic sentences in the most logical order.

## Review Exercise 4

### 1. A Good Health Club

\_\_\_\_\_ In addition to a modern, well-maintained facility, a good club will boast the latest in exercise equipment and classes.

\_\_\_\_\_ A good health club can be recognized by examining its component parts: facilities, programs, and staff.

\_\_\_\_\_ One of the most obvious qualities of a good health club is its facilities.

\_\_\_\_\_ What makes a good club outstanding, however, is its staff and amenities.

### 2. Corporal Punishment

\_\_\_\_\_ Corporal punishment aggravates antisocial behavior.

\_\_\_\_\_ Finally, corporal punishment instills fear rather than respect.

\_\_\_\_\_ Corporal punishment is counterproductive because it aggravates antisocial behavior in the student, breaks down communication between teacher and student, and instills fear rather than respect.

\_\_\_\_\_ In addition to aggravating antisocial behavior, corporal punishment blocks the opportunity for communication between teacher and student.

## 3. How to Break Off a Relationship

\_\_\_\_\_ First, I try not to break up with a boyfriend unless I'm sure the relationship can't be saved.

\_\_\_\_\_ I try to follow the guidelines I learned as a child in Sunday school: I try to treat others the way I would want to be treated myself.

\_\_\_\_\_ Once it's clear that a breakup is inevitable, I try to tell my soon-to-be ex-boyfriend as quickly and kindly as I can.

\_\_\_\_\_ Even though following this process may take longer than the cruel and quick method, the results are worth it.

## 4. An Admirable Man

\_\_\_\_\_ Not only was my Dad honest, but he was also the hardest-working man I've ever known.

\_\_\_\_\_ My father showed me the meaning of honesty.

\_\_\_\_\_ By setting a good example for me, my father showed me the meaning of honesty, hard work, and generosity.

\_\_\_\_\_ My father was also an enormously generous man.

5. Repetition in *Teletubbies*

\_\_\_\_\_ First, the characters themselves, Tinky Winky, Dipsy, Laa-Laa, and Po, are four variations on a theme.

\_\_\_\_\_ Not only are the Teletubbies repetitions of one another, but sequences of actions are repeated within each show.

\_\_\_\_\_ The show is *Teletubbies*, a British show aimed specifically at toddlers, and the repetition I noticed is no accident. *Teletubbies* uses repetition in a number of ways to appeal to toddlers and help them learn.

\_\_\_\_\_ Similarly, the repetition of sequences from previous shows provides predictability, familiarity, and pleasure.

## Writing Assignment

Try writing an essay for one of the following topics. To view writing process prompts for writing the essay, turn to Chapter 6, "Writing an Essay."

1. Choose a sport you enjoy and explain how it teaches important values. Or which sport best reflects the American character?
2. Explain why you like or dislike owning your car, or choose a brand and type of car that you would like to own and explain why.
3. Choose a favorite natural wonder like a lake, park, or river and prove that it should be preserved.
4. Should the United States be involved in peacekeeping missions around the world? Discuss the pros or cons of one such mission like our presence in Iraq and Afghanistan.

5. Prove the importance of a trend in clothing, music, lifestyle, politics, entertainment, or technology.
6. Explain the causes, effects, or solutions to daily stress.
7. Discuss the best ways to prepare for a test.
8. Choose a celebrity and prove that this person is a good or bad role model.
9. Argue that a product you can buy should be banned.
10. Who is a famous person living or dead that you'd like to meet?

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# Part III

## Rhetorical Patterns

### Introduction

Rhetoric simply means the art of speaking or writing effectively. Rhetorical patterns are ways of organizing information, and they can be used to structure paragraphs, essays, and exams. Becoming familiar with the various rhetorical patterns can help you become a better writer or speaker because you will learn various strategies for organizing and presenting information. Any of these patterns can be used alone or in combination, and they can be used to inform or to persuade. Studying the rhetorical patterns can give you invaluable strategies for presenting ideas, but you need to be aware that the organization of your ideas is only one part of the rhetorical context. Becoming an effective writer or speaker also has to do with analyzing your purpose, audience, and tone, all of which are discussed in detail in Chapter 3, “First Steps: Generating Ideas.”

Many of the patterns analyzed in Part III will be familiar to you from your reading and from your experience of life. Describing, giving examples, comparing, and sorting are skills we use daily to help us process information and understand the world. Although you are familiar with these skills, you may never have analyzed these patterns in detail or studied how to use them to improve your writing. Our approach is to show you what each pattern looks like in student writing and then to break each pattern down into its component parts to model how you might employ those structures in your writing. In addition to the traditional rhetorical patterns of description, narration, illustration/example, process analysis, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, definition, and classification, we also cover summary, analysis/division, and persuasion because they are frequently required in college level writing.

For each of the eleven patterns, we begin with a brief **definition** of the pattern, followed by an **example** paragraph and/or essay written by one of the four student peers (Alicia, Dan, Beth, and Tony). Next, we discuss the organization of each pattern, provide sample **thesis statements**, and list common **transitions** used for each pattern.

We provide advice to keep in mind as you develop your paper under **Tips** and warn against problems to avoid with each pattern under **Pitfalls**.

All of these resources are intended to give you an overview of the pattern before you start writing. Once your instructor has given you a topic or you have chosen one of our **writing assignments**, you can use the writing process prompts provided by your instructor or in Rules and Tools (pages 545 and 549) to guide you through the writing process. As you write, you can consult the lesson to see examples, outlines, tips, transitional devices, or pitfalls.

## Chapter 8

# Description

In a description, the writer paints a word picture of a person, place, or object by appealing to one or more of the five senses (smell, taste, hearing, touch, and sight). Description is useful in many kinds of writing because it helps the reader see the people, places, or objects being described. Good description depends on the effective use of specific detail. Writing “There was a flower in a vase” doesn’t help the reader see the flower as clearly as writing “There was a long-stemmed red rose in a slender crystal vase.” The more specific you can be, the more you will help the reader see the scene you have in mind. Use concrete and specific nouns and verbs, descriptive adjectives and adverbs, and vivid images. (For additional help in choosing effective language, consult Chapter 23, “Word Choice”.)



## Examples of Description

### Peer Example Description of a Person



Tony

“ My grandmother is a special person and has played a big role in my life. It was fun and a little frustrating trying to describe her. I tried to focus on her spiritual qualities but convey them through her appearance. ”

#### Grandma Anderson

My grandmother is a special lady. She stands barely five feet tall and weighs under a hundred pounds, but her will is as strong and fierce as a lion's. As long as I've known her, her gray hair has been pulled into a tight braid at the back of her head, and she has worn the same simple cotton dresses she has worn all her life. Only on Sunday, when she goes to church, does she put on the lace-trimmed black dress that is shiny with starch and ironing. Her face is small and lined with her years, but her eyes are as bright and attentive as a hawk's. She misses nothing in the world or in you. When I was young, I believed she could read my mind because she would take one look at me and know what I was feeling. I still sometimes believe she can read my mind today. Although her frame is bent slightly with her more than eighty years, her smile is as warm and free as a teenager's. Because I love and respect my grandmother, nothing gives me greater pleasure than to sit down at her dinner table and see her face light up when I ask for a second helping of her famous peach cobbler.

### Peer Example Description of a Place



Dan

“ One of my favorite places to spend time is Clearwater Lake. I seem to relax and leave my troubles behind whenever I'm there. One of the problems I had in describing the lake was settling on a time of year to describe it. I go there all year long, so I know what it looks like in the spring, summer, fall, and winter. I finally decided that the lake is at its most spectacular in the fall. ”

#### Clearwater Lake

Fishing on Clearwater Lake puts me in touch with nature. Clearwater Lake is a small lake nestled in the Adirondack Mountains. The glassy lake is ringed with aspen, larch, birch, and fir trees, and in the fall, the mountainsides are on fire with brilliant oranges, reds, and yellows. I arrive at the lake early, with mist still clinging to the surface of the water like smoke. I slide my canoe silently into the clear, cold water, step in, and push off the sandy bank. Each stroke of the paddle pulls me farther out into the lake, the wind crisp and cold against my cheeks. The world seems to go silent around me; only the sound of my paddle moving through the water breaks the silence. Once on the lake, I am cut off from the world of work and school and family, and I'm free to meditate on the beauty and tranquility of the spot.

“ My grandmother’s rocking chair sits in my living room today, and even though she’s dead, her rocking chair reminds me of her and brings her back to life for me. Sometimes special objects can represent the person we associate with them, and the rocker comforts me today just as my grandmother comforted me when I was a child. ”

### Memaw’s Rocker

My grandmother’s rocking chair sits empty in the corner of the living room. The simple unpainted cane rocker would be of little interest to an antique dealer, but I wouldn’t part with it for the world. The seat is cupped slightly from years of use: afternoons and evenings when she sat shelling peas, darning socks, or knitting sweaters. The arms are sanded smooth from the constant motion of her thin arms. The chair is silent now, but if I close my eyes, I can still hear the squeak of the rocker against the pine floor and hear the click of her knitting needles. They were sounds that always comforted me and made me feel as if everything were right with the world. Even today, I can’t look at the rocker without seeing my Memaw smiling at me over the rim of her glasses and hearing her say she loves me.

### Peer Example Description of an Object



Beth

## Organization of Description

Descriptions can be organized spatially (left to right, top to bottom, etc.); chronologically (in time order); or in order of importance (the thing that strikes you first or that is dominant about what you are describing). The subject and purpose of your description will guide your choice and organization of details.

## Thesis Statements

The thesis or topic sentence generally presents the subject of the description and/or establishes the tone or mood of the description. It controls the details you will include.

Pop stole the show at the family reunion.	The subject of the description is Pop, and the attitude is positive.
My room reflects my personality.	The subject of the description is both the writer’s room and the writer.
Big Shoals is a place I go to escape the stress of everyday life.	The subject of the description is Big Shoals and the attitude is that it is relaxing.
My biology professor, Mr. Mathews, is a distinguished man.	The writer announces the subject of the description, her biology professor, and her attitude toward him.
My 1974 Dodge station wagon is a beauty.	The writer announces the subject of the description and his attitude toward it.

## Transitions

Because there are no transitions that relate specifically to description, you would use the transitions that best show the relationship between the ideas you are expressing.

### Tips on Planning Description

1. Have a purpose in mind for the description. Are you trying to give an objective description, or are you trying to convey an attitude, opinion, or mood about your subject?
2. Because descriptions of people, places, and objects are different, you will have different considerations for each.
  - a. If you are describing a person, try to help the reader see the person and his or her character by describing appearance, dress, mannerisms, actions, and/or speech. Descriptive details can be used to suggest personality or character.
  - b. If you are describing a place, scene, or activity, you will need to select a physical perspective or viewpoint on the subject and stick to it. For example, if you were describing a room from the perspective of someone standing on a ladder looking in a window, you would notice certain things and not others. Your perspective might also include the time of day and season of the year of your description. You would notice different things in the fall and spring, in the morning and at night. You should remain consistent with the perspective you select.
  - c. If you are describing an object, try to help the reader see the object and its meaning to you. Descriptions of objects rely on the five senses (sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell) to evoke the physical appearance and emotional associations of the object.
3. Decide on an emotional perspective or attitude toward your subject and keep it in mind as you select details. Do you like or dislike this subject? What is the dominant impression or mood you wish to evoke? This mood or feeling will be a unifying element in your description. By keeping it in mind, you can reject all details that do not fit. Try not to confuse the reader by giving some positive and some negative details.
4. Make a list of things seen, heard, smelled, tasted, and felt, choosing those things that fit your physical and/or emotional perspective.



1. **Avoid disorganized descriptions.** If your description is haphazard or jumps around, you will confuse the reader. For example, if you describe something on the outside of a house, then something on the inside, and then something on the outside again, the reader will have trouble picturing your subject.
2. **Avoid inconsistent descriptions.** A description that is not consistent in physical perspective or emotional perspective will confuse the reader. For example, if you are describing a place, you will confuse the reader if you combine descriptions from two different seasons of the year. If you are describing a person, do not switch back and forth between positive and negative details about a person because this inconsistency will confuse the reader.
3. **Avoid generalizations and abstractions.** General statements and abstractions don't create an image in the reader's mind and therefore don't help the reader see the subject of your description. Abstract words such as *beautiful*, *lovely*, and *wonderful* mean different things to different people, so they won't help your reader visualize what you have in mind. You should also avoid describing something as *average* or *boring* because such words don't help the reader see your subject and may stop the reader from reading further.

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. Describe one of your favorite relatives. What makes him or her so special? Make sure you include mannerisms, patterns of speech, and anything that reveals his or her personality.
2. Choose a place that is important to you and decide on an adjective that describes the emotion or feeling of the place (peaceful, frightening, etc.). Don't use this descriptive word in the description, but select details that elicit that mood or feeling in the reader. When the reader finishes your description, he or she should be able to name the emotion you had in mind when you wrote it.
3. Write a description of a favorite object (ring, car, item of clothing). Try to appeal to all of the senses in your description and include how the object makes you feel.
4. Describe the place you most loved to spend time as a child.



## Writing Assignment



5. Imagine you are in the stadium pictured on the left and describe the scene around you. What do you see, hear, smell, taste, touch? Now do the same for the photo on the right. Your descriptions should evoke the different moods in each photo.

Or if you prefer, select a place that you like or are familiar with and write two descriptions of the same place at different times of the day or in different seasons. Try to pick times that show a contrast in the mood or quality of the place.

## Chapter 9

# Narration

In narration, the writer tells a story about a series of events. That may sound easy, but storytelling isn't as easy as it sounds. First, the writer has to tell the story clearly enough for the reader to follow what happened when. Second, the writer has to tell the story dramatically enough to keep the reader's attention and interest. One way to keep a reader's attention is by describing the people and places in the story vividly.

Generally, narratives are told chronologically, and they answer the six basic journalistic questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How? Narration often uses the first person (I, we) because the writer is recounting personal experience.

## Examples of Narration

### Peer Example Narration Paragraph



Tony

“The memory of my prom night is still fresh in my mind, so it was easy to write about. It was one of those nights when everything that could go wrong did.”

#### Disaster Prom

My senior prom was a disaster. I had arranged to borrow my brother's new Camaro, but he didn't get home until right before I was supposed to leave, and in my rush, I neglected to check the gas gauge. As a result, I ran out of gas and had to hitchhike in my tux to the nearest filling station. I arrived at my date's house sweaty and was met by her scowling father, who clearly disapproved of anyone who would keep his precious daughter waiting on such an important night. My date was forgiving enough until we arrived fifteen minutes late at the four-star French restaurant where I had made reservations months in advance. We were informed by a surly *maître d'* that we had lost our reservations and would have a one-hour wait if we wanted to stay. Instead, we opted for a local restaurant that offered a fancy seafood buffet, but we felt ridiculous in our formal clothes when everyone else was dressed casually. My date's dress was so tight that she could barely eat a bite of food, and I was so miserable that I ate too much and ended up feeling queasy. By the time we arrived at the prom, my date was barely speaking to me. The prom was held in the gym, which had been only superficially decorated by potted plants and a canopy of balloons, and the band played mostly punk rock, which was impossible to dance to. Then, someone bumped my elbow, and I sloshed my drink all over the front of my date's blue satin dress, which sent her running to the bathroom in tears. I suppose that was the last straw because by the time I dropped her off, she was so furious that she refused to kiss me goodnight, and she never went out with me again. All in all, my senior prom was an experience I would just as soon have skipped.

### Peer Example Narration Essay

Tony

“In writing an essay on my prom night, I divided the night into major chunks of time and tried to include as many details as I could about what happened and how I was feeling.”

#### Disaster Prom

For some people, the senior prom is the culmination of four years of high school and is more important and certainly more memorable than graduation. They proudly display their prom pictures on their mantels, and they remember prom night as one of the best in their lives. It didn't quite work that way for me. I changed schools my senior year because my parents moved from one area of Atlanta to another. As a result, my date for the prom was a girl I had met in my

English class but barely knew. I still have the picture of the two of us that night, but I don't have the heart to display it because even though I look good in my tux and she looks beautiful in her blue satin dress and orchid corsage, I can't look at the picture without remembering that just after the flash went off, she turned away in anger. Unfortunately, my senior prom was a disaster.

I thought I had everything arranged well in advance of the night of the prom. I had persuaded my brother to lend me his shiny new red Camaro in exchange for mowing his lawn for two months. At the time, it seemed like the trade was well worth it because I could just imagine the look in my date's eyes when I picked her up in my brother's cool car. Unfortunately, my brother didn't show up until right before I was supposed to leave, and in my rush I neglected to check the gas gauge. As a result, I ran out of gas and had to hitchhike in my tux to the nearest filling station. I arrived at my date's house twenty minutes late and sweaty. When her father opened the door, it was clear from the scowl on his face that he was not pleased with anyone who would keep his precious daughter waiting on such an important night.

My date was forgiving enough until we arrived fifteen minutes late at the four-star French restaurant where I had made reservations months in advance. We were informed by a surly maitre d' that we had lost our reservations and would have a one-hour wait if we wanted to stay. Instead, we opted for a local restaurant that offered a fancy seafood buffet, but we felt ridiculous in our formal clothes when everyone else was dressed casually. It was already clear that the evening was not going well, and my date didn't have much to say. Her dress was so tight that she could barely eat a bite of food, and I was so miserable that I ate too much. The tension and the greasy fried food combined to make me feel slightly queasy.

By the time we arrived at the prom, my date was barely speaking to me. The prom was held in the gym, which still looked very much like a gym in spite of the potted plants and canopy of balloons. To make matters worse, the band the prom committee had hired played mostly punk rock music, which was impossible to dance to. Everyone just milled around awkwardly and didn't know what to do. The music was too loud to hear yourself talk, and the strobe lights at once blinded me and made me feel dizzy. Not an hour after we arrived, someone bumped my elbow, and I sloshed my drink all over the front of my date's blue satin dress, which sent her running to the bathroom in tears. I suppose for her that was the last straw.

By the time I dropped her off, she was so furious that she refused to say goodnight, let alone kiss me goodnight. Needless to say, she never went out with me again. I spent two hot summer months mowing my brother's lawn to pay for borrowing his car, and when my prom picture arrived in the mail, I put it in a drawer without looking at it. All in all, my senior prom was an experience I would just as soon forget.

## Organization of Narration

Narratives are generally told in chronological order, meaning the events are told in the order that they happened, so the story you are telling will dictate the organization of your paragraph or essay. Try to structure your essay around logical divisions in the events you are recounting.



## Thesis Statements for Narration

The thesis or topic sentence presents the subject of the narration and its significance.

My car accident was the most terrifying experience of my life.

This thesis tells us that the subject is the writer's car accident and reveals the writer's attitude toward the events.

Our family's Christmas vacation turned into a disaster.

This thesis also announces the subject, Christmas vacation, and indicates an opinion about it, that it was a disaster.

My trip out west with my girlfriend ended our relationship.

The subject is the writer's trip out west, and its significance is that it ended his relationship with his girlfriend.

Sometimes the topic sentence of a narrative paragraph begins telling the story.

On the morning of my graduation from high school, I woke feeling sick.

This thesis tells us that the subject is the writer's high school graduation and reveals that it did not go as planned.

We began our Christmas vacation as we always did, by leaving for Grandma's house before dawn.

The writer begins telling the story of her Christmas vacation by starting when her family left the house. Notice that she lets the reader know what the story will be about and gives us a clue that things will not go as normal in the story she is about to tell.

## Transitions

Transition words used in narration are generally time markers:

afterward

in the end

at last

meanwhile

at the same time

next

at this point

soon after

by this time

subsequently

eventually

then

finally

to begin with

first, second, third, etc.

### Tips on Planning Narration

1. Decide on the story you want to tell, and think about what the story means to you. Did you learn something through the experience? What

would you like the reader to learn by reading your story? What feeling or attitude would you like the reader to have about the story you are telling?

2. Think through (or outline) what happened first, second, third, and so on. Try not to leave out anything the reader will need to understand the story. For example, if you were telling the story of your car accident, you wouldn't want to neglect to mention who was driving or what caused the accident.
3. Try to divide the action into major blocks. You may find, however, that you have to write out the entire story to see where the logical breaks in the action are. For example, you might want to divide a narrative about a car accident into what happened before the accident, what happened during the accident, and what happened after.
4. Focus on the people involved in your narrative, and try to describe them accurately and colorfully.
5. Focus on the feelings you experienced at different times in your story. Try to make these feelings clear to the reader.

1. **Avoid stringing together a series of events without dramatizing any of them or showing their significance.** For example, no one wants to read a mere series of "this happened and then this happened and then we did this."
2. **Avoid a list.** Make sure the events are logically connected with appropriate transitions to help the reader follow the sequence of events. For example, the following list isn't particularly interesting: "We arrived at my grandmother's. We put our bags away. We spent the afternoon cooking Thanksgiving dinner." If you link the events together with transitions, the sequence makes more sense for the reader: "We arrived at my grandmother's around 1 pm. After putting our bags away, we spent most of the afternoon preparing all the family's favorite Thanksgiving dishes."



Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. How did you meet your best friend, girl/boyfriend, or spouse? Tell the story of how you met. Include details about the place, the events, and your first impressions.
2. Tell the story of how you made a significant decision in your life (going to school, getting married, quitting a job, applying for a scholarship, etc.).

Writing  
Assignment

Try to dramatize who you were at the time, what factors influenced your decision, and how the decision has affected you.

3. Did you ever get in trouble as a kid or as an adult? Tell the story of what happened and what you learned as a result.
4. Retell a story your family tells about you or some other member of the family. What does the story or the way it is told reveal about your family's attitude toward the event or person? Does the story say something about what your family values?
5. Make up a dramatic story or a news story to explain what has happened in the picture below. Try to answer the six journalistic questions (who, what, when, where, why, and how) in your story.



## Chapter 10

# Example or Illustration

The writer uses examples or illustration to develop a general idea or prove a general statement. Examples are specific and concrete, not general or abstract. They explain, clarify, or demonstrate a general idea. An illustration is an extended, developed example.

Examples help readers understand the writer's ideas by making abstract ideas concrete and easier to understand. Just as a picture or illustration helps the reader see and understand the writer's ideas, examples or illustrations help the reader understand a general idea. Examples are also more memorable than abstractions. Most students remember the examples an instructor used in class long after they've forgotten the point the instructor was trying to make. Examples keep the reader's attention and make writing vivid and memorable.

## Examples of Example or Illustration

### Peer Example Illustration or Example Paragraph



Dan

“ Having to come up with concrete examples of my father’s honesty helped me appreciate this remarkable man. ”

#### An Honest Man

My father showed me the meaning of honesty. I never heard him tell a lie, even the kind of white lie we tend to use to save ourselves time or money or hassle. Once when a cashier gave him change for a twenty rather than the ten he had given her, he handed back the extra ten dollars and told her she’d made a mistake. Needless to say, she was astounded by his unexpected honesty. Another time when he accidentally backed into a car in a parking lot and put a small scratch on its fender, he left a note on the windshield with his name and phone number. Most important, he always took responsibility for his actions, and if something went wrong, he was the first to admit his mistake. When the crops failed or an animal died, if it was his fault, he admitted it. He always said it takes a man to admit his mistakes rather than run away from them. By watching my father, I learned what it means to be honest.

### Peer Example Illustration or Example Essay

Dan

#### An Admirable Man

My dad didn’t have a college degree, but he was an intelligent man. He could fix most things, from cars to toasters to radios, and he had a knack for nurturing growing things such as crops and animals and children. My father was well liked and well respected in our community, and nobody deserved his reputation more than he did. Most of the things I learned of value in my childhood came from watching my father and learning from him. By setting a good example for me, my father showed me the meaning of honesty, hard work, and generosity.

My father showed me the meaning of honesty. I never heard him tell a lie, even the kind of white lie we tend to use to save ourselves time or money or hassle. Once when a cashier gave him change for a twenty rather than the ten he had given her, he handed back the extra ten dollars and told her she’d made a mistake. Needless to say, she was astounded by his unexpected honesty. Another time when he accidentally backed into a car in a parking lot and left a small scratch on its fender, he left a note on the windshield with his name and phone number. He always took responsibility for his actions, and if something went wrong, he was the first to admit his mistake. When the crops failed or an animal died, if it was his fault, he admitted it. He always said it takes a man to admit his mistakes rather than run away from them. By watching my father, I learned what it means to be honest.

Not only was my dad honest, but he was also the hardest-working man I’ve ever known. His day began before daylight when he got up to feed and

water the animals and take care of household chores. In winter, he had to get up a half an hour earlier to bring in wood for the stoves and shovel the snow out of the driveway. After helping Mom get the kids off to school, he headed out the driveway in his pickup truck to drive thirty miles to his job working for the physical plant of a large corporation. Rain or snow, he never missed a day of work. At work he did everything from installing desks to fixing electrical problems. His job kept him on his feet most of the day, and when he came home at five, he was tired, but he was never too tired to help with dinner or to complete whatever jobs needed doing around the house.

My father was also an enormously generous man. He helped out whenever anyone in our community needed a roof repaired, a fence mended, or a crop brought in. He also volunteered his time to coach our Little League baseball team and to serve as a volunteer firefighter. Not only was he generous with others, but also with his kids. He was never too busy to help out with a school project, toss a baseball with us in the front yard, or just sit on the porch swing and talk. I don't know how he found the time to do everything he did, but he believed it was his responsibility to help others.

There aren't many men like my dad, and the older I get, the more I appreciate and admire him. The old saying "Actions speak louder than words" is certainly true of my father. He didn't preach about how to be a good person, but he was one. I learned good values from watching him and from the example he set. I only hope I can set as good an example for my children.

## Organization of Example or Illustration

Example or illustration paragraphs and essays begin with a general or abstract idea, which is then supported by individual examples or an extended illustration and details. In a paragraph, the supporting sentences give examples of the general idea stated in the topic sentence. In an essay, the supporting paragraphs give examples of the general idea stated in the thesis.

## Thesis Statements for Example or Illustration

The thesis or topic sentence is the general statement that the examples or illustration are intended to support or illustrate.

My mother was always generous with her children.

The writer will give examples that illustrate the generosity of his or her mother.

Experience is the best teacher.

The writer will support the belief that experience is the best teacher by giving examples or by giving one long illustration.

Beauty is only skin deep.	The writer will show the truth of the abstract statement that beauty is only skin deep by giving examples or illustrations.
I've learned from my mistakes.	The writer will illustrate the statement that he has learned from his mistakes by giving examples.

## Transitions

In example or illustration, many transitions may be appropriate depending on the content. The following are common transitions that relate specifically to example or illustration:

### Example or Illustration

as a matter of fact	in fact
certainly	in other words
for example	likewise
for instance	specifically
indeed	to illustrate

Transitions that show order or sequence are often useful, as are transitions that show addition.

### Order or Sequence

first	last
second	most important
next	

### Addition

also	in addition
as a matter of fact	in fact
besides	likewise
for instance	moreover
furthermore	similarly

### Tips on Planning an Example or Illustration

1. Decide on the general statement or idea you would like to support or illustrate.
2. Formulate a tentative thesis or main idea statement.
3. Decide which form will work best for your topic, exemplification (several short examples) or illustration (one or more long examples).

4. If you chose exemplification, generate a list of specific examples that support or prove your thesis.

**Example:** Using examples to support the statement “My uncle was a good role model,” you would develop a list that might include the time he helped your father financially, the time he lost his job and started his own business, and the time he broke his favorite fly rod and didn’t lose his temper. If you are writing an essay, you will need to generate a more extensive list and look for areas of similarity around which to structure paragraphs.

5. If you chose illustration, generate one or more concrete examples that support or prove your thesis and develop them in as much detail as possible.

**Example:** Using illustration to support the statement “Jackson Hole offers many recreational opportunities,” you might recount a day you spent skiing, horseback riding, shopping, and eating in Jackson Hole. If you are writing an essay, you will need to divide your illustration into major blocks around which to structure paragraphs.

1. **Avoid giving disconnected examples.** Make sure each example is tied directly to your topic sentence or thesis. Examples are of little value if the reader doesn’t see the connection between the example and the idea it is intended to illustrate. For example, if you are supporting the statement that your roommate is a neatnick, it would not be enough to state that her clothes are hung up. You might want to add that the clothes in her closet are arranged by color and are hung precisely one inch apart.
2. **Avoid trying to prove a controversial opinion with one example.** Even if it is well developed and interesting, one example is unlikely to convince your reader to share your opinion. For example, if you are trying to persuade the reader to support an optional attendance policy in college, giving an example of someone you knew who passed a class without attending regularly will not convince the reader that the majority of students could succeed without attending classes.



Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. Choose someone you admire and use examples or illustration to show that he/she is an excellent role model for a specific group of people such as children, athletes, musicians, businesspeople, and so on.

Writing  
Assignment



2. What have you learned or did you learn about being a successful student during your first semester in college? Make a statement about what you learned and then support it with specific examples.
3. Use examples or illustration to show that the Internet can be a great tool for medical research, shopping, or entertainment.
4. Use examples or illustration to show that adversity can strengthen character.
5. Do the facial expressions and the body language of the couple in the photo give you any clues about how easy it is for them to communicate with one another? Make a statement about how easy or difficult it is for men and women to communicate with the opposite sex and support it with examples.



# Chapter 11

## Process Analysis

In process analysis, the writer describes how to do something or how something happens by describing the steps or stages in the process. The writer breaks down the process into steps and describes them in detail in order to inform or persuade the reader about that process. Process analysis may be used to describe a simple process such as how to bake a cake or change the oil in a car, or it may be used it to describe a complex process such as how a scientist conducts an experiment or how Congress passes a law.

## Examples of Process Analysis

### Peer Example Process Analysis Paragraph



Alicia

“ In both my paragraph and essay, I analyzed the process I follow when breaking up with a boyfriend, and I also tried to persuade my audience that there is no point in hurting someone unnecessarily. ”

#### How to End a Relationship

When it comes to breaking off a relationship, I try to follow the golden rule I learned as a child in Sunday school: I try to treat others the way I would want to be treated myself. First, I try not to break up with a boyfriend until I'm sure the relationship can't be saved. I tell my boyfriend if one of his behaviors is bothering me, and I try to work out conflicts before they get out of hand. Even if he chooses not to change his behavior, at least I have given him a chance. If nothing else, giving a boyfriend a chance to change makes me feel less guilty about breaking up. Once it's clear that a break up is inevitable, I try to tell him as quickly and kindly as I can. There is no point in hurting someone unnecessarily, so I try to be firm but kind. I let him know that he's a great person and I still care for him, but I'm no longer in love with him and I'm not interested in continuing the relationship. Even though following this process may take longer than the cruel-and-quick method, the results are worth it. I feel good about myself, and I've managed to remain friends with many of my ex-boyfriends.

### Peer Example Process Analysis Essay

Alicia

#### How to End a Relationship

According to Paul Simon, “There must be fifty ways to leave your lover.” Unless a woman intends to marry the first man she goes out with, breaking up with a boyfriend is inevitable. Methods of breaking off a relationship are as different as the people who practice them and can range from cruel to kind. One of my girlfriends swears by her quick-and-dirty method. She starts going out with her boyfriend's best friend if she wants to break up. She swears it works every time. Even though her technique may be fast and sure, I prefer a slower, kinder method. I try to follow the guidelines I learned as a child in Sunday school: I try to treat others the way I would want to be treated myself.

First, I try not to break up with a boyfriend unless I'm sure the relationship can't be saved. I try to work out conflicts and problems before they get out of hand. I let my boyfriend know if one of his behaviors such as smoking bothers me, and I tell him if I am feeling ignored when he watches football for three hours on Saturday night. Even if he chooses not to change his behavior, at least I have given him a chance. It's a technique I learned at work from a supervisor who said she never fired anyone without giving her a chance to improve her shortcomings. If nothing else, giving a boyfriend a chance to change makes me feel less guilty about breaking up.

Once it's clear that a breakup is inevitable, I try to tell my soon-to-be ex-boyfriend as quickly and kindly as I can. My mother always told me, "What goes around, comes around," and I've tried to take her advice into consideration in the way I tell a boyfriend that I'm not interested in continuing the relationship. There is no point in hurting someone unnecessarily, so I try to be firm but kind. I avoid saying things like "I'm breaking up with you because you're a jerk or a slob." Instead I try to let him know that he's a great person, but that I'm no longer in love with him and I'm not interested in continuing the relationship.

Even though following this process may take longer than the cruel-and-quick method, the results are worth it. First of all, I feel good about myself and feel like I've lived up to my own standards by not hurting anyone unnecessarily. Second, by being kind, I can often remain friends with my ex-boyfriends. It's always better to keep a friend than to make an enemy. My ex-boyfriends have helped me fix a flat tire and repair the gutters on my mother's house. Especially in a small town like this one, it's wise not to have everyone you ever dated saying mean things about you behind your back.

## Organization of Process Analysis

The process you are analyzing will dictate the structure of your paragraph or essay. Break the process down into its component parts (or steps) and structure your writing around logical divisions in the process you are analyzing.

## Thesis Statements for Process Analysis

The thesis or topic sentence names the process that will be described or analyzed. Often the thesis contains an attitude or opinion about the process.

Changing a tire is easy if you follow the right steps.

This thesis lets us know that the process to be analyzed is changing a tire, and it gives us an opinion that it is easy if you follow the right steps.

You don't have to be Italian to make pasta carbonara.

This thesis also announces the process and indicates an opinion.

Anyone can fail a class if she tries hard enough.

The subject is failing a class, and the opinion is that you have to make an effort to do it. It's a good bet the tone of this paper is going to be sarcastic.

Bathing a dog doesn't have to be a miserable experience for either party.

The topic is bathing a dog, and the opinion is that it doesn't have to be unpleasant.

## Transitions

Transitions for process analysis are generally time and sequence markers:

afterward	in the end
at last	meanwhile
at the same time	next
at this point	soon after
by this time	subsequently
eventually	then
finally	to begin with
first, second, third, etc.	

### Tips on Planning Process Analysis

1. First, divide the process into logical major parts. For example, if you are describing how to buy a car, you might want to divide the process into the actions you take before you go to a dealership (consult *Consumer Reports*, talk to friends, prepare a list of questions, etc.), actions you take when you are looking at the car, and actions you take when you are negotiating.
2. Next, list the individual steps or stages in the process, making sure not to leave out any steps, including any preparation that might be necessary. For example, if you were describing how to change a tire, you would want to include directions on how to jack up the car properly before changing the tire.
3. Describe each step in detail. Try not to leave anything out. Remember that your readers may not be familiar with the process you are describing, so your directions will have to be explicit and complete. For example, if you are writing to a general audience about how to change a tire and include the direction “Remove the lug nuts,” you shouldn’t assume the reader knows what lug nuts are or how to remove them; you will have to explain these details.
4. Anticipate any problems that might arise at each step in the process, and tell the reader how to avoid or remedy the problem. For example, if you are describing how to change a tire, you would want to explain what to do if any of the lug nuts stick.



**Avoid incomplete directions.** For example, if you forgot to tell your reader to add baking powder to the cake batter, more than likely the cake will not rise. If you forget to tell your reader to engage the parking brake before he or she jacks up the car, your reader could be seriously injured.

## Writing Assignment

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. Choose something you know how to do well, analyze the process you follow, and write directions that would allow someone else to complete the process.
2. Explain the process of preparing for a difficult test, completing a difficult assignment, or passing a difficult class.
3. Explain the process you followed in deciding to get married, get divorced, or make any other major life choice.
4. What is the best way to go about buying or selling a DVD or CD player, used or new car, guitar, or some other product? Explain the process someone should follow to complete a sale or purchase successfully.
5. How do you go about making a good impression on a teacher, a date, or anyone you meet for the first time? Write a paper in which you explain in detail the process of making a good first impression on someone. You might want to include how you dress, how you behave, and what you say in order to make a good first impression?



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## Chapter 12

# Comparison and Contrast

In comparison and contrast, the writer places two subjects side by side and examines their similarities and/or differences in order to clarify the qualities of each (inform) or to make a point (persuade). Comparison and contrast can be used independently (just similarities or differences) or in combination (both similarities and differences). Comparison and contrast are frequently called for in essay exams because they allow you to show your knowledge of two subjects while analyzing the relationship between them.



## Examples of Comparison/Contrast

### Peer Example

#### Comparison Paragraph



Dan

“ I wrote this paragraph to point out the interesting similarities I saw in two TV sitcom characters I used to watch in reruns as a kid. It fascinated me to realize how similar these two characters were in spite of the different settings of the shows. ”

#### Flintstone and Kramden: Two Peas in a Pod

Fred Flintstone of *The Flintstones* and Ralph Kramden of *The Honeymooners* are remarkably similar. The first of these similarities is their appearance. Both have black hair and five o'clock shadows; in addition, both have large paunches and wear loud, baggy clothes. Their personalities are also similar. Both have large appetites, boisterous personalities, and a tendency to act before they think. Moreover, they both have best friends who play second fiddle to them: Barney Rubble for Fred and Ed Norton for Ralph. Additionally, both Fred's and Ralph's favorite activity on a Friday night is to go out bowling with the guys. Finally, when Fred and Ralph put down their bowling balls, they earn their living by working remarkably similar jobs. Fred drives a truck in a gravel pit, and Ralph drives a city bus. In spite of the differences in the two shows' settings, the main characters share a number of similarities.

### Peer Example

#### Contrast Paragraph



Beth

“ I wrote this paragraph to show the differences between two popular kids' sports, soccer and football, and to persuade the reader that soccer is preferable because it's less expensive and less dangerous than football. ”

#### All Sports Are Not Created Equal

Although football and soccer are both popular sports for kids, football is more expensive and more dangerous than soccer. Because of the specialized equipment necessary for football, parents must pay well over one hundred dollars for a two-month season of peewee football. In addition to this fee, the shoes and protective gear each child must purchase can easily cost upwards of fifty dollars. On the other hand, a season of youth soccer, which runs for two months in the fall and two months in the spring, costs only seventy-five dollars. Soccer shoes, which generally cost between fifteen and twenty-five dollars, are recommended but not required. Not only is football more expensive than soccer, but it is also more violent and therefore more dangerous. Children tackle and block one another, and these maneuvers result in frequent bruises, strains, and pulls. More serious injuries such as fractures, broken bones, and concussions are not unusual. Soccer, on the other hand, is not a contact sport and is therefore less likely to result in injury. Children can fall and bump into one another, but these accidental contacts rarely result in anything more serious than grass stains or loss of breath. Given the differences in these two sports, there is no question that I would prefer my son to play soccer rather than football.

### Flintstone and Kramden: Two Peas in a Pod

When I look back at my childhood, one of my fondest memories is racing home from school to settle down for an afternoon of watching television. My mother would fix me a snack, and I would flip through the channels until I located my favorite programs. I would start the afternoon with cartoons and end the evening with situation comedies. Two of my favorite programs were reruns of *The Flintstones* and *The Honeymooners*. *The Flintstones* was a cartoon set in the Stone Age while *The Honeymooners* was a situation comedy performed by live actors and set in the 1950s. Although *The Flintstones* was intended to appeal to kids and *The Honeymooners* was intended to appeal to adults, I enjoyed them both. Despite the two shows' obvious differences in form and setting, the main characters of the shows share a number of similarities. Fred Flintstone of *The Flintstones* and Ralph Kramden of *The Honeymooners* are similar in appearance, habits, and occupations.

The most striking similarity between Fred Flintstone and Ralph Kramden is their appearance. Both are large men with potbellies who wear colorful, baggy clothes. Both have dark hair, and because they both hate shaving, they have heavy five o'clock shadows. Not only do they look alike, but also they act alike as well. Fred and Ralph have boisterous personalities, and they both tend to act before they think. As a result, both men are forever getting in trouble because of their big mouths.

As well as having similar appearances, Fred and Ralph engage in similar social activities. Both men's favorite pastime is to go bowling on Friday nights with the guys. They both belong to bowling teams, and both take their bowling seriously. Their favorite bowling partners are their best friends, Barney Rubble and Ed Norton. Interestingly, Barney and Ed have similar personalities and both play second fiddle to their larger, more adventuresome friends.

Finally, when Fred Flintstone and Ralph Kramden put down their bowling balls, they earn their living by working similar jobs. Fred drives a truck in a gravel pit where he is responsible for moving boulders from one side of the pit to another. Similarly, Ralph drives a city bus; the only difference is that he moves people instead of boulders. Both men work 8:00 to 5:00 jobs that require little education and for which they are paid relatively low wages. As a result, they are both living middle-class lifestyles.

As a kid I enjoyed *The Flintstones* and *The Honeymooners*. It wasn't until I was an adult that I noticed the similarities in the shows' main characters. The similarities are so strong that it's almost as if they are the same story recast in different formats and settings. Both shows reflect a conventional 50s ideal of the American family and a certain type of conventional male role. Despite the differences in their settings, Fred and Ralph were cut from the same cloth.

### Peer Example Comparison/ Contrast Essay

Dan

## Organization of Comparison/Contrast

Paragraphs and essays that compare and/or contrast two subjects use either a subject-by-subject or a point-by-point structure. In a **subject-by-subject** structure, the writer describes one subject first and then moves on to the second subject. In such a structure, the writer would discuss everything

about subject A before moving on to discuss subject B. This structure results in larger blocks devoted to each subject.

In a **point-by-point** structure, the writer organizes his or her writing around points of similarity or difference between the two subjects, so each subject is discussed in relation to a point of similarity or difference. This structure results in both subject A and B being discussed within a paragraph.

### Subject-by-Subject Pattern

**Topic Sentence:** Similarities and/or differences in Subject A and Subject B.

- I. Subject A
  - A. Point #1
  - B. Point #2
  - C. Point #3
  - D. Point #4
  - E. Point #5
- II. Subject B
  - A. Point #1
  - B. Point #2
  - C. Point #3
  - D. Point #4
  - E. Point #5

**Topic Sentence:** Fred Flintstone and Ralph Kramden are remarkably similar.

- I. Fred Flintstone
  - A. Appearance
  - B. Personality
  - C. Friend
  - D. Activity
  - E. Job
- II. Ralph Kramden
  - A. Appearance
  - B. Personality
  - C. Friend
  - D. Activity
  - E. Job

### Point-by-Point Pattern

**Topic Sentence:** Similarities and/or differences in Subject A and Subject B.

- I. Main point #1
  - A. Subject A
  - B. Subject B
- II. Main point #2
  - A. Subject A
  - B. Subject B
- III. Main point #3
  - A. Subject A
  - B. Subject B
- IV. Main point #4
  - A. Subject A
  - B. Subject B
- V. Main point #5
  - A. Subject A
  - B. Subject B

**Topic Sentence:** Fred Flintstone and Ralph Kramden are remarkably similar.

- I. Appearance
  - A. Fred
  - B. Ralph
- II. Personality
  - A. Fred
  - B. Ralph
- III. Friends
  - A. Fred (Barney Rubble)
  - B. Ralph (Ed Norton)
- IV. Activities
  - A. Fred
  - B. Ralph
- V. Jobs
  - A. Fred
  - B. Ralph

## Essay Outline

- I. Introduction
    - Thesis
  - II. Main idea #1
    - A. Support topic
      - 1. Specific support
      - 2. Specific support
    - B. Support topic
    - C. Support topic
  - III. Main idea #2
    - A. Support topic
      - 1. Specific support
      - 2. Specific support
    - B. Support topic
    - C. Support topic
  - IV. Main idea #3
    - A. Support topic
      - 1. Specific support
      - 2. Specific support
    - B. Support topic
    - C. Support topic
  - V. Conclusion
- I. Introduction
    - Thesis: Fred Flintstone of *The Flintstones* and Ralph Kramden of *The Honeymooners* are similar in appearance, habits, and occupations.
  - II. The most striking similarity between Fred Flintstone and Ralph Kramden is their appearance.
    - A. Appearance
      - 1. Large
      - 2. Potbellies
      - 3. Colorful clothes
      - 4. Dark hair
      - 5. Five o'clock shadow
    - B. Personality
      - 1. Boisterous
      - 2. Act before they think
      - 3. Big mouths
  - III. As well as having similar appearances, Fred and Ralph engage in similar social activities.
    - A. Bowling with guys
    - B. Bowling teams
    - C. Bowling partners
      - 1. Barney Rubble
      - 2. Ed Norton
    - D. Similarity of friends
  - IV. Finally, when Fred Flintstone and Ralph Kramden put down their bowling balls, they earn their living by working similar jobs.
    - A. Fred drives truck
    - B. Ralph drives bus
    - C. Hours
    - D. Pay
  - V. Conclusion

## Thesis Statements for Comparison/Contrast

The topic sentence of a paragraph or the thesis of an essay should name the subjects (A and B) and announce the focus on contrast and/or comparison.

In a blueprinted thesis, the writer spells out the main points the essay will cover. In a general thesis, the writer states a general opinion but leaves the enumeration of points to the body of the essay.

Fred Flintstone of *The Flintstones* and Ralph Kramden of *The Honeymooners* are remarkably similar.

The topic sentence names the subjects of the comparison, Fred and Ralph, and announces the focus on similarities.

When we moved from Chapel Hill to Richmond, I discovered my new and old neighborhoods were not as different as I had expected.

This topic sentence names the subjects, Chapel Hill and Richmond, and announces comparison as the focus.

My neighborhoods in Chapel Hill and Richmond had similar kinds of kids and similar activities. (blueprinted thesis)

Notice how this topic sentence names the subjects, Chapel Hill and Richmond, and spells out the areas of similarity.

### Contrast Thesis Examples

Although football and soccer are both popular sports for kids, football is more expensive and more dangerous than soccer.

The topic sentence names the subjects, football and soccer, and spells out the areas of difference.

My junior and senior years in high school were as different as night and day.

This topic sentence names the subjects, my junior and senior years, and announces contrast as the focus.

My junior and senior years in high school differed in the amount of work expected of me and the amount of freedom I had. (blueprinted thesis)

Notice that this main idea statement names the two subjects to be compared, my junior and senior years, and spells out the differences that the writer will develop.

### Comparison/Contrast Thesis Examples

Despite the two shows' obvious differences in form and setting, the main characters of the shows share a number of similarities. Fred Flintstone of *The Flintstones* and Ralph Kramden of *The Honeymooners* are similar in appearance, habits, and occupations.

The thesis names the subjects of the comparison, Fred and Ralph, and lists their similarities.

Although ultralight and single-engine planes are visually similar, they differ in construction, flight requirements, and cost.

Although Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Steve Martin's *L.A. Story* are from different periods and are different genres, they are similar in plot, theme, and characterization. (blueprinted thesis)

The thesis announces the subjects of the essay, ultralight and single-engine planes, and spells out their differences.

This essay will emphasize similarities.

## Transitions

Transitions used in comparison generally show similarity or addition, and transitions used in contrast generally show difference or dissimilarity, but many transitions can be appropriate in comparison or contrast depending on the content.

### Common Transitional Devices Used for Comparison

also	in addition
as a matter of fact	in fact
besides	likewise
for instance	moreover
furthermore	similarly

### Common Transitional Devices Used for Contrast

conversely	nonetheless
however	otherwise
instead	on the contrary
nevertheless	on the other hand

### Tips on Planning Comparison/Contrast

1. Select the subjects for your comparison/contrast with a purpose and audience in mind. There should be a reason for bringing the two topics together. Are you trying to help the reader understand the subjects or persuade the reader that one subject is preferable to the other? There wouldn't be any good reason to compare/contrast knives and forks, for example, because such a comparison would serve no useful purpose for the reader. There should also be a basis for your comparison. For example, it wouldn't make sense to compare apples and *Star Trek* because they aren't in the same category and therefore the comparison wouldn't make sense. Try to compare/contrast two things that share a basis for comparison (two teachers, two cars, two players, two air conditioners, etc.).

2. List similarities and differences in your subjects, making sure you discuss the same topics for subject A and subject B.
3. Decide if your subjects share more similarities or differences. You will want to emphasize either similarities or differences so that you leave a clear impression with your reader.



1. **Avoid obvious comparisons.** It's not very interesting to hear what we already know, so try examining similarities or differences that aren't obvious to the reader.
2. **Avoid incomplete comparisons.** A comparison that does not discuss the same elements for both subjects (A and B) would confuse the reader. For example, if you were contrasting two jobs and discussed the pay, hours, and responsibilities of one job and the hours, responsibilities, and benefits of the second job, the reader would wonder why you didn't discuss the pay and benefits of both jobs.
3. **Avoid confusing comparisons.** A comparison that evenly balances the similarities and differences in two subjects or a comparison that balances positive and negative elements of two subjects can confuse the reader. The writer should emphasize either the similarities or the differences in two subjects and emphasize either the positive or the negative elements of the subjects. For example, if you are contrasting two teachers and you include an equal number of similarities and differences, the reader may wonder if the teachers are more alike or more different. If you include both positive and negative qualities of each teacher, the reader will be confused about whether you feel the teachers are good or bad.

## Writing Assignment

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. Choose two TV shows, magazines, or movies that you know well and compare or contrast them. If you select two items of the same type (two soap operas, two sports magazines), you would probably want to focus on differences. Comparisons are most effective with two items the reader would expect to be different, such as two different types of movies or TV shows.
2. Choose two entertainers, athletes, or leaders and compare/contrast them. You might want to use contrast to show that one provides a good example and the other does not. You might want to use comparison to show how two people who the reader would expect to be different have similar behaviors, attitudes, mannerisms, and so forth.

3. Do you notice a difference in your spouse, boss, child, or yourself on a good day and a bad day? Compare their or your behaviors, attitudes, speech, and so forth on a good and bad day.
4. Choose two products you are familiar with (cell phones, stereos, guitars) and compare and contrast them.
5. What are the differences between your generation and your parents' or grandparents' generation? You might want to consider differences in dress, behavior, beliefs, and attitudes towards such things as money, responsibility, honesty, work, and education.

## Writing Assignment



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# Chapter 13

## Cause and Effect

Causes and effects focus on why things happen and what their results or consequences are. Causes are the reasons why something happened; they answer the question “Why did the event happen?” The causes of a car accident might be bad weather conditions, inattention on the driver’s part, or faulty brakes. Causes occur before the event and make the event happen. Effects are the direct results or consequences of an event; they respond to the question “What happened because of the event?” The effects of a car accident might be injury, litigation, or increased insurance premiums. Effects come after the event and are the direct results of the event.

The study of causes and effects is central to many disciplines. For example, historians analyze causes and effects of historical events. What were the causes of the Civil War? What were the results of the Treaty of Versailles? Scientists attempt to unravel causes and effects as well. What causes cancer cells to multiply in the body? What effect do they have on healthy cells? What effect does shade have on plant growth? What are the effects of overfishing, pollution, or dams on the salmon population?

## Examples of Cause and Effect

### Peer Example Cause Paragraph



Beth

“ Writing about the reasons I decided to return to school helped me remember how much I want a degree and helped me stay motivated. ”

#### Going Nowhere

My decision to return to school was motivated by my desire to better myself. After working for minimum wage for two years, I realized that without a degree, I couldn't earn enough money to support myself, let alone support a family. My salary barely covered my living expenses, and I had nothing left over for emergencies, extras, or savings. Without a degree, I had no hope of getting a promotion or a raise. My job and my life were going nowhere, and I was beginning to feel like a loser. I needed to make a change; I needed to do something to turn my life around and have a brighter future. When I found out I could take classes part-time and still keep my job, I decided that going back to school was the perfect solution. It would allow me to work toward a degree while supporting myself.

### Peer Example Effect Paragraph

Beth

“ Returning to school has changed my life, and writing this paragraph helped me analyze the effects, both good and bad. ”

#### Poor but Proud

My decision to return to school has had a big impact on my life. First, because of the added expense of books and tuition, I have even less spending money than I did before I came back to school. This has meant that I've had to postpone making big purchases such as replacing the dishwasher when it broke, and I've had to cut back on small expenses such as going out to eat and going to the movies. Not only do I have less money than before I went back to school, but I also have less time. Rather than watching TV after dinner, I now study. Gone are the days when I could spend hours hanging out with my friends. These days most of my free time is spent studying and completing reading and writing assignments for my classes. By far the most important effect on my life, however, has been the change in the way I see myself. Through my experiences in school, I have gained a new respect for myself. I have learned I can set my mind to something and do it, and this new confidence in myself far outweighs the temporary inconveniences of not having as much time or money as I once did.

## Organization of Cause/Effect

Cause/effect paragraphs and essays generally focus on the causes or the effects of an event, problem, or phenomenon. Some longer essays examine both causes and effects. The topic sentence or thesis announces whether

cause, effects, or both will be examined, and the supporting sentences or paragraphs develop those causes or effects.

## Thesis Statements for Cause/Effect

The topic sentence or thesis should present the event or phenomenon that will be analyzed and announce whether causes, effects, or both will be examined.

Salmon populations have dwindled due to overfishing, pollution, and the presence of dams on spawning runs.

This thesis examines the causes of the decline in the salmon population. Since it announces the three causes the essay will examine, we call it a blueprinted thesis.

World War II devastated the economy of Germany.

This thesis announces a focus on the effects of World War II on the German economy.

Acid rain is an environmental catastrophe with complex causes and devastating effects.

This essay will examine both the causes and effects of acid rain in an attempt to persuade the reader to do something about the problem.

## Transitions

There are no transitions specific to cause. Use those transitions that show you are adding causes to the ones already discussed or those that show sequence.

### Addition

also	in addition
as a matter of fact	in fact
besides	likewise
for instance	moreover
furthermore	similarly

### Sequence

afterward	in the end
at last	meanwhile
at the same time	next
at this point	soon after
by this time	subsequently
eventually	then
finally	to begin with
first, second, third, etc.	

There are three transitions especially useful in effect:

as a result  
consequently  
therefore

### Tips on Planning Cause or Effect

1. Keep the purpose and length of your paper in mind as you decide whether to focus on causes, effects, or both. It would be difficult to do justice to the causes and effects of World War I in a short essay.
2. List all the causes and/or effects you can think of for your event or phenomenon.
3. Examine each cause or effect to determine whether it is a *direct* cause or effect of your event. If you can discuss the cause or effect without having to discuss any other causes or effects, then more than likely it is a direct cause. For example, the direct causes of your car accident might be the slick road, the bad condition of your brakes, and your slow reaction to the car stopping in front of you. Indirect causes might be the lack of funds that led to your not getting your brakes fixed and the fact that you stayed up all night writing a paper. You may wish to discuss secondary or indirect causes in your essay, but do not present them as direct or primary causes.
4. If there are numerous causes and/or effects to discuss, group them into related categories (political, economic, social, physical, emotional, etc.).
5. Clearly establish or demonstrate the cause or effect relationship present. Make sure the reader can understand how A caused B or how C was the result of B.



1. **Avoid mistaking coincidence (two unrelated things happening together) for cause or effect.** Just because something happened before an event doesn't mean it caused the event to happen. Similarly, just because something happened after an event doesn't mean it is a result or consequence of the event.
2. **Avoid oversimplification.** Many problems have complex causes and complex effects. It would be an oversimplification to say that any one change would solve all the problems we face in our country. Politicians often want to convince the public that they have the solutions to all the problems of society while their opponents are the cause of all the problems.

### 3. *Don't confuse affect and effect.*

*Affect* is a verb meaning “to influence.”

**Example:** The movie seriously affected my mood.

The prescription drug did not affect his driving.

*Effect* is usually used as a noun meaning “result.”

**Example:** The effects of the flood devastated the community.

The drug seemed to have no effect.

When used as a verb, *effect* means “to make or to cause to happen.”

**Example:** He effected changes in his routine.

I will effect the changes as soon as possible.

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. What causes stress in students? How does stress affect students? Develop a paper in which you analyze either the causes or effects of stress on students.
2. Discuss the effects of being raised by liberal, authoritarian, or conservative parents.
3. Have you ever quit a job? Discuss why you decided to quit your job or how quitting the job affected your life.
4. Why did you decide to enroll in college? How did that decision change your life? Discuss either the causes or effect of starting college or of dropping out of college.
5. What has been most influential in determining who you are? Has your cultural heritage, race, gender, religion, education, friends, or a particular family member influenced you the most? Explain how this factor or person has influenced who you are (your values, beliefs, actions, and dreams).

Writing  
Assignment



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# Chapter 14

## Definition

In a definition, the writer defines or puts boundaries around a term, concept, or idea in order to clarify its meaning. Definitions answer the question “What is it?” Definitions can be as short as a few words or as long as an essay or an entire book. A simple dictionary definition might be enough to clarify an unfamiliar term, but an extended definition might be needed to define the meaning of *liberty* or *Generation X*. The goal of a good definition is to help the reader understand the subject.

An *extended* definition is a long definition that employs a number of techniques to limit, distinguish, or clarify a term or concept. In an extended definition, the writer might use several rhetorical patterns to clarify a subject. For example, a writer might describe, give examples, compare and contrast, analyze (break the subject down into component parts), or examine causes and effects in order to clarify the subject of the definition.



## Examples of Definition

### Peer Example Definition Paragraph



Alicia

“My purpose in writing this definition was to persuade the reader that fathers should take responsibility for their children.”

#### Deadbeat Dads

A deadbeat dad is a biological father who refuses to live up to his financial responsibilities to his child. Any man who fathers a child and fails to support that child financially, whether or not mandated by a court to pay child support, is considered a deadbeat dad. A biological father can be classified as deadbeat regardless of whether he is or ever was married to the mother of his child because fatherhood, not marriage, determines responsibility. A deadbeat dad can be distinguished from other deadbeat citizens who default on their legal debts because the deadbeat dad harms those for whom he is morally responsible. The effects of a deadbeat father extend beyond the material realm of financial deprivations, for children of deadbeat dads often suffer from feelings of low self-worth and abandonment. Long after a child has grown up, he may still harbor resentment and hostility toward male authority figures as a result of his deadbeat dad.

### Peer Example Definition Essay

Alicia

#### Deadbeat Dads

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed into law legislation that would make it easier for states to track down fathers who fail to make their child support payments. As a result of this legislation, the paychecks of delinquent fathers can be garnished in order to recover child support payments. The problem of deadbeat dads is larger than most people suspect. Nationwide, millions of men have defaulted on their court-mandated child support payments. And this number doesn't include the millions of men who have fathered children whom they have never acknowledged or taken responsibility for. Any man who fathers a child and fails to support that child financially, whether or not he was married to the mother of his child, and whether or not he was mandated by a court to pay child support, should be considered a deadbeat dad. A deadbeat dad is a biological father who refuses to live up to his financial responsibilities to his child.

Contrary to popular belief, most deadbeat dads are gainfully employed and are unwilling rather than unable to make child support payments. They choose not to support their children for a variety of reasons, many of which are understandable but not excusable. Sending part of their paycheck each month to support children they may no longer have contact with reduces the amount of money they have to meet their personal expenses. Additionally, many absent fathers feel it is unfair that they should be burdened by their past, especially if they have taken on the responsibility of a second family. What these delinquent fathers fail to realize is that even if their children are out of sight and out of mind, the needs of the children are no less real.

A deadbeat dad is different from someone who is merely irresponsible or who has defaulted on other types of debt. In these days of easy credit, many people find themselves overextended financially, and as a result, they default on loans and/or credit card payments. However, these people hurt only themselves. They may lose the car or house they were unable to pay for, their credit is affected (making it more difficult for them to borrow again), and they may lose face in their community. On the other hand, the father who fails to make child support payments hurts not himself, but those for whom he is morally responsible. Rather than inconvenience or deprive himself, he deprives those who are unable to support themselves and who are therefore dependent on him. To make matters worse, a father who defaults on his financial responsibility to his children has, up until now, gone largely unpunished. Society has failed to stigmatize deadbeat dads, and courts have failed to enforce even court-mandated child support payments.

The effect of a deadbeat dad on his children is devastating. Most children suffer doubly for having been abandoned emotionally and financially. Not only do they suffer the emotional deprivation of not having a father present, but they may also suffer physical deprivation as well. Many of these children lack adequate shelter, heat, food, and clothing because their mother is unable to earn enough money to cover these expenses. As a result, they grow up with feelings of low self-esteem because they were abandoned. They frequently do poorly in school and get in trouble with the law. Long after these children have grown up, they may still harbor resentment and hostility toward male authority figures as a result of their deadbeat dads.

The problem of deadbeat dads will not disappear any time soon, despite the recent legislation signed by the President. The legislation does nothing to address the hundreds of thousands of biological fathers who never married the mothers of their children and who take no responsibility, either emotionally or financially, for their offspring. Society needs to broaden the definition of what constitutes a deadbeat dad and understand the harmful effects deadbeat dads have on their children if we are to put legislative muscle behind the requirement that fathers help care for their children, at the very least financially.

## Organization of Definition

Definition paragraphs and essays use a variety of patterns to limit or define a term or concept. The strategies employed to define the term will determine the structure of the essay.

## Thesis Statements for Definition

The topic sentence or thesis names the subject of the definition and makes it apparent that the term will be defined. Sometimes, a thesis names the class to which the subject belongs and gives particular features that distinguish it from others. In addition, a thesis may reflect the writer's purpose or attitude toward the term.

A fanatic is a person who becomes obsessed with his or her beliefs.

This thesis names the term that will be defined, *fanatic*; it names the class, *a type of person*; and it gives the person's distinguishing characteristics.

A demolition derby is a contest in which drivers ram old cars into one another until only one car is left running.

This thesis places the subject, *demolition derby*, into a general class, *contest*, and then gives its distinguishing characteristics.

A good doctor is a doctor who puts patients first.

This thesis also names the term, the class, and the distinguishing characteristics.

My family's definition of acceptable behavior is a hard one to meet.

This thesis names the term or concept to be defined and gives an opinion about it.

## Transitions

Because definition can be done in so many ways, there are no transitions specific to this pattern. Use the transitions that are appropriate for the rhetorical patterns you use in defining your subject.

### Tips on Planning Definition

1. Examine the other rhetorical patterns in Part III (description, narration, example/illustration, process analysis, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, classification, summary, analysis/division, and argument/persuasion) and decide which would help clarify the meaning of your subject.
2. Consider examples of what your subject is *not*. Often it is useful to include a sentence or a paragraph that distinguishes your subject from something with which it might be confused. For example, in a definition of a slang term such as *computer nerd*, you would want to distinguish between a computer nerd and someone who is merely interested in computers.
3. Explore concrete ways to explain abstract terms. For example, if you are defining an abstraction such as *friendship*, you will need to give lots of concrete examples of what friendship means to you.
4. If you are defining a type of person, consider describing the type's appearance and behavior; providing examples of the type; and differentiating this type from other, similar types.



1. **Avoid giving only the denotation, or dictionary definition, of the term.** Often the dictionary definition is limited and unclear, and dictionaries don't address connotations, or the emotional associations, of words. For example, defining a *cheat* simply as "a dishonest person" misses the intensity of the word's negative connotations. The writer could address those connotations of the word by defining a cheat as the worst sort of dishonest person.
2. **Avoid circular definitions.** Don't use the term itself in the definition. For example, you wouldn't want to define a mystery novel as a novel about a mystery. A better definition of a mystery novel would be "A novel that centers on the suspense of solving an unexplained, unknown, or secret event."
3. **Avoid oversimplification.** If you are defining an abstract term, a single example or explanation will not adequately explain your term because abstract terms tend to have different meanings for different people. For example, a term such as *beauty* or *friendship* would require numerous examples and explanations.

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. Define the role you play in your family (caretaker, peacemaker, rebel, etc.).
2. Choose a slang term (tight, trippin', skeezy, etc.) and define it.
3. Define a type of person (jock, wimp, punk, computer nerd, macho, etc.).
4. Define a good doctor, a good health club, a good tennis racket, or a good running shoe.
5. Define your cultural heritage and the role it plays in determining who you are. In defining your cultural heritage, you might want to consider describing it, giving examples of it, comparing and contrasting it with another heritage that is similar but not the same, analyzing it (break the subject down into component parts), or examining causes and effects of your heritage (who you get it from and how it affects you).



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## Writing Assignment

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# Chapter 15

## Classification

Classification has to do with sorting things into categories. Children do it when they sort objects by color or shape. Grocery stores do it when they group dairy products or meats or produce together. Music stores do it when they sort CDs by musical genre—rock, jazz, classical. Botanists and biologists use elaborate classification systems when they sort plants and animals into groups based on similar characteristics. Classification is a part of everyday life, and it can be a useful tool in organizing information.

In classifying, the writer sorts subjects into groups or categories. The subject for classification is plural (movies, books, pain medications, etc.). The writer generally classifies or sorts the subject into three or more groups. If the writer sorted the subject into only two categories, the essay might be confused with comparison and contrast.

## Examples of Classification

### Peer Example Classification Paragraph



Dan

“ I had a lot of fun trying to come up with categories for the types of campers I have encountered. ”

#### Campers

Campers can be classified as weekend partyers, family vacationers, or true outdoorsmen or -women based on their motivations, general preparedness, and attitudes toward nature. Weekend partyers see camping as an opportunity for an extended outdoor party. They arrive at the campsite laden with lawn chairs, games, coolers full of their favorite beverage, and plenty of party snacks. Unfortunately, they often neglect such essential items as appropriate clothing, insect repellent, and food, and they frequently demonstrate ignorance of basic camping techniques such as how to set up a tent. They frequently party late into the night, preventing those around them from getting any sleep, and they leave behind a campsite littered with their trash. The second type of camper, the family vacationer, is motivated by a desire for inexpensive accommodations that also provide educational and entertainment opportunities for the entire family. They bring along trunk loads of tents, chairs, lanterns, and toys, turning their campsites into miniature villages, from which they organize expeditions to nearby natural or manmade attractions. The best parents go out of their way to set a good example for their children by picking up trash and not harming plants or animals. The true outdoorsmen and -women, unlike other campers, are interested in the opportunity to appreciate nature, and they are the least visible and obtrusive type of camper. They are the minimalists of the camping world, arriving with carefully packed essential equipment, and they typically spend their days hiking, fishing, and taking pictures. The clean campsites they leave behind reflect their respect for nature. Campers say a lot about themselves by the way they behave while camping.

### Peer Example Classification Essay

Dan

#### Campers

I've enjoyed camping most of my life. When I was a child, my family camped when we went on vacation because we couldn't afford motels. Through those early experiences, I learned to love being close to nature and roughing it. When I was old enough, I went camping on my own or with friends. Now that I have my own family, I've tried to teach my children to enjoy the great outdoors while respecting and protecting it for their children to enjoy as well. In all my years of camping, I've had plenty of opportunity to observe other campers. Whether I'm camping in a local park or at Yellowstone, I've noticed that campers tend to fall into three categories: weekend partyers, vacationing families, and true outdoorsmen or -women. These types of campers can be differentiated based on their motives for camping, their preparedness, their activities, and their attitudes toward nature.

The least conventional campers are the partyers. The partyers are usually young people who want to socialize away from the watchful eyes of parents

and police, and they see camping as an opportunity for an extended outdoor party. They arrive at the campsite laden with lawn chairs, boom boxes, games, coolers full of their favorite beverage, and plenty of party snacks. Unfortunately, they often neglect such essential items as appropriate clothing, insect repellent, tent stakes, cooking utensils, and food, and they frequently demonstrate a characteristic ignorance of basic camping techniques such as how to set up a tent. They frequently party late into the night, preventing those around them from getting any sleep, and they leave behind a campsite littered with their trash. They see nature as little more than a backdrop for their parties, and they act as if a professional cleaning crew will clean up behind them. Everyone but the partyers themselves is happy to see these folks pack up their coolers and go home.

The largest and most traditional group of campers is the vacationing families. These families are motivated by their desire for inexpensive accommodations that also provide educational and entertainment opportunities for the entire family. They generally see their campsite as a base from which to organize expeditions to nearby natural or manmade attractions. They bring along trunk loads of tents, chairs, lanterns, and toys, turning their campsites into miniature villages. At their worst, these families arrive in air-conditioned camper vans or trailers, and they bring along TVs, mopeds, and other noisy diversions. These mobile home campers have little awareness, appreciation, or respect for nature, and in order to accommodate them, parks have had to install water and electrical hookups, waste dumping sites, and paved campsites. At their best, camping families go out of their way to teach their children to appreciate and respect nature. They participate in the park's organized nature programs, and parents set a good example for their children by picking up trash and by not harming plants or animals.

The true outdoorsmen and -women are the least obtrusive or visible type of camper. They are motivated by a desire to learn from and appreciate the pristine natural beauty of the areas in which they camp. These campers generally choose wilderness campsites, and they often arrive on foot, carrying carefully packed essential equipment on their backs. Although they are the minimalists of the camping world, they are well prepared for any emergency. They carry lightweight tents, freeze-dried food, compact utensils, insect repellent, first-aid equipment, rain gear, and cold-weather gear. They come so well prepared because they know that the weather can turn quickly and they must be prepared to survive on their own. These campers spend their days hiking wilderness trails, observing and perhaps photographing the flora and fauna of the area. Because they try not to disturb either habitat or animals, they take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but footprints. The clean campsites they leave behind and the spectacular images they carry out with them reflect their reverence for nature.

These three types of campers perceive and make use of nature in different ways. The partyers see nature as a beautiful backdrop for their parties, but they take no responsibility for keeping it beautiful. The family campers wish to be comfortable while being entertained by nature as they might be by a tourist attraction. Last but not least, the true outdoorsmen and -women want to enjoy the pristine beauty of nature on its own terms. If more people shared the attitude of the true outdoorsmen and -women, the natural beauty of our parks and wild areas would stand a better chance of surviving for future generations to enjoy.



## Organization of Classification

Classification is a relatively easy pattern to use because it is so structured. Once you've determined your categories and their differentiating characteristics, it's just a matter of plugging in the differentiating characteristics in the same order for each category. If you're careful to keep everything in the same order as you listed it in your thesis, the essay almost writes itself.

Classification essays are structured first by category (classes or types you have divided your subject into) and then by differentiating characteristics (the ways your categories can be distinguished from one another). Categories should be developed in the same order as in the thesis, and the same differentiating characteristics should be discussed in the same order for each category.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Topic Sentence or Thesis</li> <li>II. Category #1               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Characteristic #1</li> <li>B. Characteristic #2</li> <li>C. Characteristic #3</li> <li>D. Characteristic #4</li> </ul> </li> <li>III. Category #2               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Characteristic #1</li> <li>B. Characteristic #2</li> <li>C. Characteristic #3</li> <li>D. Characteristic #4</li> </ul> </li> <li>IV. Category #3               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Characteristic #1</li> <li>B. Characteristic #2</li> <li>C. Characteristic #3</li> <li>D. Characteristic #4</li> </ul> </li> <li>V. Conclusion</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Campers can be classified as weekend partyers, family vacationers, or true outdoorsmen or -women based on their motivations, general preparedness, and attitudes toward nature.</li> <li>II. Partyers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Motivation</li> <li>B. General preparedness</li> <li>C. Attitude toward nature</li> </ul> </li> <li>III. Family vacationers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Motivation</li> <li>B. General preparedness</li> <li>C. Attitude toward nature</li> </ul> </li> <li>IV. True outdoorsmen or -women               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Motivation</li> <li>B. General preparedness</li> <li>C. Attitude toward nature</li> </ul> </li> <li>V. Conclusion</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## Thesis Statements for Classification

The topic sentence of a paragraph or the thesis of an essay should name the subject (what is being classified); the method (classify, group, kinds); and the categories (three or more groups). The thesis often includes the differentiating characteristics.

Electricians [subject] are classified [method] as foremen, journeymen, and apprentices [categories] based on their education, experience, and salary [differentiating characteristics].

This thesis classifies electricians into three groups (foremen, journeymen, and apprentices) and gives the characteristics that distinguish them (education, experience, and salary).

Tennis enthusiasts should be aware that there are three types [method] of racquets [subject]: wood, graphite, and steel [categories]. These racquets differ in price, flexibility, size, and durability [differentiating characteristics].

Nurses [subject] can be classified [method] as registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, or nurse assistants [categories]. These nurses can be differentiated based on their education, salary, and duties [differentiating characteristics].

Blind dates [subject] fall into three categories [method]: the total loser, the octopus, and the over-achiever [categories]. These types can be differentiated based on their appearance and behavior [differentiating characteristics].

This thesis sorts tennis rackets into three groups (wood, graphite, and steel) and gives the differentiating characteristics as price, flexibility, size, and durability.

This thesis gives the three categories of nurses and lists their differentiating characteristics as education, salary, and duties.

This humorous thesis classifies blind dates into three categories based on appearance and behavior.

## Transitions

Because there are no transitions that relate specifically to classification, you would use the transitions that best show the relationship between the ideas you are expressing.

### Tips on Planning Classification

1. Determine the purpose of your classification. Are you intending to inform your reader about the differences in the categories or persuade him or her that one category is superior to the others?
2. Determine the categories of your classification, making sure that there is no overlap in the categories. Make sure a group won't fit into more than one category.
3. Determine the differentiating characteristics of your categories.
4. Outline your essay, making sure that you discuss the same topics for each class or category and that you discuss them in the same order.



1. **Avoid oversimplification.** Be careful not to stereotype or misrepresent the subjects of your classification.
2. **Avoid overlapping categories.** Make sure your types fit into only one category. For example, you wouldn't want to classify responses to stress as self-destructive, destructive to others, and annoying because annoying responses could be either self-destructive or destructive to others.
3. **Avoid missing categories.** Make sure your categories account for all the types of your subject. For example, it wouldn't be accurate to classify horses as only Appaloosas, quarter horses, or thoroughbreds because there are many other types of horses such as palominos, Clydesdales, and so on.

## Writing Assignment

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. Choose a product you know well (guitars, stereos, bikes, etc.) and classify the various types of the product.
2. Classify types of athletes or sports fans in a particular sport.
3. Classify types of rock music, types of country music, types of rap, or types of some other music genre.
4. Describe a classification system used in one of your classes and explain the purpose of the system.
5. How would you describe the various lifestyles among your peers? You might choose to focus on a particular group such as your high school, your church group, or your co-workers. Write a paper in which you classify the most common lifestyles.



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# Chapter 16

## Summary

When you summarize, you use your own words to briefly report on or explain the ideas from a source such as a book or an essay. You reproduce the contents of a source in a condensed form, focusing on the author's main ideas and reporting them accurately and objectively. You report on the author's ideas but do not evaluate or judge them, so your opinions or ideas shouldn't be included. You must use your own words to express the ideas in the source. If you wish to use the author's words, you must use quotation marks around any words, phrases, and sentences that are the author's.

## Examples of Summary

### Peer Example Summary Paragraph



Alicia

“ Summarizing an article full of technical information is difficult because you have to understand the article thoroughly in order to condense it. ”

#### Bernstein’s “Class Society”

In “Is America Becoming More of a Class Society?” Aaron Bernstein argues that the U.S. economy is becoming more stratified based on a worker’s educational level. America has traditionally been a land of opportunity in which steady upward mobility was available to everyone. In the period up until the 1980s, all workers, regardless of education or class, made similar economic gains. However, new economic data shows that in the 80s, the American economy began to stratify, with mobility decreasing for workers with low skills and mobility increasing for educated workers. The same patterns of inequality continued into the early 1990s. Today, the salaries of workers with low skills are losing ground to inflation while the salaries of workers with college degrees are increasing. The mobility for low-income groups in the United States is now as low as, if not lower than, that of similar groups in many European countries. Many working families in this country are being forced to rely on food aid to make ends meet. The outlook for the 90s is no different, and the author concludes that the continued division between the classes threatens our democratic identity.

### Peer Example Summary Essay

Alicia

#### Bernstein’s “Class Society”

America has traditionally been a land of opportunity in which steady upward mobility was available to everyone. Workers who started at the bottom and worked hard could rise through the ranks to the top of a company. As long as such opportunities were available, Americans have been willing to tolerate wide gaps between rich and poor. However, new economic studies show that mobility is decreasing for the poor while increasing for the affluent and well educated. The American dream of working hard and moving up is no longer a reality for many Americans who find themselves trapped in a series of menial jobs with low pay and no chance for advancement. In “Is America Becoming More of a Class Society?,” Aaron Bernstein argues that the U.S. economy is becoming more stratified based on a worker’s educational level.

In the period up until the 1980s, the majority of workers, regardless of education or class, made similar economic gains. In the period from 1947 to 1973, the incomes of poor families rose faster than the incomes of rich families, and most economists agree that mobility was significantly greater in the 50s and 60s than it is today. Even as recently as the 70s, however, workers

made similar gains regardless of educational level. For example, the ten-year earnings of high school dropouts increased 45 percent, while the earnings of high school graduates increased 42 percent, and the earnings of college graduates increased 53 percent. However, even in the 70s, a growing disparity between the incomes of very poor and the very rich was evident. While the pay of men in the bottom fifth fell behind inflation by 11 percent, the pay of men in the top fifth gained 29 percent. The same trend was evident in the incomes of poor families, which gained only 16 percent, compared to 60 percent for rich families. In spite of this disparity between the top and bottom, the majority of families, 61 percent, were considered middle class.

In the 1980s, the American economy began to stratify, with mobility decreasing for workers with low skills and mobility increasing for educated workers. The earnings of less educated workers dropped behind that of college graduates, with the incomes of high school dropouts gaining only 14 percent, the incomes of high school grads gaining 20 percent, and the incomes of college grads gaining 55 percent. In addition, the disparity between rich and poor that became apparent in the 70s escalated during the 80s. The wages of workers on the bottom lost 34 percent to inflation while the wages of men on the top increased 56 percent over the ten-year period.

The same patterns of inequality continue into the early 1990s. Although most workers lost ground in the early 1990s, the wages of those at the top fell less than those at the bottom, continuing to widen the gap between the rich and poor. For example, wages for men in the top fifth fell by only 1 percent, and that of men with college degrees lost only 0.4 percent, whereas the wages of high school grads fell by 4 percent, and wages of high school dropouts fell by 11 percent. Perhaps most startling, the middle class had shrunk to 50 percent by 1992, and more than one-fourth of the workforce has fallen below the poverty line. This figure doesn't include the 5 to 10 percent of the population that is permanently unemployed. As opportunities for workers at the bottom have decreased, the poor have begun to take on the characteristics of a permanent lower class. The need for emergency food aid has increased dramatically, and American workers at the bottom have less mobility than workers in many European countries.

The outlook for the future is no different, and the author concludes that the continued division between the classes threatens our democratic identity. Our democracy has been based on a stable middle class and on the ideal of economic and social mobility for all. If the gap between rich and poor continues to widen, our democratic identity may suffer.

## Organization of Summary

The organization of a summary is based on the organization of the source. A summary presents the main points of the source in the same order they appear in the source.

## Thesis Statements for Summary

The thesis restates the main idea or thesis of the source.

In “A Case for Poetry,” Marjorie Abrams argues that children should study poetry in grade school.	This thesis announces the thesis of the article that is being summarized.
In the March 1, 2006, <i>Weekly Gazette</i> , Mark Cuffy argues that increasing funding for education will provide long-term solutions to the crime problem.	This thesis contains the author, title, and source of the article as well as a restatement of the author’s thesis.
In his essay “The Black and White Truth About Basketball,” Jeff Greenfield argues that “black” and “white” styles of play are an outgrowth of different economic and social conditions.	The writer states the thesis of the essay he will summarize.

## Transitions

Transitions that show addition and sequence are often used in summary.

### Addition

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also	in addition
as a matter of fact	in fact
besides	likewise
for instance	moreover
furthermore	similarly

### Sequence

---

afterward	in the end
at last	meanwhile
at the same time	next
at this point	soon after
by this time	subsequently
eventually	then
finally	to begin with
first, second, third, etc.	

## Tips on Planning a Summary

Writing a summary involves two things: thoroughly understanding the content of the source and reporting it accurately and objectively.

1. Look up unfamiliar vocabulary and make sure you understand the meaning of each word in context. Also make sure you understand any charts, graphs, or illustrations the author uses.
2. Take notes on and/or outline the source. Depending on the length of the original, it may be useful to state the main point of each paragraph in a sentence.
3. Determine the author's thesis and the main points used to support it.
4. Write your summary, reproducing the author's ideas in the order they were presented.
5. Check your summary for accuracy, balance, and coherence.

1. **Avoid mistaking details for main ideas.** Most examples, quotes, and statistics are support for main ideas. Although they may be interesting and memorable, don't confuse them with main ideas.

### Example

**Original:** "In the past, companies could hire unskilled people and train them into skilled jobs," says Henry B. Schacht, the former CEO of Cummins Engine Co. who now is chairman of AT&T's \$20 billion equipment unit. "My predecessor at Cummins moved from the shop floor and ended up as president." But because Cummins, like many companies, has cut many first-line managerial jobs, "today those stairs don't exist."

**Not the main idea:** Henry Schacht's predecessor started on the shop floor and eventually became the president.

**Main idea:** Because many companies have cut managerial positions, employees no longer have the ability to rise through the ranks.

2. **Avoid including your opinion.** Remember that a summary condenses but does not evaluate the author's ideas.

### Example

<b>Opinion:</b> Stogan seems way off base in concluding that absenteeism is due to worker burnout.	A summary shouldn't make judgments about the source. It should report objectively on the content.
--	---

<b>Summary:</b> Stogan concludes that absenteeism is caused by worker burnout.	This is an improved thesis for a summary essay.
--	---







3. **Avoid using the wording of the source.** Remember to use your own words when you summarize. It's a good idea to take notes from the source and use your notes to write the summary.

#### Example

**Original:** "After all, the U.S., unlike more rigid economies in Europe, has always been dynamic enough to provide steady upward mobility for workers."

**Unacceptable paraphrase:** The U.S. has a dynamic economy that provides steady upward mobility for workers, unlike the more rigid economies in Europe.

This would be an unacceptable paraphrase because it uses the same sentence structure and much of the same phrasing as the original.

**Acceptable paraphrase:** In the United States, unlike in Europe, workers have always been able to advance.

This is an acceptable summary or paraphrase of the original writing.

## Writing Assignment

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. Choose an essay or chapter from one of your textbooks and write a summary that explains the main points covered.
2. Pick up a local newspaper, choose a news story, article, or editorial, and summarize its contents.
3. Choose a movie or a TV show you know well and summarize the storyline. Remember that a summary is objective, so don't include your opinion of the show.
4. Use your class notes to summarize a class or lecture you attended.
5. Do you use the Internet to get information? Choose an Internet article or Web site that you know well and summarize the contents.

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## Chapter 17

# Analysis and Division

Both analysis and division can help you divide a large and complicated subject into manageable parts. Just as in a process analysis, where you divide a process into parts, in analysis and division you divide your subject (anything from your neighborhood to the Congress) into its component parts.

In analysis, the writer breaks down a subject into its component parts and examines one or more of the parts in order to clarify the meaning of the whole. For example, a writer might analyze the role of the shortstop in baseball, the role of a character in a short story, or the role of low interest rates in a bull market.

In division, the writer divides a single subject into its component parts, the way a pie is divided into pieces, and examines *each* of the components in order to clarify the meaning of the whole. For example, a writer might divide the components of a luxury hotel into rooms, service, restaurants, and amenities (pool, sauna, etc.) in order to demonstrate a point about what it takes to be a good luxury hotel or to show that Hotel X is a superb luxury hotel.

The same subject could be divided in multiple ways depending on your interests or purpose. For example, the subject *apartment* might be divided into rooms (kitchen, bedrooms, bathroom, living room, porch) or into aspects an apartment hunter might consider (rent, facilities, size, amenities). Similarly, a book could be divided by physical parts (table of contents, chapters, bibliography, index) or by writing elements (characterization, setting, conflict, and resolution).

## Examples of Analysis and Division

### Peer Example Analysis Paragraph



Beth

“ I chose to analyze how, on the television show *The Magic School Bus*, Ms. Frizzle’s appearance and attitude encourage students to be creative. ”

#### Ms. Frizzle

Ms. Frizzle’s appearance and attitude are central to the message the TV show *The Magic School Bus* teaches about learning. First, Ms. Frizzle’s appearance encourages creativity. Her outfits always mirror her lessons; for example, if she intends to have students learn about weather, her dress is covered with thunderclouds, lightning bolts, and rain showers. Next, her attitude is the opposite of that of the traditional elementary school teacher who wants children to be orderly, neat, and quiet. The Frizz, as the students affectionately call her, encourages her students to explore, take risks, be creative, make mistakes, and get dirty. As far as she’s concerned, it’s all part of the process of learning. In keeping with her attitude, she never lectures to students but instead sets up adventures that allow them to learn firsthand about natural phenomena. Everything about the Frizz, including her clothing and her attitude, encourages students to be creative and learn.

### Peer Example Division Paragraph



Alicia

“ By dividing a good health club into its component parts, I came up with a definition of what a good club should be. ”

#### A Good Health Club

A good health club can be recognized by examining its component parts. First and foremost, a good club should offer adequate facilities including large, well-lit exercise and aerobic rooms, dressing rooms, and a pool, sauna, steam room, and whirlpool. Moreover, well-maintained exercise equipment including weight machines, stair machines, bicycles, and rowing machines is a component that should not be overlooked. Next, a good club should offer a full range of classes including high- and low-impact aerobics, step aerobics, and yoga, as well as specialized classes on such topics as diet and nutrition. A well-trained, experienced, and helpful staff is also an essential element in a good club. Finally, a good club will offer such amenities as a nursery for children and a snack bar serving healthy, high-protein refreshments. If a club offers these elements at a price the patron can afford, he or she can’t go wrong.

## Organization of Analysis and Division

Analysis and division paragraphs and essays are structured around the parts of the subject the writer wishes to examine. Each supporting sentence of a paragraph examines one of the parts or divisions of the subject.

## Thesis Statements for Analysis and Division

### Analysis Examples

The thesis or topic sentence for analysis often states an opinion about the subject and names the parts to be analyzed.

The tone, imagery, and rhythm all contribute to the impact of “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” (literary analysis)

The writer will analyze the use of tone, imagery, and rhythm in the poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.”

Music plays a key role in establishing the mood of *The Piano*.

The writer will analyze the role played by music in the movie *The Piano*.

The role of the hero in a traditional western movie is clear-cut.

The writer will analyze the role of the hero in traditional western movies.

### Division Examples

The thesis or topic sentence for division names the subject and its component parts.

Our local government is divided into three primary components: the commissioners, the staff, and the volunteer committees.

The writer will divide local government into three component parts.

A reputable builder will provide a potential customer with a quote that contains a completion schedule and a breakdown of the costs of permits, fees, materials, and labor.

The writer will divide a construction bid into its component parts.

Blueprints for a typical house are divided into materials lists, exterior elevations, foundation plans, framing schedules, and electrical diagrams.

The writer divides the blueprints for a house into their component parts.

## Transitions

Transitions used in analysis and division can vary widely, but analysis often makes use of transitions that relate to sequence and/or addition.

### Sequence

afterward	in the end
at last	meanwhile
at the same time	next
at this point	soon after
by this time	subsequently
eventually	then
finally	to begin with
first, second, third, etc.	

### Addition

also	in addition
as a matter of fact	in fact
besides	likewise
for instance	moreover
furthermore	similarly

## Tips on Planning Analysis or Division

### Analysis

1. Brainstorm a list of some of the component parts of your subject.
2. Decide which elements seem most interesting or important, and select a limited number for your analysis.
3. Develop each element for your analysis by examining the role it plays in your subject. How does it function in the whole? How does it affect the whole?

### Division

1. Choose a subject that lends itself to division, one that can be broken down into component parts.
2. List the component parts of your subject, making sure there is no overlap in the parts.
3. If you are writing an essay, decide how you will divide your subject into paragraphs. If there are many parts to your subject, see whether the parts can be divided into larger categories that could be discussed in paragraphs. For example, if you were dividing a political party's platform into its parts, you might be able to divide the parts into economic policy, social policy, and foreign policy.



1. **Avoid obvious or purposeless analysis or divisions.** Keep your audience and purpose in mind when choosing a subject. Remember that analysis and division are supposed to clarify a complex subject. Therefore, choose a subject that needs explanation or clarification. For example, dividing table utensils into forks, knives, and spoons would bore readers because you aren't telling them anything they don't already know.
2. **Avoid incomplete divisions.** Make sure the sum of the parts equals the whole in division, and make sure not to leave out components. For example, you would confuse your reader if you divided the components of a good restaurant into service, atmosphere, and price—but left out food.
3. **Avoid overlapping parts in a division.** Each part of a division should be unique. For example, if you divided the parts of an action movie into the actors, the plot, the special effects, the music, and the stars, you would run into trouble because the actors and stars are overlapping categories.

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

### Analysis

1. Analyze one or more elements of a good restaurant, hotel, or club.
2. Analyze one or more common elements of a certain type of movie (horror, sci-fi, western, comedy, etc.).
3. Analyze one or more elements of a performance you have attended (ballet, opera, rock concert, etc.).
4. How do advertisers appeal to consumers? Analyze a specific TV, magazine, or Internet ad to determine the elements used appeal to the target audience. What do those elements tell you about the intended audience?
5. Analyze one or more elements of your favorite reality television program to show how it or they make the program interesting. For example, you might choose to break American Idol into footage of the early competition, performances, judges' comments, audience participation, and so forth, and discuss what role one or more of those parts plays in making the show interesting.



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## Writing Assignment

**Division**

1. Divide a good restaurant, hotel, or club into its component parts.
2. Divide a certain type of movie (horror, sci-fi, western, comedy, etc.) into its component parts.
3. Divide a commercial for a specific type of product (used cars, aspirin, dog food, beer, etc.) into parts and explain how they work together.
4. Divide some object you know well (sailboats, carburetor, golf swing, aquarium, terrarium, binoculars, etc.) into its parts in order to help your reader understand that object better.
5. Divide a reality television program into its component parts.

# Chapter 18

## Persuasion

Persuasion is really a purpose, not a pattern, and all the rhetorical patterns can be used to help persuade a reader. In persuasion, the writer attempts to convince the reader to share an opinion or point of view on an issue. Facts, statistics, examples, testimony from authority, and logical reasoning can all be used to support an opinion. In formal arguments, the writer not only presents evidence to support his or her opinion but also refutes the opposition. To *refute* the opposition means to show why the opposite side of an argument (the logic or evidence used by those who oppose your position) is not valid. Persuasion is useful in many college classes because many assignments require you to present evidence to support your opinion or point of view.



## Examples of Persuasion

### Peer Example Persuasion Paragraph



Tony

“ I argued against corporal punishment primarily by showing that it has negative effects. ”

#### Put Away the Paddle

Corporal punishment should not be used in secondary schools. First, corporal punishment aggravates antisocial behavior. Most parenting books advise parents to teach their children to solve conflicts using words rather than resorting to physical violence. When schools resort to physical punishment to resolve problems, they teach children it is acceptable to solve problems by hitting. Second, corporal punishment blocks the opportunity for communication between teacher and student. Many students who are behavior problems in school are acting out because of real or perceived injustices at home or in society. The teacher may be the only person in the student's life who is able and willing to help him. If, however, the teacher resorts to paddling, any chance at communication and positive growth is lost. Finally, corporal punishment instills fear rather than respect. Respect comes from the fair and even-handed use of authority, not from punitive measures that rob an individual of dignity. A faculty or an administration that uses paddling to solve discipline problems is relying on brute force and fear rather than on respect. Corporal punishment is worse than useless; it aggravates the very problems it is intended to solve.

### Peer Example Persuasion Essay

Tony

#### Put Away the Paddle

Corporal punishment is once again being accepted in many high schools. In an age when students are less orderly and less disciplined than ever before, parents and teachers perceive paddling as an effective way to instill orderliness in the student body. However, it is only a good solution for an authority too calloused or too frustrated to examine the problem and come up with constructive solutions. Our school administrations must not abdicate their responsibility to model constructive problem-solving behavior. Corporal punishment is counterproductive because it aggravates antisocial behavior in the student, breaks down communication between teacher and student, and instills fear rather than respect.

Corporal punishment aggravates antisocial behavior. Most parenting books advise parents to teach their children to solve conflicts using words rather than resorting to physical violence. Surely, solving problems with words rather than force is a value we wish to instill in our children if we wish them to be nonviolent members of society. However, when schools resort to physical punishment to resolve problems, they teach children that it is acceptable to solve problems by hitting. Not only is corporal punishment a bad example, but it aggravates the problem because it makes the student angrier than he was in the first place. As a result, the student will become even more rebellious against a system he sees as unfair and hypocritical. Additionally, other students may see the

student who was paddled as a kind of hero or martyr to authority, thus gaining the student the attention and respect of his peers.

In addition to aggravating antisocial behavior, corporal punishment blocks the opportunity for communication between teacher and student. Many students who are behavior problems in school are acting out because of real or perceived injustices at home or in society. The teacher may be the only person who can be objective and helpful to the student. Rather than recommending that the student be paddled or doing the paddling himself, the teacher should sit down with the student and attempt to discover the reasons for the inappropriate behavior. The teacher may be the only person in the student's life who is able and willing to help him. These are the hardest years of the student's emotional life, the years in which he will establish his emotional identity and his relation to society. The teacher is in an excellent position to help him grow. If, however, the teacher resorts to paddling, any chance at communication and positive growth are lost.

Finally, corporal punishment instills fear rather than respect. Everyone would agree that students need to learn respect for authority if they are to be productive, nonviolent members of society. Respect, however, comes from the fair and even-handed use of authority, not from punitive measures that rob an individual of dignity. It is impossible to respect someone or something that treats you unfairly or with disrespect, and it would be impossible to respect someone who is paddling you. Paddling is the most primitive way of saying, "I can enforce my power over you with disrespect." Nothing can come from this attitude but continued discord. A faculty or an administration that uses paddling to solve discipline problems is relying on brute force and fear rather than on respect.

Corporal punishment is worse than useless; it aggravates the very problems it is intended to solve. Paddling a secondary school student compounds the anger and alienation in a young person who is living through the most difficult and crucial years of his life. It robs the teacher of the opportunity to help the student by modeling constructive problem-solving strategies, and it instills fear of authority rather than respect for authority. A school system that relies on paddling is abdicating its responsibility.

## Organization of Persuasion

Arguments are structured around the evidence or reasons the writer presents to prove the opinion. Each supporting sentence or paragraph develops one main point used to support the opinion expressed in the topic sentence or thesis.

## Thesis Statements for Persuasion

The thesis should state an opinion (a statement of belief, point of view, feeling, or attitude that can be discussed or argued about). A blueprinted thesis lists the major support areas (the reasons why the opinion is valid). The list of supports in a blueprinted thesis should be parallel. The elements should

be in the same form: all nouns, all prepositional phrases, all verb phrases, and so on.

Smokers should stop smoking because smoking damages their health, their appearance, and their pocket-book. (blueprinted thesis)

This blueprinted thesis announces the opinion that smokers should kick the habit and the three major reasons why smokers should quit. Notice that the list of reasons is parallel because each element is a noun.

Students who plagiarize should be expelled from college because they hurt the institution, they hurt other students, and they hurt themselves. (blueprinted thesis)

This blueprinted thesis states the reasons why students who plagiarize should be expelled. Again notice the parallelism in the list of major details: all are independent clauses that begin with “they hurt.”

Fairhope College should computerize its registration process in order to save time, money, and frustration. (blueprinted thesis)

This blueprinted thesis states the reasons why Fairhope College should computerize its registration process. Again notice that the list of reasons is parallel because each element is a noun.

*Return of the Swamp Monster* is a terrible movie.

The thesis states a clear opinion but does not list supports in the thesis.

## Transitions

Use transitions appropriate for the rhetorical patterns and ideas used to support the opinion.

### Tips on Planning Persuasion

In writing a persuasive paragraph or essay, the writer states the idea or belief he or she is trying to convince the reader to share and then backs that idea up with supports, evidence, or reasons why that belief is valid.

1. Decide on the opinion you want your specific audience to share.
2. Formulate a tentative thesis statement.
3. Generate ideas to support your opinion. Focus on the reasons why your opinion is valid. Examine each of the rhetorical patterns in Chapters 8 through 17 to see which might be useful in helping to prove your thesis.
4. In a formal argument essay, you may be required to refute the opposition case. To do so, generate a list of supports for the opposition and think of reasons why their points are not valid.



1. **Avoid factual topics.** If a topic is either true or false, the answer can be looked up or researched, but there is no purpose for argument. For example, there would be no point arguing that the New England Patriots won the Super Bowl in 2005 because the statement is either true or false, and no amount of arguing will alter the facts.
2. **Avoid obvious topics.** If everyone would agree with a statement, then there is little point in building a careful argument to support it. For example, since most people would agree with the statement that smoking damages a person's health, you would have to work very hard to get an audience's attention with this argument. (You can do it, but you have to find a way to make an argument that your audience has not already heard many times.) A more interesting and controversial topic for a general audience would be the statement that smoking should be banned in the workplace or in public places.
3. **Avoid oversimplification.** Don't oversimplify a complex problem or you will lose credibility. For example, if you argue that the planet's pollution problems could be solved if we all recycled, you will lose your audience's trust—most people know that our pollution problems cannot be solved so easily.
4. **Avoid unfair arguments.** Don't distort the truth or mislead your audience, and don't unfairly characterize the opposition or its case. For example, it would be unfair to characterize the opposition as a bunch of fools or dismiss their case as flimsy or ridiculous without presenting evidence.

## Writing Assignment

Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. How important should attendance be in determining a student's grade? Argue for or against attendance requirements at your school.
2. More and more states are instituting graduation requirements. Argue for or against the requirement that students pass a skills test before graduation from high school, college, or a technical program.
3. Argue for or against strict penalties for academic dishonesty.
4. How far should the government be allowed to go to protect against terrorism? At what point do we lose the individual liberties we are supposedly protecting?
5. Argue for the legalization of something that is currently illegal or the criminalization of something that is currently legal.



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# Part IV

## Writing Elements and Skills

### Introduction

All the writing you do, in fact every sentence you write in letters, e-mails, and school papers, requires you to use many different skills. You must choose the appropriate words and spell them correctly, combine the words into clauses and phrases, and connect all the parts so that they make sense and read smoothly. This section of *Writer's Resources* covers the elements and skills you need to write college-level sentences.

Chapters 19 and 27 will introduce you to the parts of sentences and familiarize you with the grammatical vocabulary used by writers and their teachers to explain sentence structure. In Chapters 23, 31, and 32, you will learn to choose appropriate words and vary and combine sentences. The skills chapters in Part IV will introduce you to all the individual skills necessary to write without making English errors.

All of the concepts and skills in this part of *Writer's Resources* will help you become a better writer. You should read the chapters in the order assigned by your instructor, and you should complete all exercises and practices—they will help you make the concepts and skills part of your working knowledge of the written word.

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# Chapter 19

## Parts of Speech

In English, words can be classified into the eight **parts of speech**. You should become familiar with the parts of speech in order to understand the proper grammatical structure of sentences and to use words in prescribed ways.

### Eight Parts of Speech

nouns	adjectives
pronouns	adverbs
verbs	conjunctions
prepositions	interjections

### Nouns

- A **noun** is a word that names a **person, place, thing, or idea**.

*Faye, baseball player, home, lake, Singapore, pencil, car, space, freedom*



## Kinds of Nouns

**Proper nouns** name particular persons, places, things, and ideas. They are always capitalized: *Will Rogers, White House, Renaissance*.

**Common nouns** name general persons, places, things, and ideas. They are not capitalized: *singer, cafeteria, park*.

**Concrete nouns** name things that can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched: *wall, music, smoke*.

**Abstract nouns** name things that cannot be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, or touched: *love, fear, death*.

**Collective nouns** name a group or collection. Many collective nouns are singular: *class, team, family, company*.

- A noun can be **singular** (referring to one person, place, or thing) or **plural** (referring to more than one). The most common way to make a noun plural is to add **-s** (or **-es**, for most nouns ending in *o, x, z, sh, ch, ss, or y*).

one chair → two **chairs**

one beach → many **beaches**

a street → some **streets**

the box → no **boxes**

- Some nouns have **irregular plurals**.

one child → two or more **children**

one man → two or more **men**

one woman → two or more **women**

one person → two or more **people**

## Exercise 1

Circle the correct noun.

1. Many childs / children take the bus to school.
2. Two persons / people forgot their tickets to the game.
3. A lot of woman / women want to have a career.
4. There are a lot of car / cars in the parking lot.
5. The two churches / churches will have a joint service on Sunday.

## Pronouns

- **Pronouns** take the place of nouns. The noun to which the pronoun refers is called the **antecedent**.

Antecedent

Pronoun

The **doctor** sent me a bill for the services **she** provided.

Antecedent Pronoun

The **campers** lost **their** way in the woods.

## Kinds of Pronouns

**Personal pronouns** refer to specific people or things.

**Singular:** I, me, you, he, she, him, her, it

**Plural:** we, us, you, they, them

**Possessive pronouns** indicate ownership.

**Singular:** my, mine, your, yours, her, hers, his, its

**Plural:** our, ours, your, yours, their, theirs

Pronoun case refers to the form of a pronoun. The case of a pronoun shows how that pronoun is used in the sentence; it indicates the pronoun's relation to the other words in the sentence. If the pronoun is used as a subject, use the subjective case. If the pronoun is used as an object, use the objective case.

	Subjective Case	Objective Case	Possessive Case
<b>Singular</b>	I	me	my/mine
	you	you	your/yours
	he/she/it	him/her/it	his/her/its
<b>Plural</b>	we	us	our/ours
	you	you	your/yours
	they	them	their/theirs

### SUBJECTIVE CASE

S V

**I** *like* to study early in the morning.

S V

**He** *passed* his math exam.

### OBJECTIVE CASE

S V O

Dad *asked* **me** to go fishing.

S V O

Sarah *invited* **him** to dinner.

### POSSESSIVE CASE

My car is newer than **yours**.

**Her** brother loves to polish **his** boots.

**Reflexive pronouns** are formed by adding *-self* or *-selves* to personal pronouns. Reflexive pronouns indicate that the doer and receiver of the action are the same.

**Singular:** myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself

**Plural:** ourselves, yourselves, themselves

I taught **myself** to play bridge.

The cat cleaned **itself**.

A reflexive pronoun is called an **intensive pronoun** when it emphasizes its antecedent.

George **himself** rose to rebut the charges.

The boys decided their punishment **themselves**.

Writers should avoid using nonstandard forms of reflexive pronouns. These forms are always errors.

himself

The boy picked **hissself** up when he fell.

themselves

The birds splashed water on **theirselves**.

themselves

My brother and his friend congratulated **themself** on their win.

**Relative pronouns** introduce dependent clauses and refer to a noun or pronoun that comes before them.

who, whom, whose, which, that, whoever, whomever, whatever

My brother is the one **who** won the race.

Lawanda is the woman **whom** I interviewed for the assignment.

The second test, **which** I passed, was harder than the first.

*Crime and Punishment* is the book **that** is overdue at the library.

**Interrogative pronouns** take the place of a noun in a question.

who, whom, whose, which, what

**Who** won the game last night?

**Whom** did Juanita play in the championship?

**What** did you buy at the store?

**Demonstrative pronouns** identify or point to nouns. They may function as adjectives that describe nouns or as pronouns that replace nouns.

**Singular:** this, that

**Plural:** these, those

Adjective

**This** shirt is stained.

Pronoun

**This** is my sister.

An **indefinite pronoun** functions as a noun, but it does not refer to any particular person or thing.

### Indefinite Pronouns

all	anything	everyone	nobody	several
another	both	everything	none	some
any	each	few	no one	somebody
anybody	either	many	nothing	someone
anyone	everybody	neither	one	something

Take special notice of **agreement** with indefinite pronouns. Most indefinite pronouns are singular and must take a singular verb. However, some indefinite pronouns are plural and take a plural verb. A few indefinite pronouns may be either singular or plural depending on the noun or pronoun to which they refer. Chapter 25 covers more information and practice on subject-verb agreement.

#### SINGULAR INDEFINITE PRONOUNS AND SINGULAR VERBS

**Everything** in my kitchen **has** its place.

**Everyone** in the class **does** her own work.

**Something** **is** losing its balance in the motor and making noise.

#### PLURAL INDEFINITE PRONOUNS AND PLURAL VERBS

**Both** of my sisters **are** studying for their exams.

**Several** candidates **are** presenting their platforms tonight.

**Few** **are** chosen to lead their country.

#### SINGULAR OR PLURAL INDEFINITE PRONOUNS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING VERBS

**Singular: None** of the money **is** missing.

**Plural: None** of the books **are** missing.

**Singular: Some** of the money **is** missing.

**Plural: Some** of the books **are** missing.

Phrasal, or **reciprocal, pronouns** refer to individual parts of a plural antecedent.

each other, one another

**Each other** is generally used when the antecedent is two people. **One another** is used when the antecedent is more than two people.

Juan and Maria helped **each other** over the creek.

The three girls answered **one another's** questions.

## Exercise 2

Correct the nonstandard pronouns.

1. The man fixed the car by hisself.
2. I received help fixing my car from my next-door neighbor, which is a mechanic.
3. The kids tired themselves out playing all morning.
4. The husband and wife rented a house for themself and their friends.
5. The fans forced theirself to leave the game early.

## Verbs

- A **verb** is a word that expresses an action or a state of being.

**Action verb:** That child **plays** quietly.

**State of being verb:** The child **feels** happy.

### Kinds of Verbs

- **Action verbs** express an action: *talk, strike, fight*.

The dean **talks** on the telephone frequently.

- **Linking verbs** link the subject to a noun or adjective: *is, are, been, feel, look, seem, become, smell, sound, taste*.

The weather **is** beautiful.

- **Helping, or auxiliary, verbs** link the subject to a verb: *is, are, was, were, am, been, being, could, might, will, would, shall, should, did, must, can, may, have, has, had, do*.

I **could have gone** to the store after work.

### Forms of the Verb

- There are three main forms of the verb: the **present, past, and past participle**.

While most verbs form the past tense and past participle by adding *-ed* to the verb, many common verbs have irregular past tense and past participle forms. See Chapter 26 for a list of irregular verbs.

Present	Past	Past Participle
walk →	walked →	walked
do →	did →	done
go →	went →	gone

- The form of the verb changes according to its **tense** (present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect, future perfect); **number** (singular or plural); **voice** (active or passive); and **mood** (indicative, imperative, subjunctive).

From the three main verb forms comes the **tense of the verb**, which indicates the time of the action or state of being of the subject. There are six different tenses: **present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect, future perfect**. See Chapter 26 for more on verb tenses.

- The verb must agree with its subject in **number**.

A singular subject must take a singular verb, and a plural subject must take a plural verb. Verbs usually have a different ending in the third-person singular of the present tense.

	Singular	Plural
<b>First-person</b>	I walk	We walk
<b>Second-person</b>	You walk	You walk
<b>Third-person</b>	She walks He walks It walks	They walk

- The **voice of the verb** can be **active** (subject is acting) or **passive** (subject is being acted upon).

See Chapter 26 for more on active and passive voice.

**Active Voice:** Jerry **throws** the ball.

**Passive Voice:** The ball **is being thrown** by Jerry.

- The **mood of the verb** is the tone or attitude with which a statement is made.

**Indicative** (used to make statements and ask questions).

Citizens **should vote** this Tuesday.

**Imperative** (used to give command or directions).

**Vote** this Tuesday.

**Subjunctive** (used to express wishes and requests or to express conditions contrary to fact).

I wish it **were** Tuesday.

- Verbs can also take different forms called **verbals**. **Verbals** are words that come from a verb but act as another part of speech.

**Infinitives** are a verb form introduced by *to*.

My ambition is **to become** an engineer.

**Gerunds** are a verb form ending in *-ing* that acts as a noun.

**Eating** is my brother's favorite activity.

**Participles** (verb form usually ending in *-ing* or *-ed* that acts as a verb or an adjective).

**Built** in 1890, the bank should be preserved.

## Prepositions

- A **preposition** explains the relationship between its **object** (the noun or pronoun that follows it) and another word in the sentence. Many prepositions explain time or space relationships.

Prep

Prep

**After** eating, the cat leaped **onto** the table.

(*After* explains the relationship of the word *eating* to the word *cat*. *Onto* explains the relationship of the word *leaped* to the word *table*.)

### Common Prepositions

about	behind	in	outside of
above	below	in addition to	over
according to	beneath	inside	since
across	beside	in spite of	through
after	besides	instead of	throughout
against	between	into	to
along	beyond	like	toward
along with	by	near	under
among	despite	of	until
around	down	off	up
as	during	on	upon
as far as	except	on account of	with
at	for	on top of	within
before	from	out	without

The preposition and its object together form a **prepositional phrase**. A prepositional phrase can appear anywhere in a sentence. Note, however, that the object of a prepositional phrase cannot be the subject of the sentence.

S      Prep phrase      V

The people **in the class** are talking.

Prep phrase      S      V

**In the class**, people are talking.

S      V      Prep phrase

People are talking **in the class**.

### Exercise 3

Underline the prepositional phrases in each sentence.

1. On the first of each month, people from my church volunteer at the local food bank.
2. By the end of the day, I must finish all of my work.
3. During class, students in the back of the room began talking to one another.
4. After lunch, the group from the other organization made its presentation to the committee.
5. At the meeting of the club, many of the members voiced objections to the proposal.

## Adjectives

- An **adjective** describes or modifies a noun or pronoun.

The **Adj** **lazy** **N** river curved through the **Adj** **majestic, colorful** **Adj** **N** canyon.

The **articles** *a*, *an*, and *the* are adjectives that modify a noun. *A* is used before a word that begins with a consonant or consonant sound. *An* is used before a word that begins with a vowel, a vowel sound, or silent *h*.

a boy, a doctor, an apple, an A grade, a university, an F grade

- In addition to describing a noun, an adjective can compare nouns (**comparative**) or show that a noun is the best (**superlative**). For most adjectives of one syllable, add *-er* to form the comparative and *-est* to form the superlative.

### COMPARATIVE

The Tigers are **better** than the Red Sox.

### SUPERLATIVE

The Tigers are the **best** team.

- For most adjectives of more than one syllable, add *more* to form the comparative and *most* to form the superlative.

### COMPARATIVE

Beth's answer was **more thoughtful** than Xian's.

### SUPERLATIVE

Beth's answer was the **most thoughtful**.

Adjectives that end in *-y* usually form the comparative and superlative by dropping the *-y* and adding *-ier* or *-iest*: prettier, prettiest.

Some adjectives are **irregular**.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
many	more	most

## Adverbs

- An **adverb** modifies or describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Many adverbs end in *-ly*.

The **V** dog barked **Adv** **fiercely**.



Adv      Adj                  Adv      Adv

The **fiercely** obedient dog sat **really attentively** by the man's side.

### Adverb/Adjective Confusion

Do not confuse adjectives and adverbs. Since many descriptive words can be used both as adjectives and adverbs, using the adjective for the adverb is a common error. Be particularly careful with *real/really* and *good/well*. Remember that *real* and *good* are adjectives and can only describe nouns. *Really* and *well* are adverbs and describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

Adj   Adj

✗ I was **awful** hot.

Adv   Adj

✓ I was **awfully** hot.

Adj   N                  Adj   Adj                  Adj   N

✗ The real cowboy had a **real** easy time riding the real horse.

Adj   N                  Adv   Adj                  Adj   N

✓ The real cowboy had a **really** easy time riding the real horse.

Adj                  V   Adj

✗ The teacher's good class did **good** on the test.

Adj                  V   Adv

✓ The teacher's good class did **well** on the test.

- Use adjectives with linking verbs (*is, seem, appear, become, look, smell, taste*).

The doctor looks **sad**.

The dinner tastes **good**.

### Exercise 4

Circle the correct adjective or adverb.

1. Our dog whines steady / steadily because she wants a biscuit bad / badly.
2. Class begins regular / regularly at ten, and the teacher gets real / really angry if anyone is later / more late than she is.
3. The cat pounced fierce / fiercely on the toy, and the child became sad / sadly.
4. The team performed good / well during practice but played poor / poorly during the game.
5. The professional driver operated her car fearless / fearlessly in the race, so she felt good / well about her performance.

## Exercise 5

Circle the correct adjective or adverb.

- Twins are usually real / really close and understand each other very good / well.
- Our car runs terrible / terribly in real / really cold weather, and it won't start in the coldest / most cold weather.
- The computer worked beautiful / beautifully after it was skillful / skillfully repaired at the shop.
- The crowd waited noisy / noisily for the speaker to begin.
- My mother speaks French good / well and Spanish perfect / perfectly.

## Conjunctions

- A **conjunction** joins words or groups of words.

The two most common types of conjunctions are coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions.

- Coordinating conjunctions** join a word to a word, a phrase to a phrase, or a clause to a clause.

### Coordinating Conjunctions

for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so

*Note:* FANBOYS is a helpful mnemonic for remembering the seven coordinating conjunctions.

We usually vacation in winter **or** summer. (joins two words)

In the morning, we went down the path **and** into the woods. (joins two phrases)

I like English, **but** I hate math. (joins two independent clauses)

- Subordinating conjunctions** show the relationship between clauses. They connect a dependent clause to an independent clause.

### Subordinating Conjunctions

after	in order that	until
although	since	when
as	so that	where
because	that	whereas
before	though	while
if	unless	

**Because** tomorrow is my day off, I am going fishing with Tom.

- **Conjunctive adverbs** also join clauses.

### Common Conjunctive Adverbs

therefore	furthermore
consequently	also
however	then
moreover	later

#### Conj Adv

I don't feel well today; **therefore**, I will stay home from work today.

## Interjections

- An **interjection** communicates a strong emotion and is separated from the rest of the sentence by a punctuation mark such as a comma or an exclamation point.

### Common Interjections

wow	hey
yikes	ouch
watch out	OK

**Watch out!** You're going to hit that tree.

**Hey**, that piece of pie is mine!

## Review Exercise

Fill in the blanks.

1. Nouns are the part of speech that name a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Action words or state of being words are which part of speech?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Pronouns take the place of which part of speech? \_\_\_\_\_
4. *By the door* is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_ phrase.
5. Adjectives describe or modify what parts of speech? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
6. Adverbs describe or modify what parts of speech? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Name two kinds of conjunctions: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

8. *Because* is a \_\_\_\_\_ conjunction, and *but* is a \_\_\_\_\_ conjunction.
9. Name three articles: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Name two kinds of verbs: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

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# Chapter 20

## Spelling

Spelling is an important skill. Misspelled words are not only distracting to the reader but also may be confusing—in fact, a misspelling can entirely change your meaning.

Your spelling will improve if you

- Remember a few common spelling rules.
- Familiarize yourself with the most frequently misspelled words.
- Keep a record of your spelling errors.
- Use a computerized spell checker when possible.

### Common Rules for Spelling

The following rules have to do with particular combinations of vowels (*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and sometimes *y*) and consonants (all letters except vowels) and the rules for adding endings (such as *-ing*, *-ed*). In general, the pronunciation stays the same when word endings are added.

#### Rule 1

- Use *i* before *e* except after *c*.

believe	receive
reprieve	deceive
friend	conceive

- When the word makes a long a (ay) sound, use e before i.

neighbor	eight
weight	freight

**Exceptions:**

<b>e</b> ither	<b>n</b> either
for <b>e</b> ign	<b>s</b> eize
<b>h</b> eight	<b>w</b> eird
<b>l</b> eisure	

## Exercise 1

Write OK next to correctly spelled words. Cross out and correct misspelled words.

1. relief
2. conceive
3. wiegh
4. neighborhood
5. niether

## Rule 2

- For a single-syllable word in which a vowel comes before a final consonant, double that consonant when adding an ending that begins with a vowel (such as *-ing*, *-ed*, *-er*, *-est*).

bat + ed = batted  
 pen + ed = penned  
 rob + ing = robbing  
 sit + ing = sitting  
 run + er = runner  
 slim + est = slimmest

The last consonant is doubled to preserve the sound of the vowel.

- For multisyllable words in which the final syllable is stressed and a vowel comes before the final consonant, double the final consonant when adding an ending that begins with a vowel (such as *-ing*, *-ed*, *-er*, *-est*).

control + ed = controlled  
 permit + ed = permitted  
 prefer + ed = preferred  
 refer + ed = referred  
 begin + er = beginner  
 admit + ing = admitting  
 commit + ing = committing  
 patrol + ing = patrolling

## Exercise 2

Write OK next to correctly spelled words. Cross out and correct misspelled words.

1. joging
2. fittest
3. controlling
4. submitted
5. preferred

## Rule 3

- Drop the final e on a word when adding an ending that begins with a vowel.

believe + er = believer  
like + able = likable  
rake + ing = raking  
move + ed = moved

- Keep the final e when adding an ending that begins with a consonant.

achieve + ment = achievement  
rare + ly = rarely  
like + ness = likeness

**Exceptions:**

argue + ment = argument  
judge + ment = judgment  
true + ly = truly

## Exercise 3

Write OK next to correctly spelled words. Cross out and correct misspelled words.

1. baking
2. moveable
3. barely
4. dinning
5. judgment



## Rule 4

- Drop the final *y* and add *i* when adding an ending if there is a consonant before the *y*.

pretty + er = prettier  
 funny + est = funniest  
 try + ed = tried  
 rely + able = reliable  
 reply + ed = replied  
 happy + ness = happiness  
 beauty + ful = beautiful

- Keep the final *y* when adding an ending if there is a vowel before the *y*.

delay + ed = delayed  
 donkey + s = donkeys  
 play + er = player

- For words ending in *y*, keep the final *y* when adding *-ing*.

rely + ing = relying  
 reply + ing = replying  
 try + ing = trying

### Exceptions:

lay + ed = laid  
 pay + ed = paid  
 say + ed = said

## Exercise 4

Write OK next to correctly spelled words. Cross out and correct misspelled words.

1. babyed
2. cowboys
3. payed
4. busyest
5. carrying

## Frequently Misspelled Words

You can improve your spelling significantly by studying the following two lists of frequently misspelled words. Try to remember the spelling by looking at the bold letters that show what's unusual or tricky about the spelling of the almost two hundred words in these two lists.

## List 1

The following words are very common words that many writers misspell.

<b>across</b>	carried	<b>guard</b>	<b>poison</b>	source
actually	clothes	happiness	possible	speech
<b>against</b>	coming	height	<b>probably</b>	<b>stopped</b>
a lot (two words)	<b>dealt</b>	<b>hungry</b>	<b>proving</b>	stories
all right (two words)	destroy	interest	quiet	<b>straight</b>
<b>almost</b>	dining	<b>laid</b>	really	<b>strength</b>
<b>although</b>	during	<b>library</b>	receive	strict
<b>always</b>	easily	likely	<b>regard</b>	studying
<b>among</b>	<b>effect</b>	marriage	<b>remember</b>	supposed
<b>answer</b>	exercise	<b>meant</b>	roommate	<b>themselves</b>
<b>around</b>	experience	<b>mere</b>	safety	therefore
article	favorite	naturally	science	together
<b>attack</b>	<b>field</b>	<b>neither</b>	sense	truly
<b>before</b>	finally	<b>niece</b>	sentence	until
beginning	<b>forty</b>	ninety	<b>several</b>	<b>using</b>
believe	<b>fourth</b>	<b>ninth</b>	<b>since</b>	<b>view</b>
<b>breath</b>	<b>forward</b>	<b>paid</b>	shining	writing
breathe	friend	<b>personal</b>	<b>shoulder</b>	<b>yield</b>
business	generally	<b>personnel</b>	simply	
careful	<b>grateful</b>	<b>planned</b>	sophomore	

Cross out the misspelled word in each item, and spell it correctly.

## Exercise 5

- experience  
alright  
among
- ninth  
library  
intrest
- guard  
probally  
remember
- roomate  
naturally  
marriage
- safety  
themselves  
sevrал

## List 2

The following words are commonly used in academic writing.

absence	convenience	February	noticing	ridiculous
absorption	curious	fulfill	operate	sacrifice
accomplishment	decision	further	opinion	satisfied
achievement	dependent	government	particular	scenery
acquire	description	independent	pastime	schedule
amount	development	intelligence	permitted	separate
annual	difference	involve	pleasant	significance
apparent	disappoint	jealous	practical	succeed
appearance	disease	knowledge	preparation	surprise
appreciate	divide	laboratory	proceed	suspense
argument	enemy	license	procedure	syllable
arrangement	entertain	liveliest	professor	symbol
attendance	environment	luxury	quantity	technique
attitude	equipped	magazine	recognize	temperature
benefited	especially	mathematics	recommend	tendency
boundary	excellence	mechanics	relative	theories
category	expense	medicine	relieving	variety
ceiling	experiment	morally	representative	vegetable
cemetery	explanation	necessary	restaurant	weird
completely	familiar	neighbor	response	

## Exercise 6

Cross out the misspelled word in each item, and spell it correctly.

- weird  
temperture  
succeed
- ridiculous  
convience  
representative
- divide  
February  
fullfil
- entertain  
completly  
disappoint
- explanation  
expence  
government

## Some Other Easy Ways to Improve Your Spelling

1. Correct spelling is becoming much easier to accomplish with the spell checker in your computer's word processing program and mechanical spell checkers for handwritten work. Be sure to use the spell checker before you finish writing a document. However, be aware that a spell checker cannot catch words that sound similar but are spelled differently or misspellings that are themselves words.
2. It's a good idea to keep a list of your common errors to study before writing. You will not always have a dictionary or spell checker handy, and you should know the spelling for common words in your vocabulary. Use the personal error list in Rules and Tools at the end of this book to record your spelling errors.

Cross out the misspelled word in each item, and spell it correctly.

### Review Exercise

- |                                     |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. biking<br>untill<br>ceiling      | 7. referral<br>article<br>seperate   |
| 2. decieve<br>therefore<br>operate  | 8. receive<br>boundary<br>enviroment |
| 3. beginning<br>payed<br>difference | 9. truly<br>niece<br>vegatable       |
| 4. friend<br>acquire<br>tendancy    | 10. fittest<br>keys<br>wierd         |
| 5. petting<br>greatful<br>medicine  |                                      |
| 6. foreign<br>a lot<br>discription  |                                      |


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# Chapter 21

## Problem Words

Words that sound alike or have similar spellings can cause problems for writers. Although there are many groups of **problem words**, the two lists in this lesson contain some of the most common word groups that give writers problems.

There are two easy ways to remember the differences between the words in these groups:

1. Use a **memory hook**:  an easy way to remember something because it hooks your memory.
2. Remember an **example** for each word that illustrates the difference between the words.

## List 1

**Accept** means “take” or “receive what is offered.”



**With *accept*, think of acceptance.**

I accept your invitation.

**Except** means “what is left out or excluded.”



**X in *except* means “not.”**

Everyone is here except Joaquin.

**An** is a word meaning “one” or “any” and is used in front of words that begin with a vowel or silent *h*.

An airline pilot must fly for an hour before taking a break.

**And** means “plus.”

Jean and Takela went to the store.

**Its** is the singular possessive pronoun meaning “belonging to it.”



***Its* has lost its apostrophe (').**

The car lost its antennae.

**It's** is the contraction of *it is* or *it has*.



***It's* = *it'(i)s*.**

It's a beautiful day.

**Know** means “to have knowledge of.”

I know how to sew very well.

**No** means “zero.”

There is no water in the dry well.

**Passed** is the past tense of the verb *to pass*.




**Passed ends in -ed because it's a verb.**

I have passed the test.

**Past** is an adverb meaning “by” or “beyond,” or an adjective or noun meaning “time that has already gone by.”


The bus went past the bus stop every day this past week.

**Peace** means “tranquility.”

 **“Peace on Earth!”**

There was peace after the war.

**Piece** means “a part of something.”

 **“Piece of pie.”**


A piece of thread is hanging from your sleeve.

**Principal** is an adjective meaning “main” or “most important,” or a noun meaning “main person or thing.”

 **Principal = main.**


The principal road into town is Main Street.

**Principle** is a noun meaning “rule” or “law.”

 **Principle = rule.**


One principle of math is addition.

**Right** can refer to something that is due to a person by law.

 **“Might does not make right.”**


My neighbor has a right to park in the driveway to his house.

**Write** means “put words on paper.”

 **“The w in write looks like a scribble.”**


Please write your name clearly.

**Steal** means “rob.”

 **To steal is illegal.**

A robber could steal the bicycle.


**Steel** refers to a hard metal.

 **The ee in steel is doubled to make it strong like the metal.**

The part for the machine was made of steel.




**Suppose** means “assume.”

 **No *d* means that *suppose* is a verb in the present tense.**


I suppose I will go to the dance unless I am sick.

**Supposed to** means “ought to” or “should.”

 ***Supposed to* is always preceded by a form of *to be* and followed by *to* plus a verb.**


Children are supposed to respect their parents.

**Than** is used to make comparisons.

 **Than = comparison.**


Jackie is taller than Raphael.

**Then** means “for a moment in time.”

 **Then = time.**


First, we will go to the movie; then we will go to eat.

**Their** is a possessive pronoun meaning “belonging to them.”

 **Their = heir.**


The neighbors should cut their lawn.

**There** can mean a place.

 **There = not here.**


There is a car over there in the parking lot that looks brand new.

**They're** is the contraction of *they are*.

 **They're = they are.**

The children are quiet because they're watching a movie.

**Thorough** means “complete” or “entire.”

 **Thorough has an *o* for complete.**

The house needs a thorough cleaning.

**Through** can mean “in one side and out the other” or “finished.”

The last person went through the door after the movie was through.

**Throw** means “launch” or “send.”

The mayor will throw out the first ball at the baseball game.

**Threw** is the past tense of the verb *throw*.

The pitcher threw the last pitch.

**To** is either a preposition that indicates direction or a part of the infinitive verb form (*to be, to go, to do*).

I am going to the store to buy groceries.

**Too** means “excessively,” “extremely,” or “also.”



**Too = too many o's.**

It's too hot to play outside.

**Two** is the number.

Two boys are fishing on the bridge.

**Use to** means “utilize” and is present tense.

That wood I will use to make a fire.

**Used to** means “having the habit” and is past tense.



**Used to is always followed by a verb (used to eat).**

The postal carrier used to arrive before lunch.

**Weather** means “outdoor air conditions.”

The rainy weather is almost over.

**Whether** indicates alternatives.

I don't know whether I can come or not.

**Woman** is the opposite of “*man*” in the singular form.

One woman left already.

**Women** is the plural form of “*woman*.”

Two women are staying to hear the last speaker.

**Would have, could have, should have, and must have** are verb phrases; *have* is a helping verb. The contraction forms are *would've*, *could've*, *should've*, and *must've*.

The garbage should have been taken out last night.

The garbage should've been taken out last night.

**Would of, could of, should of, and must of:** The *of* that follows the verbs begins a prepositional clause.

*Of* is almost never used after these verbs. (*Have* is almost always used after these verbs.)

You would, of all people, be the first to know my secret.

**Your** is the possessive pronoun meaning "belonging to you."

Your uncle just called.

**You're** is the contraction of *you are*.

You're the most interesting person that I know.

## Exercise 1

Circle the correct words in each sentence.

1. We past / passed a soft drink machine an / and stopped to get a drink.
2. The neighbors use to / used to park they're / their / there cars over they're / their / there by the pool.
3. When she went thorough / through the rain she got a thorough / through soaking.
4. They're / Their / There trying to / too / two hard for them to fail the writing / righting exam.
5. The truck should of / should have driven past / passed the car to avoid an / and accident.

## Exercise 2

Identify the sentences as correct (C) or incorrect (I), and then correct all problem word errors.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A woman in my dorm is suppose to help me find a new roommate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. West End Apartments has a nice pool, but its rooms are too small.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I will be through this school sooner then I thought.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Some of my friends are attending summer school, and they're working part time to.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Change is a principle of life that I have trouble accepting sometimes.

## Exercise 3

Identify the sentences as correct (C) or incorrect (I), and then correct all problem word errors.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I don't no weather there are any tickets left for the concert.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Your suppose to treat men and woman equally.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My class should of taken its test today.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The bus went past the children without stopping.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I loved the movie, and my date enjoyed it, too.

## List 2


**Advice** is a noun that means "a recommendation."

My father has given me good advice about my finances.

**Advise** is a verb that means "counsel."


The doctor will advise you to stop smoking.

**Affect** is a verb that means "influence" or "bring about a change."

 **Affect is an action.**


The temperature can affect plants.

**Effect** is a noun that means "result."

 **Effect is a result.**


One effect of exercising is weight loss.

**All ready** means that everyone or everything is prepared.

 **If the sentence makes sense without *all*, write *all ready*.**


My children are all ready for school.

**Already** means "before," "previously," or "by this time."

 **If the sentence does not make sense without *all*, write *already*.**


Dinner has been served already.

**All together** means that everything or everyone is together.

 **If the sentence makes sense without *all*, write *all together*.**

The camping gear is all together in the closet.

**Altogether** means “completely” or “entirely.”

 **If the sentence does not make sense without *all*, write *altogether*.**

I have altogether too much work to do tonight.

**Bare** means “uncovered” or “just enough.”

There is barely time to reach the airport before our plane leaves.


**Bear** means the wild animal OR “to carry, to hold up, or to endure.”

I can’t bear the thought of school starting again after our vacation.

**Blew** is the past tense of *blow*.

The wind blew all night long.

**Blue** is a color.

 **Blue = color or hue.**

Her eyes are blue.

**Brake** means “a device to stop movement.”

The car’s brakes needed to be replaced.

**Break** means “an interruption.”

I must take a break before I continue working.

**By** is a preposition.

My sister will stop by our apartment with cookies.


**Buy** means “to purchase.”

You need to buy milk.

**Capital** means “the main or most important.”


The capital city of New York is Albany.

**Capitol** means the government building.

 **Capitol = dome.**

Congress meets in the Capitol in Washington.

**Choose** means “pick out”; it is present tense.

 **“Choose has two o’s to choose from.”**

I will choose a new car.

**Chose** is the past tense of *choose* and is pronounced with a long o.

The dinner I chose last night gave me food poisoning.


**Complement** is a verb meaning “make complete” or a noun meaning “something that completes or makes perfect.”

The blue shirt complements your tan slacks.

**Compliment** is a verb or a noun meaning “praise.”

My teacher gave me a compliment about my paper.

**Fair** means “just,” “good,” blond,” “pale,” or “carnival.”


 **“Fair” is used for almost all meanings except money.**

It’s not fair when someone takes advantage of an elderly person.

**Fare** means the ticket price.


The bus fare was only five dollars.

**Hear** means “to perceive by ear.”

 **Hear = ear.**

I can’t hear you when you are in the next room.

**Here** means location.

 **Here = not there.**

Please come here right now.

**Hole** means “an opening.”

The workman used a shovel to dig the hole.

**Whole** means “entire or complete.”

I can't believe that you ate the whole pie.

**Lay** means “place or put.”



**If you can substitute *place* or *put* for *lay*, then *lay* is correct.**

Please lay the book on the table.

**Lie** means “recline.”

My grandfather always lies down before dinner.

**Loose** is an adjective meaning “not tight,” or a verb meaning “set free.”

The doorknob is loose and wobbles when I turn it.

**Lose** is a verb meaning “suffer loss.”



**Remember: *lose* = *lost*.**

People can lose a lot of money gambling.

**Stationary** means “not movable.”

The car was stationary when it was hit by the bus.

**Stationery** means “writing paper.”



***Er* in stationery = *er* in paper.**

The letter came on blue stationery.

**Weak** means the opposite of strong.

A muscle can be weak after an injury.

**Week** means seven days.

The meeting is next week.

## Exercise 4

Circle the correct words in each sentence.

1. By the time she blew / blue out the candles, she was all ready / already out of breath.
2. Exercising on the stationary / stationery bike complemented / complimented the weightlifting the athlete was doing for conditioning.
3. The setback was hard to bare / bear, but he was all together / altogether sure he could win.
4. The table was bare / bear before the waiters began to lay / lie the dishes down for the meal.
5. Don't loose / lose any more time taking shortcuts because we are all ready / already late for the appointment.

## Exercise 5

Identify the problem words in the following sentences as correct (C) or incorrect (I) and then correct the errors.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I can't bear to hurt my friend's feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I need to buy some new stationary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My brother chose to go to work rather than go to college.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I am all together certain I am right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Will you drive me through the capital?

## Exercise 6

Identify the sentences as correct (C) or incorrect (I), and then correct all problem word errors.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Workmen have been using a stationary ladder to repair the capitol's roof.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I used my coffee brake to buy some stationery.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The weatherman advised everyone to get all ready to evacuate low-lying areas before the storm struck.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I paid the bus fair with my lose change.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Three weeks ago, the hole family met here for my birthday.



## Review Exercise 1

Correct the problem words in each sentence.

1. I could of changed my answer, but I was all together sure that I choose the right one.
2. That women over their use to be my neighbor before she got married.
3. When I get a brake from my job, I will build a house made of steal and glass that will stay stationery in any kind of weather.
4. Over spring break, I visited our nation's capitol, Washington, D.C.
5. The women in the last row past her test even through she didn't study.
6. Though it wasn't lose and comfortable, I choose to wear the shirt my grandmother gave me to the picnic.
7. The plane and train rides at the amusement park were not a hole lot of fun because they remained stationery.
8. The principle reason I want to lay down for a rest is that I am suppose to stay up late tonight to study.
9. The dog's owner choose it's name from a comic strip.
10. The school's principle bearly had time to finish his speech before the band started playing.

## Review Exercise 2

Identify the problem words in the following sentences as correct (C) or incorrect (I) and then correct the errors.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Julio has already seen the movie.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I can't bear to hurt my friend's feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My principal reason for going to the store is to buy new stationary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. My brother chose to go to work and go to college too.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am all together certain I am right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. There is a whole in my new blue folder.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The train fair to New York is sixty-four dollars.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Her ring fell off because it was too lose.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Will you drive me through the capital to see the beautiful capitol building?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I blew my horn and then slammed on my brakes.

## Editing Exercise 1

Alone or with a partner, proofread the paragraph and correct any errors with problem words.



## Fun Fair

This passed weekend, my friend Jeremy and I decided to take a trip too an amusement park that I use to go to when I was a child. When we got there, I told Jeremy I wanted to ride the roller coaster. Since Jeremy likes to ride a roller coaster less then I do, he said that I should go on it by myself. Maybe I should of taken his advise, but I told him, "Know way! Your coming too because its to scary alone." Jeremy was fine while the ride was stationery, but as soon as it began too move, Jeremy began screaming at the top of his lungs. When the ride was over, Jeremy said that it had been altogether to long. Jeremy choose to sit the next ride out, so I had to go on it alone. When that ride was over, Jeremy had all ready decided that we should go shopping for souvenirs. I bought a teddy bear, and Jeremy chose to get a cup with his name on its side. I had to lend him money for the tax because he said that all of his lose change had fallen out of his pockets on the roller coaster. While we were shopping, the whether began to get cloudy, so I thought that we should have some lunch and wait for the sun to come out again. However, Jeremy said he couldn't bare to eat right after the roller coaster. Their was a man doing magic tricks, an we stopped to watch him. I was just about to complement him on his trick when it started to rain, and the hole crowd ran indoors accept for the magician. When the rain finally stopped, I was starving, and I convinced Jeremy to go for a peace of pizza. Our day at the amusement park was a lot of fun, and Jeremy and I are already planning to go back next weak.

## Editing Exercise 2

Alone or with a partner, proofread the paragraph and correct any errors with problem words.



### Cleaning Up

Is there too much clutter in your life? Do you often hear yourself saying, "I know I must have put it here somewhere, if I could just find it"? Well, according to clutter-buster experts, there is hope for people whose homes are less than orderly. Although it's hard to break certain habits (like throwing your clothes near the closet instead of hanging them up), the first step to a more organized home is to have a plan. Choose the one room that especially screams "Help!" every time you walk in, and take a thorough look around to see what needs organizing. A kitchen, for example, should not have more than one junk drawer, and cleaning supplies should be kept altogether. A drawer near the telephone is supposed to hold only one pad of paper, twelve pens or pencils, one kind of stationary, and the most current telephone book. For the bedroom closet that you use to close, you can buy closet organizers to double the space. Even with no money to spend on organizers, though, a fair amount of determination will go a long way. The hardest but most important thing about organizing your clutter is to throw away what you don't use. Most experts recommend keeping only one box of memories you just can't bear to live without. It may take a whole weekend or more to undo the months or years of clutter, but if you clean your house, your life will have more peace and quiet within a week.

# Chapter 22

## Capitalization

Capital letters announce to the reader that a word has special importance. You probably know many of the rules for capitalization, but this lesson will acquaint you with all the rules and give you practice testing your knowledge.

### Sentence Beginnings

- Capitalize the first word of a sentence.

### Proper Nouns

- Names of specific people, places, and things are considered proper nouns, and all proper nouns should be capitalized.

#### People

- Proper names of people should be capitalized.

Don Jordan, Lin Ying, LaToya Jones

- **Proper titles are capitalized if they are used to replace someone's name.**

Are we going shopping on Friday, Mom?

Please, Professor, don't give us more homework.

Do not capitalize titles if they are not used to replace someone's name in a sentence. (If a word like *my* or *the* comes before the title, the title is not replacing a proper name.)

I told my uncle that I would come.

- **The pronoun *I* is considered a proper name and should be capitalized.**

Juan and I will return soon.

## Exercise 1

### Correct all capitalization errors.

1. My wife and i believe that aunt mary will come to the party with mr. jackson.
2. A neighbor suggested that i ask mom to tell my dad that jenny will be late.
3. Would you like to talk to ms. zhao, doctor?
4. Please, sir, would you put out your cigarette.
5. The doctor told coach that i can't play this week.

## Places

- **Proper names of specific geographic features and proper place names should be capitalized.**

Mount Everest, Atlantic Ocean, Lake Superior, Banff National Park, Tiananmen Square, Namib Desert

Do not capitalize places that are not proper names.

the lake, the desert, an ocean, a mountain

- **Names of cities, counties, states, regions, countries, continents, and planets should be capitalized.**

Budapest, DeKalb County, Illinois, the South, Romania, North America, Venus

Prepositions are not capitalized in proper names unless they are the first or last word of the name.

United States of America

- **Directional words ending in *-ern* are not capitalized.**

eastern, northern, southern, western

## Exercise 2

Correct all capitalization errors.

1. My parents told me that grandpa came to chicago from the south.
2. The northern united states had record high temperatures.
3. There are mountains on mars and a lake on venus.
4. My brothers and i love to fish in the atlantic ocean and in lake sumpter.
5. Experts predict that dade county in the southern part of florida will experience rapid growth.

## Things

- Proper names of **institutions, businesses, and federal agencies** should be capitalized.

Central High School, First National Bank, University of Tennessee, Holiday Inn, Environmental Protection Agency, Chicago Bulls

- Proper names of **buildings and historical monuments** should be capitalized.

Statue of Liberty, Parthenon, Kennedy Center, Sistine Chapel

- Names of **holidays** should be capitalized.

Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Flag Day, Black History Month

- **Days and months** are capitalized.

Monday, Tuesday, Saturday, January, March, December

Names of seasons are not capitalized.

spring, summer, fall, winter

- Names of **specific school courses** should be capitalized.

Fundamentals of Algebra, College Composition, Art 101

Subject names that are not part of a course title are not capitalized.

math, writing, history

- The **first word, last word, and all important words in the titles of books, poems, articles, chapters, academic papers, songs, journals, and magazines** should be capitalized. (Prepositions, conjunctions, and articles are not capitalized unless they are the first or last word of the name.)

*Journal of Education, Paradise Lost, The Grapes of Wrath, Working Woman*

- **Specific historical events and eras or periods in history should be capitalized; however, centuries should not be capitalized.**

the Renaissance, the Roaring Twenties, the twenty-first century

- **Nationalities and languages should generally be capitalized.**

Swedish, English, Swiss cheese, French pastries

Some phrases using a nationality have made their way into common use and may not be capitalized; check with a dictionary and use the term consistently throughout your writing.

french fries

- **Abbreviations for agencies, organizations, trade names, and radio and television stations should be written in all-capital letters.**

TVA, NASA, NFL, KCAZ, WFHB

- **Capitalize only the words of animal and plant names that refer to a specific place or person.**

German shepherd, Bermuda grass, cardinals, blue whales, roses, oak trees

### Exercise 3

1. This fall, we have no school on veteran's day.
2. I am enrolled in principles of sociology, math, and english.
3. My father works for ibm, and my mother is employed at nasa.
4. In history class, we are studying the enlightenment.
5. On monday, my golden retriever had puppies.

### Exercise 4

1. My father got mom a dozen thompson roses for mother's day.
2. The movie will be shown on cbs in june.
3. The plumber from ward's plumbing will come on tuesday.

4. One of the most popular books of the twentieth century is *gone with the wind*.
5. The lincoln memorial has been crowded the entire summer.

## Quotes

- The first word of a quoted sentence should be capitalized.

He replied, "Nothing is wrong."

### Exercise 5

1. I asked, "what have i done wrong, officer?"
2. She replied, "you just ran a red light."
3. I told the officer, "the sun was in my eyes because i was driving west."
4. After writing the citation, officer backus said, "take my advice, son, and wear sunglasses to cut the glare."
5. Before putting the toyota into gear, I thanked the officer for her advice.

Correct all capitalization errors.

### Review Exercise 1

1. My brother dan is a dentist and lives in eastern new mexico.
2. The new york giants are going to win the nfl football championship.
3. Most people thought that *forrest gump* was a funny movie.
4. Of all the planets, mars is closest to earth.
5. The southern part of florida is where i live.
6. I called out in my psychology class, "please, professor, depress us by giving another test."
7. She is no longer speaking to her father or aunt julia.
8. On labor day, we might take a trip to the rocky mountains.



9. My high school, meridian senior high school, has been rated as one of the top high schools in the state.
10. The internal revenue service, which is called the irs, is investigating my boss.

## Review Exercise 2

Correct all capitalization errors.

1. The industrial revolution occurred during the nineteenth century.
2. Ford and chevrolet are both american-made cars.
3. The band will be touring the south in february.
4. You can get discount tickets for Disney world and universal studios.
5. The student said, "the statistics in math 201 can be difficult."
6. I wanted mother to plant live oak trees and carolina roses in our yard.
7. The woman graduated from western ohio university and went to work for Nasa.
8. The sailing race followed a path across the eastern pacific ocean to hawaii.
9. A book from the public library, *home farming for the whole family*, had information about building a chicken coop.
10. At the Fall river mall, children can participate in activities.

## Chapter 23

# Word Choice

This chapter will make you aware of some of the issues surrounding word choice: use of concrete, specific language; awareness of denotation and connotation; appeal to the senses; and use of appropriate vocabulary. We also caution you about pitfalls to avoid: unfamiliar synonyms, slang, clichés, and wordiness.

Words are the most basic element in how we communicate, and yet, most of us don't spend much time thinking about the words we choose. We often use the first word that comes to mind. Sometimes our choice effectively expresses our idea, and sometimes it doesn't. Since words are the tools we use to communicate our ideas and experiences, it's important to choose the best words. This lesson will make you aware of some of the issues surrounding word choice.

The words you select should be concrete and specific enough to create a picture in the reader's mind, appeal to the senses and create images, express your intended meaning, and have the right emotional associations.

You should choose vocabulary that is appropriate for your topic so that your reader will have confidence you know what you're writing about, and you should avoid language that might turn readers off or leave them cold—such as worn-out expressions and slang. This means you have a lot of decisions to make about which words fit and which do not. Writing is hard work, but the more aware you are of words, the better chance you'll have of picking language that is clear and precise.

Deciding which words to choose is important in two stages of the writing process—drafting and revising. In your first draft, you want to choose concrete, specific language that you are familiar with—nothing fancy, just clear language that communicates your meaning. Then when you are revising, you

can go back and focus on language again. Take a look at your nouns and verbs; are they concrete and specific enough? Take a look at your vocabulary; is it appropriate for the topic? Get rid of slang, clichés, and unnecessary words and expressions. Start thinking about the language you use, and be aware of the language used in the essays you read. Nine times out of ten, what makes writing work, what makes it effective, is the language the author chooses to use.

## Clear Language

### Abstract and Concrete Words

- Words can be divided into **abstract** and **concrete** words.

We know concrete words through our senses. You can see, touch, taste, hear, and smell a flower or a car. Abstract words, on the other hand, we know through our minds. You can't touch or see abstractions like love and loyalty. We have to use abstract words to convey concepts like beauty and truth, but when we want to create a picture in the reader's mind, we should choose specific, concrete words.

If you are describing ideas and concepts, then abstract language is appropriate, as in the first examples below. However, if you are trying to help the reader see what you are describing, abstract language won't do the trick. In the concrete examples below, the specific, concrete language creates a picture that helps the reader see the scene.

#### ABSTRACT

The men fought because they were *loyal* to their leader.

Their *cowardice* in the face of *adversity* was not something they were *proud* of.

#### CONCRETE

The woods behind my house are **densely packed** with **underbrush** and **tangled** with **wild grapes**.

The **grassy dune** where the **battle** took place was **dotted** with the **mangled bodies** of **soldiers and horses**.

### Exercise 1

Identify the following words as abstract or concrete.

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. chair         | 6. fire truck |
| 2. knowledge     | 7. cup        |
| 3. doll          | 8. authority  |
| 4. entertainment | 9. beautiful  |
| 5. intimidating  | 10. grass     |

## General and Specific Words

- Concrete words vary from **general** to **specific**.

General nouns, even if they are concrete, won't help the reader see a picture of what you have in mind. After all, there are all kinds of cars, flowers, and bridges. Specific nouns communicate a clearer image of what the writer has in mind.

General	Specific
car	Rolls Royce
flower	tulip
bridge	Golden Gate Bridge
shark	great white shark
cake	German chocolate cake

- Very specific nouns create a clearer image than general nouns.

very general → very specific is meant to convey a continuum.

Very General			Very Specific
tree	oak	red oak	southern red oak
people	students	college students	college scholarship students
humans	children	toddlers	hyperactive toddlers

General	More Specific
She owns a dog.	She owns a Dachshund.
We drove our car.	We drove our Mustang convertible.
The animals went wild.	The gorillas, cheetahs, and polar bears went wild.

Identify the following words as general or specific.

### Exercise 2

1. movie
2. alligator
3. food
4. Mt. Everest
5. tulip
6. waffles
7. actor
8. bluebird
9. dog
10. boat

## Vivid Adjectives

Even when we use specific nouns, we sometimes need adjectives to create a more specific picture of what we have in mind.

- When appropriate, use **vivid adjectives** to describe nouns, other adjectives, and adverbs.

#### Specific nouns

Rolls Royce  
tulip  
great white shark

#### More specific noun phrases

**white convertible** Rolls Royce  
**blood red** tulip  
**ten-foot, 1,000-pound** great white shark

To generate a clear picture of the dog in the following sentences, we have added increasingly specific words.

She has a dog.

She has a **long-haired** dog.

She has a **long-haired Dachshund**.

She has a **long-haired Dachshund with a white patch over one eye**.

## Comma Usage with Adjectives

### COORDINATE ADJECTIVES

- Commas are needed between coordinate adjectives; these are adjectives that modify the noun separately (that is, each adjective modifies the noun directly). To determine whether a set of adjectives is coordinate, try either rearranging them or placing *and* between them.

She is a sweet, affectionate child.

In the sentence above, the adjectives are coordinate; they can be rearranged, and you can place *and* between them. It means the same to write, “She is an affectionate, sweet child.” or “She is a sweet and affectionate child.”

### CUMULATIVE ADJECTIVES

- Commas are not needed between cumulative adjectives, which are adjectives that do not modify the noun separately.

He lived in a large brick house.

You don’t need commas between *large* and *brick* in the above sentence. They can’t be rearranged, and you can’t place *and* between them because it wouldn’t sound right to say, “He lived in a brick large house,” or “He lived in a large and brick house.”

## Exercise 3

Place commas where needed in the following sentences:

1. I bought a blue velvet dress for the prom.
2. My cousin is a tall handsome basketball player.
3. I've always been afraid of large growling dogs.
4. I love my yellow Mustang convertible.
5. My mother is an honest loving woman.

## Specific Verbs

- Like nouns, verbs vary from **general to specific**.

General verbs tend to be weak whereas specific verbs communicate an image to the reader and are, therefore, stronger and more powerful. Specific verbs help create an image of an action just as specific nouns help create an image of people, places, and things. Specific verbs are known as **strong verbs**.

General verbs	Specific (strong) verbs
walk	stroll, stride, amble, glide, slink, creep
talk	yell, scream, whisper, growl, snarl, chatter
eat	devour, nibble, gulp, inhale

“When I revised my paragraph, I tried to use specific strong verbs that were right for the topic I was writing about.”

### Luxury Ride

The interior of the new Supra minivan **is designed** for the driver's safety and comfort. When a motorist **enters** the vehicle, she **is offered** choices for adjusting the seat's height, distance from the steering wheel, and lower back support, which **ensures** that every driver **is properly positioned** to operate the vehicle without straining, stretching, or hunching down. In front of the driver of a minivan, there is a beautifully displayed instrument panel with a digital display that is lit in bright colors for easy reading. Moreover, the console next to the driver **anticipates** her needs with its cup holders and organizer tray for tapes or CDs. When the van **is moving**, a computerized voice **warns** of

## Peer Example



Beth

unlocked doors or seat belts that are not fastened, which **puts** a driver at ease when carrying a vanload of kids. The driver **can** even **control** the mirror on the passenger door to get a better look at the lanes of traffic, and the mirror on the back gate **lets** the driver feel confident when backing into a parking space. The Supra's interior **makes** driving a pleasure.

### TO BE AND TO HAVE

- The verbs *to be* and *to have* are general (weak) verbs. Often more specific (strong) verbs can be used in their place.

#### Weak

Mr. Tirkenhaas **is** the manager of the Steak House.

#### Strong

Mr. Tirkenhaas **manages** the Steak House.

If you often use the verbs *to be* and *to have* in your writing, try to find a more specific verb to fit a situation.

#### Weak

The restaurant **has** a wide selection of desserts.

#### Strong

The restaurant **offers** a wide selection of desserts.

When you can replace *to be* or *to have* with another verb, your sentence will be stronger and more effective.

## Exercise 4

Identify the following verbs as general or specific.

- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. squint  | 6. yell   |
| 2. exclaim | 7. slouch |
| 3. say     | 8. shiver |
| 4. see     | 9. feel   |
| 5. whisper | 10. want  |

## Exercise 5

Circle the most appropriate verb to replace the italicized word or phrase.

### A Difficult Destination

My friend Marianella Rolla *is* (lives, belongs) at the end of a long, winding dirt road that takes me forever to travel. There are so many potholes and tree roots that I

must *go* (creep, move) along at under ten miles per hour so I don't *harm* (snap, hurt) an axle. It is even worse after a hard rain when puddles *are in* (hide, obscure, fill) the potholes and make me *go* (crawl, move) along the shoulder of the dirt road, or else my truck and I might *get wet* (bog down, drown). When the weather is dry, I have to be careful that my truck's tires don't *move* (slide, turn) in the loose sand and get stuck. Nighttime *is* (presents, has) the worst danger of getting lost because I can't *find* (see, locate) the landmarks that tell me where I am, and there is no street sign for the dirt lane that *goes* (leads, moves) into her driveway. Picking up Marianella *is* (presents, makes) a real challenge!

## Colorful Adverbs

- When appropriate, use **colorful adverbs** to describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

He rode along the mountain trail.

He rode **recklessly** along the mountain trail.

He rode **lightheartedly** along the mountain trail.

He rode **cautiously** along the mountain trail.

Notice how each adverb creates a completely different image

She stepped in front of the men.

She stepped **rudely** in front of the men.

She stepped **confidently** in front of the men.

She stepped **quickly** in front of the men.

The modifying adverb gives you more information about the action.



## Exercise 6

Write a sentence by selecting from the list of descriptive words for each symbol and bold word.

1. The **◆ child made a sound ◆**.

<i>adjective</i>	<i>child</i>	<i>made a sound</i>	<i>adverb</i>
spoiled	toddler	squealed	contentedly
hyperactive	baby	cooed	angrily
fussy	infant	murmured	softly
hungry	waif	yelled	happily
sleeping	youngster	whined	incessantly

2. The **◆ car went down the ◆ road**.

<i>adjective</i>	<i>car</i>	<i>went</i>	<i>down</i>	<i>adjective</i>	<i>road</i>
dusty	jeep	skidded	across	rain-slick	highway
shiny	limousine	slid	over	crowded	interstate
rusty	truck	flew	on	dusty	dirt road
huge	semi	rumbled	through	muddy	city street
sleek	dragster	accelerated		reflective	track

## Writing Practice 1

Create your own sentences by substituting specific nouns, vivid adjectives, strong verbs, and colorful adverbs.

1. The tree moved in the wind.

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2. The clouds were in the sky.

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3. The animal crossed the road.

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4. The instructor gave an assignment.

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5. The man caught the ball.

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## Denotation

- Choose words that have the right meaning or **denotation**, or literal meaning.

If you're not absolutely sure the word you have in mind is the right one, look it up in the dictionary to make sure it means what you think it means. You are better off choosing a word you are familiar with rather than one you think sounds sophisticated.

## Exercise 7

Circle the correct word in each sentence.

1. The instructor is liable / likely to put anything on the exam.
2. Sonia looked real / really tired after the hike.
3. Chocolate cake is my favorite dessert / desert.
4. Jeremy wasn't conscious / conscience that he had hurt Alicia's feelings.
5. My brother Ernie refunded / refurbished his money.

## Connotation

- Choose words that have the right emotional association, or **connotation**.

Words come with their own baggage; they have many shades of meaning. For example, it sounds a lot worse to say someone is a liar than to say someone takes liberties with the truth.

Positive Connotation	Negative Connotation	
slender	skinny	Describing a person as skinny sounds negative, whereas slender sounds attractive.
full	cluttered	When my wife tells me that my dresser drawer is cluttered, I know I have to straighten it up.
hurry	rush	While most of us are in a hurry in the morning, we know that being in a rush can cause accidents.
sociable	chatterbox	I'll never forget the look on my daughter's face when I remarked that she was a little chatterbox at the dance. I should have said that she was sociable.

## Exercise 8

Circle the word that does NOT have a negative connotation.

1. The garbage had begun to (rot / decompose).
2. The teacher's dress was (colorful / gaudy).
3. The job applicant was dressed in a (disorganized / casual) manner.
4. The auditorium was practically (empty / deserted) for the performance.
5. The man takes pride in having (an antiseptic / a clean) apartment.

## Writing Style

### Appeal to the Senses

- Descriptive writing appeals to the senses (**sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste**) and creates images or mental pictures.

### Peer Example

Beth

“ In describing my grandmother's rocking chair, I tried to use as much specific detail as possible and to appeal to as many of the senses as possible. ”

#### Memaw's Rocker

My grandmother's rocking chair **sits empty** [sight] in the corner of the living room. The **simple unpainted cane rocker** [sight] would be of little interest to an antique dealer, but I wouldn't part with it for the world. The seat is **cupped slightly** [sight] from years of use: **afternoons and evenings when she sat shelling peas, darning socks, or knitting sweaters** [sight]. The arms are **sanded smooth** [touch] from the constant motion of her thin arms.

The chair is **silent** now, but if I close my eyes, I can still hear the **squeak of the rockers** against the pine floor and hear the **click of her knitting needles** [sound]. They were sounds that always comforted me and made me feel as if everything were right with the world [sound]. Even today, I can't look at the rocker without seeing my grandmother **smiling** at me over the **rim of her glasses** [sight] and hearing her say she loves me [sound].

## Figurative Language

- Good writers use **figurative language** to help readers see what they are describing.

Figurative language employs figures of speech—such as **similes**, **metaphors**, and **personification**—that compare or identify one subject with another.

- A **simile** is a comparison that uses *like* or *as*.

He eats like a pig.

Her look penetrated like an X-ray.

The sailboat glided through the water like a swan.

- A **metaphor** is a comparison that likens two things **without** using *like* or *as*.

He is a pig.

Her look shot a bullet through me.

The sailboat was a feather in the wind.

- **Personification** means to give human characteristics to something nonhuman.

Money **talks**.

The sails **inhaled** and **exhaled** with each gust of wind.

The trees **sighed** in the wind.

### Clearwater Lake

Clearwater Lake is a small **lake nestled** [personification] in the Adirondack Mountains. The glassy lake is ringed with aspen, larch, birch, and fir trees, and in the fall, **the mountainsides are on fire** [metaphor] with brilliant oranges, reds, and yellows. I arrive at the lake early, with **mist still clinging like smoke to the surface of the water** [simile].

### Peer Example



Dan

## Appropriate Vocabulary

- Choose vocabulary that is appropriate for the subject and audience.

Using the right vocabulary can go a long way toward convincing your audience that you know what you are talking about.

## Peer Example



Alicia

“When I wrote this paragraph, I wanted to show the negative health effects smoking has on pregnant mothers, and I wanted the writing to sound authoritative, so I used medical terminology that doctors use.”

## What a Drag

While cigarettes create health problems for all smokers, **newborn babies** are put at great health risk by their smoking mothers. First, smoking can cause damage to the **fetus** by **reducing oxygen** that reaches the **unborn child** in the **mother's womb**. During **childbirth**, smokers are more likely than non-smokers to suffer **heart and lung complications** due to their **impaired breathing capabilities**, and often the **stress from childbirth** causes injuries to babies. At birth, the babies of mothers who smoke weigh an average of 25% less than other newborns, and **low birth weight** weakens the babies' **resistance to disease**. Also, newborns may suffer **respiratory ailments** from their mothers' cigarette smoke. Finally, because the milk of mothers is **contaminated by nicotine**, a **stimulant that overexcites the heart**, many affected newborns **show signs of high blood pressure**. In conclusion, the Surgeon General, **the nation's top health authority**, warns on every pack of cigarettes about the dangers of smoking to pregnant women.

## Exercise 9

Circle the most appropriate word or phrase to replace the italicized word or phrase.

## A Good Deal

*Cut-rate* (Discount, Cheap) stores meet a lot of our needs today. First of all, the *stuff* (merchandise, things) you (people, consumers) can *get* (buy, grab) is *cheap* (inexpensive, less). For example, there are *places* (stores, buildings) that *have* (sell, give) *stuff* (products, things) for the house that you (people, shoppers) use every day including razors, cereal, and soap that can be *had* (purchased, gotten) for less than half of the cost at a *regular* (full-priced, real) store. *Factory-reject* (Defective, Factory-seconds) clothing stores are a real bargain too. You (Customers, Someone) can *get* (see, find) *fancy clothes from designers* (fancy threads, designer wear) for *cheap* (less, nothing). Finally, *cut-rate* (discount, secondhand) auto parts stores are a great way to save

because these places have things like oil, headlights, and batteries for less than a gas station charges. Try cut-rate *places* (stores, digs) to save money.

## Writing Practice 2

Write a paragraph using one of the following prompts. Try to use specific, concrete language that appeals to the senses.

1. Describe one location in winter and summer. Try to give the reader a picture of the place in each season.
2. Describe an image from a magazine and turn in the picture with your description.
3. Describe one location at different times of the day (a stadium before, during, and after a game; downtown at midnight and at rush hour, etc.).
4. Describe the place you most like to spend time. Use words that make the reader want to spend time there too.
5. Write a paragraph that develops one of the following topic sentences. Imagine the place and what might go on there.

John Deerfield Memorial Stadium was filled with excited fans.

The volcano erupted at two A.M.

The mountain path disappeared into a thicket of trees.

The desert shimmered with heat.

Take care to avoid pitfalls such as using unfamiliar synonyms, slang, clichés, and wordiness in your writing.



### Pitfall 1: Unfamiliar Synonyms

- Avoid using **unfamiliar synonyms** (words that have the same or similar meaning).

Words listed in a thesaurus as synonyms are not always interchangeable because each word has its own shade of meaning and its own associations. Too often writers use words they aren't familiar with because they think they should use language that sounds impressive or sophisticated. As a result, more often than not, they choose words that have the wrong meaning or the wrong associations. You're much better off using language that you are familiar with than language you've found in a thesaurus.

The president of the company appeared before the **laborers** (workers) and admitted that the company had **obfuscated** (hidden) its financial difficulties.

The writer tries to use sophisticated vocabulary but winds up changing the meaning of the sentence. Most workers would resent being called laborers, which usually means workers who perform manual labor. Obfuscated means confused or clouded, which has the effect of hiding, but in the context of the sentence, hidden is the clearer word.

### Pitfall 2: Slang

- Avoid **slang** (informal words that have a specific meaning to a group of people) and **profanity** (language that is disrespectful or vulgar).

Slang may be colorful, but it is generally considered inappropriate for most writing. One of the problems with slang is that the writer runs the risk of the audience not understanding the intended meaning.

anyways	main squeeze
off the hook	chillin'
gross	bummed
phat	dude
dis (disrespect)	whackjob
hood (neighborhood)	fab

### Pitfall 3: Clichés

- Avoid **clichés**, expressions that have been used so much they have lost their freshness.

Many clichés are similes, figures of speech that use *like* or *as* to compare two things. Others are simply phrases that we've become so familiar with that they no longer help us see an image.

cold as ice	poor as a church mouse
dumb as an ox	mad as a hornet
go out on a limb	read him like a book
happy as a clam	sink your teeth into
hot as hell	red as a rose
open and shut case	strong as a bear
pretty as a picture	

## Pitfall 4: Wordiness

- Avoid **wordiness**, the use of words that do not contribute to meaning.

Often writers end up using more words than they need to in order to convey their meaning. When we speak, we tend to use lots of extra words. In writing, it's best to be concise and cut out unnecessary expressions.

### WORDY

**In my opinion**, if politicians were **being absolutely honest and straightforward about the actual facts of** where they get their money, **the people who vote for them** would understand whose voice is most important **and who gets listened to**.

The bold words are not needed to understand the idea of the sentence. They are either understood (*in my opinion, actual facts*) or redundant, meaning they repeat the meaning of the words around them (*being absolutely, and straightforward, and who gets listened to*). The phrase *the people who vote for them* is a lot of words that simply mean *voters*.

### CONCISE

If politicians were honest about where they get their money, voters would understand whose voice is most important.



**Exercise 10**

Eliminate slang, clichés, and wordiness from the following sentences.

1. It goes without saying that Rico is the best man for the job.
2. An amazingly high number of citizens of the United States are overweight.
3. I absolutely agree with you that your brother is a sly dog who cannot be trusted any farther than you can throw him.
4. Some people who go out to restaurants feel that they need to get their money's worth by eating the whole entire meal even if they feel full to the point of not wanting to eat any more.
5. Last time I went to the beach, I ran into a totally cool dude, and we surfed some awesome waves.

**Review  
Exercise**

Circle the best choice of words in each parenthesis. To eliminate a word or phrase, circle delete.

1. Susie's (bird / parakeet) chirped as we talked.
2. My neighbor's dog (made noise / barked) last night.
3. My roommates and I like (our / are) new apartment.
4. My date (complimented / complemented) me on my new dress.
5. I like to shop in (unconventional / disreputable) stores.
6. I met an interesting (dude / man) in my chemistry class.
7. I'm not going to do (no / any) more homework tonight.
8. My date looked (pretty as a picture / gorgeous) in her prom dress.
9. (It goes without saying / delete) students should not be required to wear uniforms.
10. My botany test was (so / delete) difficult.

## Editing Exercise 1



Alone or with a partner, circle the most appropriate word or phrase within the parentheses for each italicized word. If a choice is [delete], this means that the best choice is to cut the italicized word or phrase.

## Sleep

Sleep is an *extremely* ([delete] / incredibly) important and *very* ([delete] / really) troubling part of *the lives each of us lives every day* (our lives / our everyday lives). The *person who is like most people* (average person / regular Joe) spends more than 220,000 hours *in bed* ([delete] / in his own bed) asleep *from the time he is born until the time he dies* (in his lifetime / his whole entire lifetime). Some people sleep nine to ten hours *each and every night* ([delete] / a night) while others need as few as three hours of sleep *each night of the week* ([delete] / every night). Some of us take naps, and some find napping to be very ([delete] / way) difficult and *somewhat* ([delete] / kind of) disorienting. Sleep is *so* ([delete] / very) necessary to restore our vitality, reduce stress, and regenerate. Unfortunately, *in actual fact*, ([delete] / in reality) many people have trouble sleeping *really well* ([delete] / getting some serious Z's), and Americans spend *so* ([delete] / many) many millions *and millions* ([delete] / upon millions) of dollars on sleep aids every year. Experts *who understand people who have trouble sleeping* ([delete] / who are knowledgeable about this subject) estimate *with an educated guess* ([delete] / roughly) that *each and every* (every / every single) night *close to* ([delete] / close to) approximately one in three people *or so* ([delete] / thereabouts) has *some type of problem or trouble* (trouble / some kind of difficulties) sleeping.

## Editing Exercise 2



Alone or with a partner, circle the most appropriate vocabulary in parentheses for each italicized word or phrase. If a choice is [delete] this means that the best choice is to cut the italicized word or phrase.

## Lots of Bikes for Free

Teenagers in one town are doing something *really cool* (awesome, productive) and helping many *people who live there* (townspeople, folks) get around. These teens are fixing up old bicycles that are *ditched* (dumped, discarded) around town. Then each of the bikes is put back on the busy streets for *people* (residents, people who reside there) to use. All the bikes can be spotted *as easy as pie* (no problem, easily) because they are painted a bright fluorescent color. When a *person* (a person who rides the bike, bicyclist) is *done* (finished, completed) using a bike, she just *dumps* (places, throws) it on a curb for the next *person* (guy, citizen) who comes along and needs a quick ride. The bikes are popular with lots of school kids and even elderly people on their way to one of the churches in town.

There are many *good things* (benefits, perks) to this program. Teenagers get mechanical training. Some of the volunteers have gained job training that has gotten them a job that pays well. Also, the *cops* (heat, police) like this program because there are few thefts of bikes anymore since there is a free bike available almost everywhere. One of the best *things* (advantages, perks) is that most old bicycles are being recycled instead of *trashing* (corrupting, cluttering) city streets or being thrown away and clogging the town dump. Most importantly, this town and its citizens feel a sense of community.

# Chapter 24

## Identifying Subjects and Verbs

A **sentence** is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. Subjects and verbs are the building blocks of the sentence. To avoid run-ons, sentence fragments, and subject–verb agreement errors in your writing, you should be able to identify subjects and verbs.

### Subjects

- The **subject** is who or what the sentence is about.

**S**      **V**  
My **neighbor** *walks* his dog every morning.

**S**      **V**  
In the summer, the **bugs** *are* terrible.

### Finding the Subject

- To find the subject of the sentence, ask who or what the sentence is about.

**S**  
**Jake and Sabrina** dance well together.

Who or what is the sentence about?

S

**We** will study tonight.

Who or what is the sentence about?

S

There is a **dog** in the yard.

Who or what is the sentence about?

- The **simple subject** is the one word that names the subject, without modifying words such as adjectives.

S

The uninvited **guest** at the party liked the idea.

- Subjects can be **nouns** (persons, places, or things); **pronouns** (I, she, they); or **gerunds** (verbs ending in *-ing* that act as nouns).

S

My **friends** went on a trip.

S

**I** don't like spinach.

S

**Swimming** is great exercise.

- A sentence can have a **compound subject**, which is more than one subject.

S

**Jake and Sabrina** dance well together.

## Problems with Identifying the Subject

- In command sentences, the subject is **implied**.

Imp S

**(You)** Open the door.

Imp S

**(You)** Turn left at the corner.

- The subject follows the verb in sentences that begin with *there* or *here*.

S

There is a funny **bug** on the window.

- The subject is not found in a prepositional phrase (a preposition followed by its object).

PP

S

PP

After eating, the **cat** leaped on the table.

### Common Prepositions

about	at	down	like	through
above	before	during	near	throughout
according to	behind	except	of	to
across	below	for	off	toward
after	beneath	from	on	under
against	beside	in	on account of	until
along	besides	in addition to	on top of	up
along with	between	in spite of	out	upon
among	beyond	inside	outside of	with
around	by	instead of	over	within
as	despite	into	since	without
as far as				

- To find the subject of the sentence, cross out the prepositional phrases and ask who or what the sentence is about.

PP                      S                      PP  
~~In the morning,~~ **James** ~~takes me to school.~~

### Exercise 1

Cross out each prepositional phrase and circle the simple subject.

- Around midnight during finals week, students with a need to stay up all night go out in search of coffee.
- The all-night diner down the street from my apartment becomes crowded from midnight until midmorning.
- Over the next few days, some students with research to complete will live in the library.
- Except for a Saturday-night break, Bill and Lisa studied every day in the last week.
- With little sleep and lots of coffee, I am worried about my performance on the final exam.

### Exercise 2

Cross out each prepositional phrase and circle the simple subject.

- Without a doubt, the best time of the year is springtime.
- After class, the teacher spoke with the student.
- In the room, the lamp on the table went out.
- During the night, a storm from the north brought cold weather to the region.
- The dog behind the fence barked throughout the day.

## Verbs

- The **verb tells the action or state of being** of the subject. The verb usually comes after the subject. Note, however, that the verb is not necessarily the next word after the subject, nor does it always follow the subject.

### Finding the Verb

- To find the verb, ask what the subject is doing or what word expresses the state of being of the subject.

S                                  V

**Everyone** at the meeting *likes* the idea.

What is everyone doing?

S                                  V

**Mrs. Jones** *was* late for the meeting.

What word tells the state of being of Mrs. Jones?

S                                  V

Satisfied with her work, the **scientist** *has returned* to her office.

What words tell what the scientist is doing or her state of being?

### Classes of Verbs

- Action verbs** tell what the subject is doing.

S                                  V

The **car** *rolled* down the hill.

- Linking verbs** link the subject to words that describe or identify the subject.

#### Common Linking Verbs

---

is	feel	look
seem	become	smell
sound	taste	appear

S                                  V

**I** really *feel* tired today.

- Helping verbs**, called **auxiliaries**, help the main verb. The helping verb plus the main verb make a **verb phrase**, which expresses the complete action or state of being of the subject.

S                                  V

The **moon** *has come* out from behind the cloud.

## Common Auxiliaries

Forms of <i>to be</i>	Forms of <i>to do</i>	Forms of <i>to have</i>	Others
am	does	have	will
is	do	has	would
are	did	had	shall
was			should
were			may
been			must
			might
			can
			could
			need to
			ought to

Circle the simple subject and underline the complete verb.

### Exercise 3

1. Someone has taken my seat in the movie!
2. Our car must be taken to the shop.
3. That motorist should move her vehicle.
4. The bedspread has been washed many times.
5. My parents may arrive today.

Circle the simple subject and underline the complete verb.

### Exercise 4

1. I want to eat early tonight.
2. Before school today, my child is supposed to finish her homework.
3. On Friday, Chandra asked to meet with me.
4. Sometimes before class, the teacher of my class tries to have conferences with students.
5. The man at the table seems to be angry.

## Problems with Identifying the Verb

- Infinitives (to + verb) are not part of the complete verb of the sentence.

The mail **carrier** *had* to park her truck.

- The present participle and past participle are not complete by themselves and need a helping verb.



### Present Participle

✗ The man *walking* down the street.

#### Complete Verb

✓ The man *was walking* down the street.

### Past Participle

✗ The damage *caused* by the fire.

#### Complete Verb

✓ The damage *was caused* by the fire.

- The main verb of the sentence is not found in a **dependent clause**.  
Dependent clauses begin with words like **because, while, if, and although**.  
Relative clauses begin with **who, which, or that**.

For more about relative pronouns and subordinating conjunctions, see Chapter 19, page 192 and page 199.

S                      DC                      V

The **man** *who was mowing his lawn* *was* injured.

DC                      S                      V

*When the rain stopped*, the **children** *went* out to play.

- A subject can have a **compound verb** (more than one verb).

S                      V                      V

**Christopher** *swims* twenty laps and *runs* three miles every day.

## Exercise 5

Cross out dependent clauses and circle the simple subject and underline the complete verb.

1. The comedians who I enjoy tell funny jokes and make funny faces.
2. The computer that I used in the lab makes a strange noise and shuts down unexpectedly.
3. When I bought my car, the dealership gave me a free cell phone.
4. My sister doesn't want to help me because she is annoyed with me.
5. If you want to do well in life, you should work hard to make friends who will help you.

## Review Exercise 1

Circle the simple subject and underline the complete verb of each sentence. You may cross out the prepositional phrases and dependent clauses to help in your identification.

1. Once during a storm, I stood under a tree.
2. It saves money.

3. Get a tutor for English.
4. There are many new homes in this subdivision.
5. My mom and dad understand, but they miss me.
6. I am worried that my girlfriend back home will forget me.
7. Gardens need care and attention.
8. Have you ever eaten a fresh carrot?
9. There are many dogs and cats in my neighborhood.
10. Some families on my street own a dog and a couple of cats.

Circle the simple subject and underline the complete verb of each sentence. You may cross out the prepositional phrases and dependent clauses to help in your identification.

## Review Exercise 2

1. The books that I ordered have arrived.
2. The best runners in my class run five miles every day.
3. During the spring, birds from South America fly north.
4. Studying for most students takes up to two hours for each hour spent in class.
5. The car that my parents gave me is old and has many parts that need replacing.
6. The neighbors who live next door water their plants every day.
7. Speaking two languages can be useful when traveling.
8. Once in a while, my brothers and I like to go camping without our parents.
9. There are many ways to travel to Europe.
10. A trip can cost a lot and can take a lot of planning.

Circle the simple subject and underline the complete verb of each sentence. You may cross out the prepositional phrases and dependent clauses to help in your identification.

## Review Exercise 3

1. In the lobby of the hotel, the doorman greets guests and helps guests who are carrying suitcases.
2. With a wave of his hand, the policeman was motioning for one lane of traffic to continue.
3. By the time class begins, my classmates and I must have completed the entire assignment.
4. The large bird in the tree was singing a familiar song.

5. My computer that I just bought was made in Japan and shipped to me yesterday.
6. The tree in the front yard has dropped most of its leaves and has begun to sprout new ones.
7. People who enter our house may take off their coats and leave them in the front hall.
8. When the road crews arrived, workers and their foremen jumped out of their trucks and looked at the job to be done.
9. The work on that job was difficult and needed to be completed quickly.
10. Before the workers have lunch, everyone who is working on the project must meet in the conference room.

## Editing Exercise



Alone or with a partner, circle the simple subject and underline the complete verb of each sentence. You may cross out the prepositional phrases and dependent clauses to help in your identification.

### Board Games

Playing board games has been popular in America for more than a century. The first popular game was invented by Milton Bradley. The name of the first game was *The Checkered Game of Life*. There were many game inventors who became famous. Along with Milton Bradley, the Parker brothers got rich when they invented Monopoly. With its hotels and railroads, Monopoly is the most popular and well-known game of all time. Because they took people's minds off their troubles, Monopoly and Life were extremely popular during the Depression and were played every night by millions of Americans. Even with all of the computer games today, many children and adults from all over the world still enjoy checkers, Scrabble, and Clue. Some families make up their own games and create the board and the rules. There are even books that explain how to create board games.

# Chapter 25

## Subject–Verb Agreement

Making subjects and verbs agree is a crucial skill because subject–verb agreement errors are major writing errors. The rules are fairly simple, but there are several areas in which writers commonly make errors. Be sure to complete the exercises in this chapter to ensure that these errors are not part of your writing.

### Subject–Verb Agreement Rules

- Subjects and verbs must **agree** in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb.

S V

**Joe** *takes* his lunch to work every day.

The singular subject *Joe* agrees with the verb *takes*.

---

S V

**They** *take* binoculars to view the wildlife.

The plural subject *they* agrees with the verb *take*.

---

- Telling the difference between singular and plural subjects is usually easy (though see the section below on problem subjects): most nouns that end

in *-s* or *-es* are plural, and it's easy to tell singular pronouns (such as *he*) from plural ones (such as *they*).

Telling the difference between singular and plural verbs can be trickier.

- In the present tense, the singular and plural forms of the verb are identical in both the first and second person: they take no ending. In the third person, however, singular verbs take an *-s* or *-es* ending, and plural verbs take no ending.

	Singular	Plural
First person	I work	We work
Second person	You work	You work
Third person	He works	They work
	She works	Students work
	It works	
	A student works	

The following easy-to-remember formula may help you remember the correct endings for verbs:

- 💡 *I* and *you* take a verb with no ending.
- 💡 *Single subject* begins with *s*, and the verb needs an *-s* ending.
- 💡 *Plural* doesn't begin with *s*, so the verb needs no *-s*.

## Problem Subjects

### Indefinite Pronouns

- Most **indefinite pronouns**, commonly used as the subject of a sentence, are singular and take a verb with an *-s* ending.

Singular Indefinite Pronouns			
Pronouns ending in <i>-one</i>	Pronouns ending in <i>-body</i>	Pronouns ending in <i>-thing</i>	Other singular indefinite pronouns
anyone	anybody	anything	each
everyone	everybody	everything	either
no one	nobody	nothing	neither
one	somebody	something	
someone			

S V

**Everything** *seems* fine.

## Singular or Plural Subjects

- Some subjects can be either singular or plural depending on the meaning of the sentence.

Singular or Plural Subjects			
a lot more	all most	any none	lots some

### SINGULAR

S                      V  
A **lot** of energy *goes* into studying.

### PLURAL

S                      V  
A **lot** of students *enjoy* college.

## Collective Nouns

- Collective nouns are words that refer to one whole made up of parts. Most collective nouns are singular and take a verb with an -s ending.

Common Collective Nouns	
audience	faculty
band	family
class	group
committee	jury
crowd	team

S                      V  
The **class** *meets* on Monday.

- However, some collective nouns can be either singular or plural depending on how they are used. When the members of a collective noun are thought of as individuals, the subject is considered plural and therefore takes a verb with no ending.

S                      V  
The **team** *have turned* in their uniforms.

## Exercise 1

Underline the correct verb in the following sentences.

1. Everyone (loves / love) a parade.
2. Some of the bills (has / have) been paid.
3. Most of your advice (has / have) fallen on deaf ears.
4. My family (goes / go) to the beach in the summer.
5. Our team (plays / play) on Saturday.

## Fields of Study

- **Fields of study** are singular subjects and take a verb with an -s ending.

Fields of Study	
history	news
home economics	physics
mathematics	politics
music	statistics

S                      V

**Mathematics** *requires* logic to understand.

## Compound Subjects

- **Compound subjects** (two or more subjects joined by *and*) are plural; they take a verb with no ending.

S            S            V

**Mary** and **Jason** *walk* home together every day.

## Subjects Joined by *Or* or *Nor*

- When subjects are joined by *or* or *nor*, only one of the subjects performs the action, so the **verb agrees with the closest subject**.

S                      S            V

The woman **or** her children *answer* the phone.

S                      S            V

The children **or** their mother *answers* the phone.

## Gerunds

- A **gerund** (an *-ing* word used as a subject) is singular and takes a verb with an -s ending.

S            V

**Running** *takes* energy.

## Exercise 2

Underline the correct verb in the following sentences.

1. Home economics (is / are) no longer taught in many high schools.
2. Neither my brothers nor my wife (is / are) interested in going to the game.
3. Politics and money (seems / seem) to go hand in hand.
4. My aunt or my parents (picks / pick) my brother up from school.
5. Exercising with friends (relieves / relieve) stress.

## Problem Verbs

### Compound Verbs

- Both verbs in a **compound verb** should agree with the subject.

S        V                                  V

The letter carriers *stop* at mailboxes and *deliver* mail.

### Irregular Verbs

- **Irregular verbs**—such as *to be*, *to do*, and *to have*—can cause confusion.

Sometimes *I be*, *he be*, and *they be* are used in speaking; however, these forms are not standard English and should be avoided in writing.

To be	Singular	Plural
First person	I am	we are
Second person	you are	you are
Third person	he is she is it is	they are

To do	Singular	Plural
First person	I do	we do
Second person	you do	you do
Third person	he does she does it does	they do

To have	Singular	Plural
First person	I have	we have
Second person	you have	you have
Third person	he has she has it has	they have



## Problem Sentence Structures

Confusion about subject–verb agreement can occur when the structure of a sentence is unusual or complicated. That is why it is important to be able to identify the subject and the verb (see Chapter 24).

### Prepositions

- Be careful not to confuse an **object of a preposition** with the **subject of the sentence**.

This confusion can arise when a prepositional phrase comes at the start of the sentence or between the subject and the verb. (As explained in Chapter 24, the subject of a sentence is never found in a prepositional phrase.)

S                      V  
 The **men in the car** *drive* carefully.  
PP

### Reversed Order

- The subject usually comes after the verb in a question or in a sentence that begins with *There* or *Here* (see Chapter 24). Even though the usual order is **reversed**, the basic subject–verb agreement rule still applies.

V    S  
 There *is* a **cat** on the car.

V                      S  
 Here *are* some **napkins**.

V                      S  
 What **are** your **feelings**?

V    S  
 Where **is** my **pen**?

### Exercise 3

Underline the correct verb in the following sentences.

1. One of my friends (is / are) coming over this afternoon.
2. There (have / has) been reports of severe thunderstorms in the area.
3. The students in the back row (is / are) talking.
4. Here (are / is) the information you requested.
5. When (do / does) the movie start?



## Review Exercise 1

Underline the correct verbs.

1. (Is / are) our newspaper here yet?
2. One of my friends (swims / swim) twenty laps and (runs / run) three miles every day.
3. During recess, the class (plays / play) in the field.
4. College for most students (requires / require) time and (demands / demands) commitment.
5. Taking a test after staying up late with friends (is / are) risky.
6. The neighbors or their gardener (waters / water) the plants every day.
7. Speaking two languages (is / are) useful in some jobs.
8. Economics (happens / happen) to be my major.
9. There (appears / appear) to be many ways to get there from here.
10. The pinball machine that (steals / steal) my quarters (is / are) in the game room.

## Review Exercise 2

Correct any subject–verb agreement errors.

1. Poodles with bows around their necks makes me laugh.
2. A good teacher offers the students a clear example and help the students understand the material.
3. The hand movements that are used by the referee confuses me.
4. One of my roommates who admire movie stars hangs their pictures all over the house.
5. Politics in most towns are discussed in the newspaper.
6. There is a lot of adventurous rides at the theme park that remind me of my childhood.
7. Because I have such a limited budget, the prices at the mall really annoys me.
8. Although neither my friends nor my brother have ever stolen anything in our lives, the security guards who patrol the mall always follow me.
9. Cars with only one air bag doesn't help the passenger at all.
10. When classes at school ends for spring break, I hop in my car and leave town as fast as I can.

## Editing Exercise 1

Alone or with a partner, correct the subject–verb agreement errors in the following paragraph.



## Grandma

My grandmother is a special lady. This woman from the backwoods of Tennessee stand barely five feet tall and even with all of her clothes on weigh under a hundred pounds, but her will and her courage is as strong and fierce as a lion's. Her gray hair is pulled into a tight braid at the back of her head, and she always wear a simple cotton housedress. Her face is small and lined with her years, but her eyes is bright and attentive as a hawk's. On Sunday, when she go to church, she puts on the lace-trimmed black dress that is shiny with starch and ironing. Either her sisters or my grandmother make Sunday dinner for our entire family. Everyone love her cooking, and usually one of the sisters bake a pie for dessert. Providing a second home for my brothers and me are what I love most about my grandmother.

## Editing Exercise 2



Alone or with a partner, correct the subject–verb agreement errors in the following paragraph.

### The Sound of Music

Although the music that a band play on CDs sound simple, it is often made up of many different types of instruments that work together to create sound. There is the woodwinds, which includes saxophones, oboes, and clarinets. Strings are made up of violins, guitars, and cellos. The brass section of most orchestras include trumpets, trombones, and tubas. Either trumpets or a tuba are included in many marching bands. Most people at a concert thinks of drums or congas as the only percussion instruments, but the piano is actually percussive as well. A piano's sound is produced when small hammers inside the piano hits a key to play a note. The most portable and remarkable instrument, however, are the human voice. The vocal chords of a trained singer is capable of producing an amazing array of sounds.

# Chapter 26

## Verb Tenses

The past tense of the verb indicates that the action or state of being existed before the present moment. Verb tense is signaled in several ways. The past participle verb form uses a helping verb, usually *has/have/had* or *was/were*. The past tense and past participle forms of verbs can be a problem for writers.

Luckily, many verbs are regular; these should not give you much trouble. However, many others are irregular; these are much more difficult because their forms change. You should review the correct forms and practice using them.

In addition, the past participle can be used in a number of ways, and it is important to know how and when to use it. Once you have learned about verbs in the present and past tenses, you will be ready to edit your writing for verb shifts.

### Forming the Past Tense and Past Participle

#### Regular Verbs

- To form the past tense or past participle of **regular verbs**, add *-ed* to the verb.  
walked, talked, returned
- When adding the *-ed* ending to verbs, pay attention to the **spelling rules**.

- If the verb ends in e, drop the extra e: imagined, fired, filed.
- If the word is one syllable and a vowel comes before the final consonant, double that consonant: stopped, dripped.

## Irregular Verbs

- There is no set pattern to form the past tense or past participle of **irregular verbs**. You must memorize the forms. (Collegiate dictionaries list the past tense forms of irregular verbs.)
- Some irregular verbs keep the **same form** in the present tense, past tense, and past participle.

**Present:** The canoes **cost** only \$10 each per day.

**Past:** Yesterday, the two canoes **cost** \$20.

**Past participle:** The canoes have **cost** only \$40 for the two days.

- Most irregular verbs take **different forms** in the present tense, past tense, and past participles.

**Present:** I often **go** on a trip.

**Past:** Last week, I **went** on a trip.

**Past participle:** I have **gone** on a trip every summer.

- One of the most irregular verbs is **to be**. It has different forms for different persons in the past tense.

To be	Singular	Plural
First person	I was	we were
Second person	you were	you were
Third person	he was she was it was	they were

## Common Irregular Verbs

Present	Past	Past Participle	Present	Past	Past Participle
arise	arose	arisen	bring	brought	brought
awake	awoke	awakened	build	built	built
bear	bore	born	burn	burned	burned/burnt
beat	beat	beaten	burst	burst	burst
become	became	become	buy	bought	bought
begin	began	begun	cast	cast	cast
bend	bent	bent	catch	caught	caught
bet	bet	bet	choose	chose	chosen
bind	bound	bound	cling	clung	clung
bite	bit	bitten	come	came	come
bleed	bled	bled	cost	cost	cost
blow	blew	blown	creep	crept	crept
break	broke	broken	cut	cut	cut

Present	Past	Past Participle	Present	Past	Past Participle
dare	dared	dared	seek	sought	sought
deal	dealt	dealt	sell	sold	sold
dig	dug	dug	send	sent	sent
do	did	done	set	set	set
draw	drew	drawn	shake	shook	shaken
dream	dreamed/dreamt	dreamed/dreamt	shave	shaved	shaved
drink	drank	drunk	shine	shone	shone
drive	drove	driven	shoot	shot	shot
eat	ate	eaten	show	showed	shown/showed
fall	fell	fallen	shrink	shrank	shrunk
feed	fed	fed	shut	shut	shut
feel	felt	felt	sing	sang	sung
fight	fought	fought	sink	sank	sunk
find	found	found	sit	sat	sat
fling	flung	flung	sleep	slept	slept
fly	flew	flown	slide	slid	slid
forget	forgot	forgotten	slit	slit	slit
forgive	forgave	forgiven	speak	spoke	spoken
freeze	froze	frozen	speed	sped	sped
get	got	gotten/got	spend	spent	spent
give	gave	given	spin	spun	spun
go	went	gone	split	split	split
grind	ground	ground	spread	spread	spread
grow	grew	grown	spring	sprang	sprung
hang	hung/hanged	hung/hanged	stand	stood	stood
have	had	had	steal	stole	stolen
hear	heard	heard	stick	stuck	stuck
hide	hid	hidden	sting	stung	stung
hit	hit	hit	strike	struck	struck
hold	held	held	string	strung	strung
hurt	hurt	hurt	swear	swore	sworn
keep	kept	kept	sweep	swept	swept
know	knew	known	swim	swam	swum
lay	laid	laid	swing	swung	swung
lead	led	led	take	took	taken
leave	left	left	teach	taught	taught
lend	lent	lent	tear	tore	torn
let	let	let	tell	told	told
lie (to relax)	lay	lain	think	thought	thought
light	lit /lighted	lit /lighted	throw	threw	thrown
lose	lost	lost	understand	understood	understood
make	made	made	wake	woke	woke
mean	meant	meant	wear	wore	worn
meet	met	met	weave	wove	woven
pay	paid	paid	wed	wed	wed
quit	quit	quit	weep	wept	wept
read	read	read	wet	wet	wet
ride	rode	ridden	win	won	won
ring	rang	rung	wind	wound	wound
rise	rose	risen	wring	wrung	wrung
run	ran	run	write	wrote	written
see	saw	seen			



## Exercise 1

Write the correct form of the verb in the space.

1. **run**

The horse \_\_\_\_\_ from the stable when the dog barked.

I have \_\_\_\_\_ every day this week.

2. **bet**

My friend \_\_\_\_\_ me that he would get an A on the French exam.

She has \_\_\_\_\_ on the lottery.

3. **take**

I \_\_\_\_\_ the coat to the cleaners.

They have \_\_\_\_\_ a part-time job.

4. **choose**

Miranda \_\_\_\_\_ to wear a red dress to the party last night.

I have \_\_\_\_\_ an excellent school for my child to attend.

5. **have**

The motorist \_\_\_\_\_ to blow her horn to get the pedestrian's attention.

We have \_\_\_\_\_ a hard time paying our bills.

6. **come**

Yesterday I \_\_\_\_\_ home at five.

The jury has \_\_\_\_\_ back into the courtroom.

7. **eat**

Someone \_\_\_\_\_ the whole pie before I got home.

We have \_\_\_\_\_ at the same restaurant for many years.

8. **draw**

The child \_\_\_\_\_ a picture for her mommy.

She has \_\_\_\_\_ many pictures of the dog.

9. **write**

Yesterday I \_\_\_\_\_ a letter to my parents.

My father has never \_\_\_\_\_ an email.

10. **hurt**

Yesterday I \_\_\_\_\_ my leg.

The defeat has \_\_\_\_\_ the team's chances for the title.

## Exercise 2

Write the correct form of the verb in the space.

1. **shake**

The mayor \_\_\_\_\_ everyone's hand after the speech.

The hurricane has \_\_\_\_\_ all the fruit off the tree.

2. **forgive**

The boy \_\_\_\_\_ his sister after their fight.

My parents have \_\_\_\_\_ me for taking their car without asking.

3. **see**

Last week, I \_\_\_\_\_ an eagle by the creek.

A stranger was \_\_\_\_\_ in our yard.

4. **lead**

The scoutmaster \_\_\_\_\_ the troop on an expedition.

Our teacher has \_\_\_\_\_ an interesting life.

5. **swim**

We \_\_\_\_\_ for a few minutes before leaving the beach.

The old man has \_\_\_\_\_ across the lake every spring for the past thirty years.

6. **wear**

The job applicant \_\_\_\_\_ a suit to the interview last week.

I have \_\_\_\_\_ the same shirt for two days.

7. **drive**

The family \_\_\_\_\_ fifty miles for a picnic in the mountains.

The flies have \_\_\_\_\_ all of us crazy this summer.

8. **hide**

The man \_\_\_\_\_ the present from his wife.

The dog has \_\_\_\_\_ its bone.

9. **steal**

Someone \_\_\_\_\_ my bike.

My car was \_\_\_\_\_ from the parking lot.

10. **speak**

The principal \_\_\_\_\_ to the child's parents.

The mayor has \_\_\_\_\_ many times at our school.

## Using the Past Participle

### The Present Perfect Tense

- The present perfect tense **expresses an action that began in the past and is continuing in the present**. The present perfect tense is made with the present tense of *to have* and the past participle.

I **have gone** to the same school for two years.

- The present perfect tense can also describe **an action that has just been completed or an action that was completed at an undetermined time in the past**.

The mechanic **has completed** his work on the car.

### The Past Perfect Tense

- The past perfect tense is used to **emphasize that an action occurred in the past before another past action or point in time**. It is always used when *already* or *just* is in a sentence in which one action occurred in the past before another past action. The past perfect tense is made with the past tense of *to have* and the past participle.

I **had** already **been** in college for two years before I decided on my major.

I **had** just **become** a recreation major when I met my future husband.

## Exercise 3

Underline the correct verb form.

1. The sandhill cranes arrived / have arrived last weekend.
2. Most days this week I went / have gone out at dusk to watch these stately birds.
3. During all these years, I saw / have seen them in my yard twice.
4. Yesterday the birds flew / have flown away because a tractor was plowing nearby.
5. I have took / had taken many pictures already before I got a picture of the flock of birds rising above the trees with the sun dawning behind them.

## The Passive Voice

- In the passive voice, **the subject of the sentence receives the action of the verb**. The passive voice is made with a form of the verb *to be* and the past participle.

This seat **is taken** by my husband.

The dinner **was paid** for by Bill.

The explanation **will be given** by the president's spokesman.

Notice that the passive voice takes the emphasis away from who or what is doing the action and puts the emphasis on who or what is receiving the action.

- In most writing, the **active voice** is preferable to the passive voice because it communicates clearly and directly the subject completing the action.

✗ The shoe was chewed by the puppy.

✓ The puppy chewed the shoe.

- However, the **passive voice** is acceptable when the doer of the action is unknown or unimportant.

✓ The crime **was committed** at 11:31 P.M.

No one knows who committed the crimes.

✓ The explosion **was recorded** on videotape.

Who recorded the videotape is unknown or unimportant.

## Exercise 4

Write Correct if the passive voice is appropriate. Rewrite the sentences in active voice if the passive is not appropriate.

1. The assignment was completed after midnight by the student.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. The house was robbed sometime after midnight.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The steak was undercooked.

\_\_\_\_\_

4. The letter was received by my mother.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. The exam was taken by the students last week.

\_\_\_\_\_

## Using the Past Participle as an Adjective

- The past participle form of the verb may be used as an adjective (a modifier).

a piece of **broken** glass

some **fried** chicken

a **closed** book

## Avoiding Shifts in Tense

- Avoid shifting tenses within a piece of writing unless the time of the action changes. For example, if the actions took place in the past, remain consistent in using past tenses for verbs; if the actions are taking place in the present, remain in the present throughout the writing.

### Tense shift

- ✗ When I **asked** the grocer about the vegetables, he **says** to me that they **came** in fresh that morning.

### Consistent tense

- ✓ When I **asked** the grocer about the vegetables, he **said** to me that they **came** in fresh that morning.

## Exercise 5

Correct the verbs in the following sentences to avoid shifts in tense by putting all the verbs in the same tense, present or past.

1. When I drove into the yard, I see my door standing open.
2. By the time I got to the game, the first inning is over.
3. The mayor visited a nursing home and plays cards with the residents.
4. My teacher always writes dates on the board when she announced a test.
5. Shoppers should always check their change when the cashier gave it to them.

## Review Exercise 1

Correct all verb errors in the following sentences. Rewrite sentences in the passive voice to put them in the active voice. (*Note: Some verbs are correct and should not be changed.*)

1. Tennis was played by our team at a local club.

---

2. I have hitted tennis balls with my friends all summer.

3. I have been playing with my brother until he went away to camp.

4. I were playing with a racket that was stringed incorrectly.

5. My racket was broken by me when I smash an overhead shot.

6. After the game, I layed the racket in my car.

7. I have replace my broken racket with a new one.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Since I have began playing tennis, I've become a pretty good player.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. I have played racquetball before I took up tennis.

\_\_\_\_\_

10. I had hopes of becoming good at racquetball, but I stop playing when I hurted my wrist.

Correct all verb errors in the following sentences. Rewrite sentences in the passive voice to put them in the active voice. (Note: Some verbs are correct and should not be changed.)

## Review Exercise 2

1. The Olympic Games were began in Olympia in Greece in 776 B.C.
2. The games were dedicate to Zeus, the most powerful Greek god.
3. During the celebration, Greeks make offerings to the gods and watched athletic contests.
4. The celebration was always hold in the summer and lasted for five days.
5. Athletes arrived one month early in order to be select for the competition.
6. Physical strength was valued by the ancient Greeks.
7. Winners were crown with a wreath of olive leaves.
8. Many contests were held in stadiums that seat over 20,000 people.
9. Strict rules govern the competition.
10. Athletes who did not obey the rules were punish.

## Editing Exercise 1



Alone or with a partner, correct all errors with subject–verb agreement, verb tenses, unnecessary passives, and past participle forms used as adjectives.

### The Average American Diet

The average American diet are loaded with fat and cholesterol, but there is many ways to reduce fat and caloric intake and get shaped up. First, those who are watching their diet has to eat foods that is low in fat and cholesterol. Eating at fast-food places or ordering a pizza raise one's cholesterol count. On the other hand, eating oatmeal, green leafy vegetables, and potatoes are healthy. There is many companies that labels their products "light" or "free." By substituting high-cholesterol foods with these low-cholesterol ones, people can reduce their cholesterol intake.

Another way to get shaped up is to develop an exercise plan. People should start off slowly and gradually increase the amount of time that they exercised. Anyone who has took the time to pay attention to his body's needs will be rewarded with a longer life. These basic steps will quickly get anyone shaped up and feeling great!

Alone or with a partner, correct all errors with subject–verb agreement, verb tenses, unnecessary passives, and past participle forms used as adjectives.

## Editing Exercise 2



### Eating Out

Last night, I want something delicious to eat. I was not in the mood for chicken or a hamburger. I decide to go to Sussman's All-American Diner. Whenever I have ate at this restaurant, I have had a good meal. The salad bar and the hot bar there are always fantastic. When I arrived at the restaurant, it were not very crowded. A friendly host helped me to find a table, and he brings me a menu. Everything on the menu look tasty; however, I decided to try the hot bar. The hot bar have a variety of foods such as beef stew, rice, potatoes, peas, and pasta. I eat two large portions of pasta and potatoes, and I leave the restaurant feeling satisfied.



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## Chapter 27

# Sentence Types

The sentence is the building block for all writing. Understanding the basic structure of the sentence will help you in writing paragraphs and essays. This structure includes the parts of the sentence and how those parts can be put together. This chapter defines **sentence parts**, **sentence types**, and **sentence purposes**.

## Sentence Parts

Subjects and verbs are the most important ingredients in a sentence. In fact, every sentence must contain a subject and a verb, and many sentences contain more than one subject and verb. The parts of a sentence that contain subjects and verbs are called **clauses**. The parts of a sentence that do not contain both a subject and a verb are called **phrases**.

### Clauses

Because clauses contain subjects and verbs, clauses are the primary parts of a sentence, and putting clauses together in different ways creates the different sentence types.

- An **independent clause** is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.

An independent clause can stand alone as a sentence. In fact, every sentence contains at least one independent clause.

S                      V  
The **robins** *have migrated* south already.

- A **dependent clause** includes a subject and a verb but does not express a complete thought. It usually begins with a **subordinating conjunction** or a **relative pronoun**.

A dependent clause cannot stand alone as a sentence. To complete its meaning, it must be joined to an independent clause. Some sentence types contain one or more dependent clauses.

DC                      IC                      DC  
Because the air is cool, I enjoy the springtime even though it often rains.

IC                      DC  
I love the lamp that she bought at the antique store.

### Subordinating Conjunctions

after	even though	until
although	if	when
as	since	whereas
because	though	whether
before	unless	while

### Relative Pronouns

that	whoever
which	whom
whichever	whomever
who	whose

## Phrases

- Sentences may also contain **phrases**, which are groups of words that act together in a sentence but do not include both a subject and a verb.

There are many kinds of phrases that can add information to sentences; these include

**Noun phrases** (a noun and its modifiers): The small green tugboat chugged along.

**Verb phrases** (a verb and its modifiers): Jordan always talks and laughs.

**Prepositional phrases** (a preposition and its object): The ad was on the last page.

**Verbal phrases** (a phrase beginning with a gerund, an infinitive, or a participle): Walking home takes me ten minutes.

## Exercise 1

Identify each word group as an independent clause (IC), a dependent clause (DC), or a phrase (PH).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. After I read the article about global warming.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I took a break from studying.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. At the snack bar on the first floor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Since I was hungry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I paid for a drink and chips.

## Exercise 2

Identify each word group as an independent clause (IC), a dependent clause (DC), or a phrase (PH).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Which is more fun than studying.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. In the last game.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. While he was sleeping.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A workman carried the sign across the road.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Deep red berries.

## Sentence Types

Writers combine independent clauses and dependent clauses to create the four different sentence types. Phrases are used in every sentence type.

### Simple

- A **simple sentence** contains one independent clause.

IC

**Jacob** *walked* to the store.

### Compound

- A **compound sentence** contains two or more independent clauses joined together by a comma and a coordinating conjunction, a semicolon, or a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb.

IC

Cord. Conj.

IC

**Jacob** *walked* to the store, **but** **he** *got* a ride home.

IC

IC

**Jacob** *walked* to the store; **he** *got* a ride home.

IC

Conj. Adv.

IC

**Jacob** *walked* to the store; **however**, **he** *got* a ride home.



## Sentence Purposes

All sentences, no matter what type, can be classified according to purpose. There are four basic purposes.

### Declarative

- **Declarative sentences** make a statement. They *declare* something about a person, place, thing, or idea.

Martin bowls on Friday night.

### Interrogative

- **Interrogative sentences** ask questions and end in a question mark. (*Interrogative* is related to *interrogate*, which means to question.)

When does Martin bowl?

### Imperative

- **Imperative sentences** give commands. Usually the subject *you* is implied or understood, and not written.

Don't go bowling, Martin.

The subject *you* is understood.

### Exclamatory

- **Exclamatory sentences** express a strong emotion or surprise and end in an exclamation point. (*Exclamatory* is related to *exclaim*.)

Martin bowled a perfect game!

Identify the purpose of each sentence: D (declarative), IN (interrogative), IM (imperative), or EX (exclamatory).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Come to the presentation today.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The speaker is a respected authority on nutrition.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What time will the meeting begin?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. There is a fire in the kitchen!
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Quality is harder to find than quantity.

### Exercise 5

## Review Exercise

1. The part of a sentence that includes a subject and a verb is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The part of a sentence that does not include both a subject and a verb is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The type of sentence that contains two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent is called a \_\_\_\_\_ sentence.
4. The type of sentence that contains two or more independent clauses is called a \_\_\_\_\_ sentence.
5. The type of sentence that contains one independent clause is called a \_\_\_\_\_ sentence.
6. The type of sentence that contains one or more dependent clauses and one independent clause is called a \_\_\_\_\_ sentence.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ sentences ask questions.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ sentences give commands.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ sentences make a point.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ sentences express a strong emotion.

## Sentence Fragments

Sentence fragments are parts of sentences that are punctuated as if they were complete sentences. We use sentence fragments all the time in our speech. We also see fragments in advertising and in some published books and articles, where writers use them on purpose, for specific effects. However, in most academic and business writing, sentence fragments are major English errors.

A **sentence fragment** is a group of words that does not express a complete thought. (The reader is left asking questions about a fragment.) There are many types of sentence fragments, but most are missing a subject, a complete verb, or both. Fragments that do contain a subject and a verb may not express a complete thought, as in dependent clauses. To correct a fragment, a writer must either add words to the fragment or connect the fragment to a sentence.

✗ Walked his dog at five o'clock every day.

Who walked his dog? To correct this fragment, add a subject.

✓ My **neighbor** walked his dog at five o'clock every day.

✗ The final exam given on Friday.

What about the final exam? To correct this fragment, add a verb.

✓ The final exam given on Friday **was** easy.



✗ In the summer.

What happens in the summer? To correct this fragment, add a subject and verb.

✓ In the summer, **students** sometimes **work** part-time.

## Missing-Subject Fragments

- A common type of fragment is one that is missing a subject. It may contain a noun, but that noun does not act as the subject of a complete sentence.

V

✗ *Have* plans for the party on Friday.

Who has plans? To correct this fragment, add a subject.

S V

✓ **I** *have* plans for the party on Friday.

**Exception:** Remember that the subject *you* is understood in **imperative sentences** (see Chapter 27). Although the subject is not written in the sentence, the reader understands that the verb refers to *you*.

S V

✓ **(You)** *Take* a break after you move those boxes.

### Exercise 1

Correct each fragment by adding a subject.

1. Stopped by around noon to talk.

---

2. Don't have anything special to talk about.

---

3. Couldn't wait for the end of the week.

---

4. Starts after the holiday.

---

5. Tried to use the phone without charging it.

---

## Missing-Verb Fragments

- Another type of fragment is one in which there is a subject but no verb.

S

✗ The little **boy** with curly black hair.

What is the little boy doing? To correct this fragment, add a verb.

S

V

✓ The little **boy** with curly black hair *pulled* his wagon down the walk.

Fragments also occur when the verb of the sentence is not complete. Present participles (verbs ending in *-ing*) and past participles are not complete verbs. To correct this kind of fragment, add a helping verb or a complete verb.

S

✗ The **student** working on his term paper.

S

V

✓ The **student** working on his term paper *was* late to class.

S

✗ The **apples** fallen on the ground.

S

V

✓ The **apples** *have fallen* on the ground.

### Exercise 2

Correct the fragment by adding a verb.

1. The road taken by the driver.

---

2. The old car rusting behind the barn.

---

3. Some students in the class.

---

4. The glasses in the cupboard.

---

5. The computer sitting on the desk.

---

## Missing-Subject-and-Verb Fragments

- Phrases lack a subject and a verb; unless they are attached to an independent clause, they are fragments. Add a subject and a verb to make phrases into sentences.
  - ✗ From morning until night.
    - S V
    - ✓ **I** *work* from morning until night.
  - ✗ Walking home after dark.
    - S V
    - ✓ Most **people** *don't enjoy* walking home after dark.

### Exercise 3

Correct the fragment by adding a subject and a verb.

1. From morning until late in the evening.

---

2. Sitting quietly on the bench at the bus stop.

---

3. Operated by a licensed technician.

---

4. On the table since yesterday morning.

---

5. In order to deliver the package.

---

## Dependent-Clause Fragments

- Even though they contain a subject and a verb, dependent clauses are always fragments because they do not express a complete thought. Dependent-clause fragments are corrected by removing words or adding words to make a complete thought. Often, dependent-clause fragments can be joined to an independent clause.
  - ✗ Because Mr. Pastorelli caught a cold last week.
    - Dependent Clause
    - ✓ Because Mr. Pastorelli caught a cold last week, **he** *missed* work.
  - ✗ The woman who lives down the street.
    - S V
    - ✓ The **woman** *who lives down the street* *is* friendly.

### Steps to Identifying Fragments

1. Identify the subject and the verb in every word group.
2. Make sure that the word group is a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence.

### Exercise 4

Correct the fragment by adding or removing words.

1. When I want to eat a home-cooked meal.

---

2. Which is my favorite place to eat.

---

3. If it rains today.

---

4. Who was my last English teacher.

---

5. Because the test is on Friday.

---

### Exercise 5

Correct the fragment by adding or removing words.

1. Before winter begins this year.

---

2. While the children are eating breakfast.

---

3. That I answered correctly on the last test.

---

4. Although it has not rained in a month.

---

5. Unless we have a review session before the test.

---

## Review Exercise 1

Label each item as Fragment (F) or Sentence (S) and correct the sentence fragments.

\_\_\_ 1. Being the mail carrier in my neighborhood.

---

---

\_\_\_ 2. There are dogs barking all the time.

---

---

\_\_\_ 3. Bitten on the leg by a mean German shepherd.

---

---

\_\_\_ 4. Because a mail carrier never knows if a barking dog will bite or not.

---

---

\_\_\_ 5. Dogs are not the only problem.

---

---

\_\_\_ 6. One yard that is a real challenge because of the poison ivy climbing up the mailbox.

---

---

\_\_\_ 7. The leaves of the plant, which sting if you touch them.

---

---

\_\_\_ 8. Another hassle for the letter carrier is neighbors who park in front of their mailbox.

---

---

\_\_\_ 9. The carrier can't deliver the mail.

---

---

\_\_\_ 10. The problems delivering mail in my neighborhood safely.

---

---

## Review Exercise 2

Label each item as Fragment (F) or Sentence (S) and correct the sentence fragments.

\_\_\_ 1. Making a meal for a family.

---

---

\_\_\_ 2. A real challenge to satisfy everyone's tastes.

---

---

\_\_\_ 3. Some cooks take a vote to decide what to cook.

---

---

\_\_\_ 4. Kids who hate most foods usually like peanut butter and jelly.

---

---

\_\_\_ 5. Teenagers usually love pizza and hamburgers.

---

---

\_\_\_ 6. Which can be fattening for adults.

---

---

\_\_\_ 7. Don't try to please everyone.

---

---

\_\_\_ 8. Because most cooks don't have a lot of time to make a meal.

---

---

\_\_\_ 9. Cooked in the oven for half an hour.

---

---

\_\_\_ 10. A favorite recipe that my mother gave me.

---

---

## Editing Exercise



Alone or with a partner, correct the fragments in the following paragraph. You may either add subjects and verbs or connect the fragments to other sentences.

### The Perfect Houseplant

African violets are the perfect houseplant. Ever blooming, with single, semi-double, or double flowers in lots of colors. African violets also charm admirers with their green or variegated foliage of smooth, velvety, or deeply creased leaves. Discovered in 1890 by Baron Walter von Saint Paul while hiking in Africa. Easy to grow with the right temperature and sunlight. They like temperatures in the 70s. Also, indirect sunlight or the fluorescent lighting from overhead lights. Many gardeners like to start new plants from old ones. Two methods. Division of plants that produce offspring and leaf cuttings that grow new plants. A very inexpensive plant to grow and a very enjoyable indoor hobby!

# Chapter 29

## Run-Ons

**Run-ons** consist of two or more independent clauses that are run together without proper punctuation. (See Chapter 27 for a discussion of independent clauses.) Because they make writing difficult to understand, run-ons are major English errors. Readers expect to see a complete thought between ending punctuation marks. When writers omit those marks or fail to add connectors, readers become confused.

### Types of Run-Ons: The Fused Sentence and the Comma Splice

- A **fused sentence** incorrectly joins or fuses together two independent clauses without any punctuation.

S      V      S      V  
✗ The **sun** *is shining* **we** *are going* to the beach.

- A **comma splice** incorrectly joins or splices together two independent clauses with only a comma.

S      V      S      V  
✗ The **sun** *is shining*, **we** *are going* to the beach.



## Identifying Run-Ons

Identifying subjects and verbs that make a complete thought can help you determine whether there is more than one independent clause in a word group. Remember that independent clauses cannot be run together with no punctuation or with only a comma between them.

### Steps to Identifying Run-Ons

1. Identify the subjects and the verbs in a word group that end with a period.
2. If the subjects and verbs can be divided into two complete thoughts that are not joined with the proper punctuation, then the word group is a run-on.
3. If the word group cannot be divided into two complete thoughts (with two subjects and verbs), it is not a run-on.

### Exercise 1

Circle the subjects and underline the verbs in the following word groups to determine how many independent clauses are in each word group. If there are two independent clauses without punctuation or spliced together with a comma, indicate the run-on with RO. Identify the sentences with S.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Losing weight is difficult and takes motivation and knowledge.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. People may need to change their diet, they should also exercise regularly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Experts believe changing lifestyle is the key to weight control people must make changes in the way they live.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Two out of three successful dieters change some habits, such as eating late at night.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Change requires awareness of eating habits that may be adding pounds.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Establishing a goal for weight loss is crucial to success, visualizing what needs to be accomplished also motivates people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Concrete goals are better than vague ones, dieters should set small goals that are realistic such as only eating ice cream twice a week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Dieters must keep track of their activities, they should record their exercise each week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. With a clear picture of their behavior, dieters will realize when they are not sticking to their diet and exercise.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Consulting a fitness counselor or nutritionist may help dieters to lose weight.

## Five Ways to Correct Run-Ons

1. Separate the independent clauses with a **period**, and start the second with a **capital letter**.

✓ The sun is shining. We are going to the beach.

2. Join the two independent clauses with a **comma** and a **coordinating conjunction**.

Coordinating conjunctions: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*

✓ The sun is shining, so we are going to the beach.

Correct each run-on by separating the independent clauses with a period or by adding a comma and a coordinating conjunction or just a coordinating conjunction if the comma is already present.

### Exercise 2

1. The economy is good right now, there are lots of job openings.
2. Interest rates are low people can afford to buy a new house.
3. Banks are making loans almost everyone can qualify.
4. Consumers are buying new cars in record numbers, last month over ten thousand new cars were bought in this state.
5. Sometimes saving money is the wise course of action, later you can use the money for a down payment on a house or car.

3. Join the two independent clauses with a **semicolon**, a **conjunctive adverb** or **transitional expression**, and a **comma**. If you use a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression to join two sentences, you must use a semicolon and not a comma after the first independent clause. Joining two sentences with a comma and a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression creates a run-on. (For a full list of conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions and their meanings, see Chapter 30, page 303.)

**Common conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions:** *more-over, also, however, on the other hand, therefore, consequently, for example, then, later*

✗ The sun is shining, therefore, we are going to the beach.

✓ The sun is shining; therefore, we are going to the beach.

4. Join the two independent clauses with a **semicolon**. Use only a semicolon to connect two independent clauses when the two ideas are closely related and their relationship is clear to the reader.

✓ The sun is shining; we are going to the beach.

### Exercise 3

Correct each run-on by separating the independent clauses with a semicolon or with a semicolon, conjunctive adverb, and comma.

1. Neighbors can be a source of support, the people in the neighborhood can also be a source of annoyance or danger.
2. Neighbors can help one another in times of need they might give their next-door neighbor a ride when her car breaks down.
3. Neighbors watch out for the houses around them, therefore, they will investigate or call the police if they see something suspicious.
4. Getting a smile and a wave on the way home feels good someone putting the paper on the doorstep or delivering a package creates a sense of support.
5. Neighbors contribute to our quality of life most people appreciate their neighbors.

5. Join two independent clauses with a **subordinating conjunction**.

#### Subordinating Conjunctions

after	even though	until
although	if	when
as	since	whereas
because	though	whether
before	unless	while

- ✓ Because the sun is shining, we are going to the beach.

### Exercise 4

Correct the following run-ons by joining the two clauses with a subordinating conjunction.

1. Neighborhood organizations can help a neighborhood come together they provide a way for neighbors to meet and discuss common concerns.
2. These organizations also tackle problems, neighbors may have specific complaints.
3. If there are services that the neighborhood wants the city may work well with the organization.
4. Some neighborhoods have organized themselves, many neighborhoods do not have any organization to represent the residents.
5. A few organizations were formed in the 1970s, now such organizations are quite common.

Return to Exercise 1 and correct each run-on using use one of the five ways of correcting run-ons.

## Exercise 5

Label each word group as Run-on (RO) or Sentence (S), and correct the run-ons using one of the methods discussed in this chapter.

## Review Exercise 1

- \_\_\_ 1. My hometown offers residents many advantages, for example it has lots of parks and playgrounds.
- \_\_\_ 2. He plays the lottery regularly, he wants to win a million dollars.
- \_\_\_ 3. Last weekend, Nancy learned to use a compass because she doesn't want to get lost in the woods.
- \_\_\_ 4. I enjoy going home my family is glad to see me.
- \_\_\_ 5. I can never find a place to park unless I arrive at 7:30 A.M. for my 10:00 A.M. class.
- \_\_\_ 6. Some bosses let employees off for tests, however some bosses do not.
- \_\_\_ 7. The class is required to attend two cultural events, also there are three major exams.
- \_\_\_ 8. The coffee was cold, and the toast was burned.
- \_\_\_ 9. The messenger picked up a package at the post office, later she delivered a package downtown.
- \_\_\_ 10. I graduate in June, which is five years from when I began school.

Label each word group as Run-on (RO) or Sentence (S), and correct the run-ons using one of the methods discussed in this chapter.

## Review Exercise 2

- \_\_\_ 1. Many people don't get enough sleep, one in three adults suffers from sleeplessness.
- \_\_\_ 2. Experts advise people who have trouble sleeping well to go to bed only when they feel drowsy, otherwise, they will get frustrated trying to fall asleep.
- \_\_\_ 3. If you can't fall asleep in twenty minutes, you should get up and leave your bedroom for some quiet time elsewhere.
- \_\_\_ 4. Exercising regularly helps the exercise should be done early in the day.
- \_\_\_ 5. Coffee doesn't help us sleep it keeps us awake, so coffee lovers shouldn't drink coffee in the evening.

- \_\_\_ 6. Some people drink alcohol to sleep better, but it doesn't help problem sleepers and should be avoided.
- \_\_\_ 7. We all love naps they should be kept under one hour in the mid-afternoon.
- \_\_\_ 8. Large meals seem to make us sleep, indigestion keeps us awake.
- \_\_\_ 9. Smokers have a particularly hard time sleeping because nicotine is a stimulant.
- \_\_\_ 10. Sleeping pills should be used conservatively they can lead to addiction.

## Editing Exercise



Alone or with a partner, correct the run-ons in the following passage.

### Future Movie Stars

My friends Jane and Carol are moving to California within a few weeks. They have always been interested in motion pictures, they hope to become movie stars. The two women studied acting in college, therefore they believe that they can find careers in the movie industry. When they arrive in Hollywood, California, they expect to work part-time as waitresses or office assistants while they audition for acting parts. Jane read a book about going to Hollywood that advised actors to get an agent, but Carol is afraid that an agent will cost too much money. Fortunately, Carol has a contact at one of the movie studios he said he would help them. Maybe someday I will see them on the big screen, then I can brag about my good friends.

## Chapter 30

# Sentence Combining Using Coordination and Subordination

Good writers vary the structure of their sentences in order to include lots of information and to keep their readers' interest. **Sentence combining** is the process of using **coordination** and **subordination** to build compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences from simple sentences. (These four sentence types are discussed in Chapter 27.) Sentence combining is especially useful in generating strong support in paragraphs.

### Steps to Combining Sentences

1. Generate two or more ideas expressed in simple sentences (independent clauses).

Emil's Café offers soft lighting and romantic music. This restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

2. Combine the ideas into one sentence that expresses the relationship between the ideas.

Emil's Café offers soft lighting and romantic music, so this restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

3. Use **coordination** and **subordination** to combine ideas into a variety of sentence structures.

Emil's café offers soft lighting and romantic music; therefore, this restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

Because Emil's café offers soft lighting and romantic music, this restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

## Coordination

- Writers use **coordination** to combine two or more ideas of equal importance, giving each idea equal weight.

### Original Sentences

Renovating my house is exciting. Remodeling can be expensive and tiring.

### Combined Sentences Using Coordination

Renovating my house is exciting, **but** remodeling can be expensive and tiring.

Renovating my house is exciting; **however**, remodeling can be expensive and tiring.

## Coordinating Conjunctions

- An easy way to coordinate two ideas is to use a **comma** and a **coordinating conjunction** to create a compound sentence.

### Original Sentences

I like to play tennis. I enjoy swimming.

### Combined Sentence

IC            CC            IC  
I like to play tennis, and I enjoy swimming.

To choose the conjunction that most clearly shows the relationship between the ideas, the writer must know the meaning of each coordinating conjunction.

**For** means “because.”

I must leave the party now, *for* I have to get up early tomorrow.

**And** adds two ideas that are similar.

I like English, *and* I love to write.

**Nor** negates both ideas.

I don't like English, *nor* do I like to write.

**But** contrasts two ideas.

I like English, *but* I hate math.

**Or** offers the ideas as equal choices.

I must leave the party now, *or* I will never get up early tomorrow.

**Yet** limits or contrasts two ideas.

I enjoy dancing, *yet* I'm not a very good dancer.

**So** suggests results.

Emil's Café offers soft lighting and romantic music, *so* this restaurant is a favorite.

## Exercise 1

Choose the appropriate conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) to combine the ideas.

1. Football is popular throughout the United States, \_\_\_\_\_ hockey isn't.
2. Jack doesn't like spinach, \_\_\_\_\_ does he like tuna.
3. Dave sees a lot of movies, \_\_\_\_\_ he runs the projector at the local theater.
4. It's raining outside, \_\_\_\_\_ let's take a walk later.
5. We can eat dinner now, \_\_\_\_\_ we can wait until after the show.

## Compound Predicates

- Ideas can be coordinated using a **compound predicate** (two verb phrases). To do this, add a coordinating conjunction and drop the subject of the second sentence. Note that in this method of coordination, no comma is needed.



### Original Sentences

I love to cook. I hate to wash dishes.

### Combined Sentence

I love to cook **but** hate to wash dishes.

## Exercise 2

Choose the appropriate conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) to combine the ideas.

- John works at a supermarket. He brings home sale items sometimes.  
John works at a supermarket \_\_\_\_\_ brings home sale items sometimes.
- Computers cost businesses a lot of money. They save a lot of workers time and energy.  
Computers cost businesses a lot of money \_\_\_\_\_ save a lot of workers time and energy.
- The best team in the league will go to the championship game. It will play the best team from the other conference.  
The best team in the league will go to the championship game \_\_\_\_\_ will play the best team from the other conference.
- Air bags are offered on many new cars. They make the cars more expensive.  
Air bags are offered on many new cars \_\_\_\_\_ make the cars more expensive.
- Many people go to their parents' home for Thanksgiving. Many people cook at home on this holiday.  
Many people go to their parents' home for Thanksgiving \_\_\_\_\_ cook at home on this holiday.

## Conjunctive Adverbs and Transitional Expressions

- Independent clauses can be coordinated using a **semicolon (;)** and a **conjunctive adverb** or **transitional expression**.

### Original Sentences

Emil's Café offers soft lighting and romantic music. This restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

### Combined Sentence

IC Conj. Adv. IC

Emil's Café offers soft lighting and romantic music; **therefore**, this restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

To combine ideas into compound sentences using semicolons and conjunctive adverbs or transitional expressions, writers must understand the relationship between the ideas and choose a word or phrase that expresses that relationship.

#### To **add** two related ideas

also	in addition
as a matter of fact	in fact
furthermore	moreover

What we eat can affect our ability to fight colds; **moreover**, foods high in copper, zinc, and protein can help our immune system fend off the common cold.

#### To **contrast** two related ideas or to **limit** an idea

conversely	on the contrary
however	on the other hand
nevertheless	otherwise

I love driving fast in my sports car; **on the other hand**, I don't like getting pulled over by the police.

#### To **show that one idea is a consequence** of the other

accordingly	for this reason
as a result	therefore
consequently	

Our immune system weakens as we get older; **consequently**, people over the age of sixty-five should take care to eat foods that help strengthen the immune system.

#### To **show repetition or illustration** of an idea or fact

for example	in other words
for instance	indeed

Yogurt is a proven disease fighter; **for example**, studies have shown that women who eat yogurt every day get fewer yeast infections than women who do not eat yogurt.



To combine sentences using subordinating conjunctions, writers must understand the relationship between the ideas and choose a subordinating conjunction that expresses that relationship. Subordinating conjunctions show the following relationships between ideas.

**One idea is a *contrast* of the other**

although                      whereas  
 even though                while  
 though

**Though** it's late, I'm not tired at all.

**One idea is a *consequence* of the other**

as  
 because  
 since

**Because** my favorite team is playing this weekend, I want to go to the game.

**One idea is a *condition* of the other**

if  
 unless

**If** I have to do chores around the house, I would like to do the ones I enjoy like washing the car.

**One idea is *related in time* to the other**

after                      until  
 as                         when  
 before                  while

Sometimes I play games on my computer **while** I am talking on the phone.

Circle the subordinating conjunction that shows the relationship between the ideas.

**Exercise 4**

1. I know a lot about computers (though / since / unless) my father works for a computer maker.
2. (Even though / Because / If / Before) I had a snack an hour ago, let's eat dinner now.
3. (Although / Since / Unless / While) my aunt works as a maid, her own house is a mess.
4. (While / Because / If / After) Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, he ended his days in exile.
5. (Even though / As / If / Before) I should pass Basic Writing, I will take College Composition.

## Relative Pronouns

- Two ideas can sometimes be combined using a **relative pronoun** (*who*, *that*, or *which*). The relative pronoun is used to make one idea into a dependent clause in order to define a word or phrase in the other idea (the independent clause).

### Original Sentences

My neighbor owns a store in town. The store sells lawn mowers and lawn maintenance supplies.

### Combined Sentence

DC

My neighbor owns a store in town **that** sells lawn mowers and lawn maintenance supplies.

When subordinating a clause using a relative pronoun, choose the appropriate relative pronoun to refer back to the noun in the main clause. The relative pronoun should follow the noun to which it refers. Also, use commas to set off relative clauses that express nonessential (or *nonrestrictive*) information—that is, any information that does not restrict the meaning of the sentence.

**Who** takes the place of people.

**Which** takes the place of things.

**That** usually takes the place of things or people when the clause is essential (or *restrictive*).

My boss, **who is a kind man**, lets me go home early sometimes.

My house, **which is located on Cherry Street**, is painted green.

The computer **that was advertised in the newspaper** wasn't expensive.

## Exercise 5

Circle the appropriate relative pronoun to combine these sentences.

1. Our new car already has a scratch on it. We bought it last week.  
Our new car, (who / that / which) we bought last week, already has a scratch on it.
2. I like my geography professor. She has traveled all over the world.  
I like my geography professor, (who / that / which) has traveled all over the world.
3. A house was burglarized last night. It is on the next block.  
A house (who / that / which) is on the next block was burglarized last night.
4. I just bought a new computer. I use it for school.  
I just bought a new computer (who / that / which) I use for school.
5. I just talked to Marina Federov. She is my best friend.  
I just talked to Marina Federov, (who / that / which) is my best friend.

## Appositives

- Two ideas can sometimes be combined using an **appositive**, a group of words that defines or explains a given word or phrase. When two ideas are combined using an appositive, one idea defines a word or phrase in the other idea.

### Original Sentences

Mr. Hernandez is very nice. He is my calculus professor.

### Combined Sentence

#### Appositive

Mr. Hernandez, **my calculus professor**, is very nice.

## Exercise 6

Fill in the blanks with words from the second sentence that can be used to form an appositive in the first sentence.

1. That telephone call was from Jose. He's the top student in my math class.  
That telephone call was from Jose, \_\_\_\_\_.
2. My car is in the parking lot. It's an old blue station wagon with a dent in the fender.  
My car, \_\_\_\_\_, is in the parking lot.
3. A major health problem for young women is bulimia. Bulimia is an eating disorder.  
A major health problem for young women is bulimia, \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I loved my first home. It was a two-story Victorian townhouse.  
I loved my first home, \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The neighbors' dog always chases cats. It is a golden retriever.  
The neighbors' dog, \_\_\_\_\_, always chases cats.

## Verbal Phrases

- Two ideas can sometimes be combined by making one idea into a **verbal phrase** beginning with an **infinitive verb**, a **present participle**, or a **past participle**.

### Original Sentences

I wanted to get a job. I had to cut my hair.

### Combined Sentence

#### Infinitive phrase

**To get** a job, I had to cut my hair.

### Original Sentences

Juanita was getting a cold. Juanita left work early.

### Combined Sentence

#### Present participial phrase

**Getting** a cold, Juanita left work early.

### Original Sentences

The worker was tired of her job. The worker told her boss that she was quitting.

### Combined Sentence

#### Past participial phrase

**Tired** of her job, the worker told her boss that she was quitting.

**Note:** Using verbal phrases correctly can be tricky because the phrase must refer to a subject that performs the action of the verbal phrase.

✗ Running up the hill, my heart was pounding.

Who is running up the hill?

✓ Running up the hill, I could feel that my heart was pounding.

The subject closest to the verbal phrase must be the one running up the hill.

## Exercise 7

Use words in the first sentence to form a verbal phrase for the second sentence.

1. The waitress was carrying a platter of food. The waitress didn't see the customer bent over tying his shoe.

\_\_\_\_\_, the waitress didn't see the customer bent over tying his shoe.

2. The waitress had to keep the platter from falling. The waitress stumbled to an empty table and set the platter down.

\_\_\_\_\_, the waitress stumbled to an empty table and set the platter down.

3. She was done for the day. She counted her tips.

\_\_\_\_\_, she counted her tips.

4. The waitress was tired from all the work. The waitress still had to walk home.

\_\_\_\_\_, the waitress still had to walk home.

5. The waitress was unlocking her door. She remembered that she had forgotten to pick up her tips.

\_\_\_\_\_, she remembered that she had forgotten to pick up her tips.

## Using Coordination or Subordination

Understanding the relationship between two or more given ideas is the key to combining those ideas into strong sentences. The three most common relationships are **addition of similar ideas**, **contrast of opposing ideas**, and **consequence of resulting ideas**. Below are the conjunctions used to show these relationships.

	Addition	Contrast	Consequence
<b>Coordinating conjunctions</b>	and	but yet	so for
<b>Subordinating conjunctions</b>	along with in addition to	even though although	because since while though
<b>Conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions</b>	moreover furthermore in addition also	however in contrast nevertheless	therefore as a result consequently
<b>Relative pronouns</b>	that which who		



## Review Exercise 1

Combine the following pairs of sentences according to the directions following each pair. Refer to the chart of connectors to choose an appropriate connecting word and sentence pattern.

1. Susan loves the beach. She lives on the coast.

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

---

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound predicate.

---

Use a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression.

---

Use a subordinating conjunction.

---

Use a relative clause.

---

Use an appositive.

---

Use a verbal phrase.

---

2. Mrs. Hall loves her husband. He is a lazy bum.

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

---

Use a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression.

---

Use a subordinating conjunction.

---

Use a relative clause.

---

Use an appositive.

---

3. Miss America is very beautiful. She has shown a lot of talent as a pianist.

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

---

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound predicate.

---

Use a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression.

---

Use a subordinating conjunction.

---

Use a relative clause.

---

4. **His attempt at cooking dinner was a disaster. They went out to eat.**

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

---

Use a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression.

---

Use a subordinating conjunction.

---

5. **The employee wanted a day off. He was afraid to ask his boss.**

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

---

Use a coordinating conjunction in a compound predicate.

---

Use a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression.

---

Use a subordinating conjunction.

---

Use a relative clause.

---

## Editing Exercise



Alone or with a partner, revise this passage of nineteen sentences by combining sentences so that there are fourteen sentences or fewer.

### Ireland

Ireland is one of the most popular holiday destinations for Americans. Over fifty thousand tourists visit the Emerald Isle every year. The Irish speak English. They also speak the island's traditional language of Gaelic. Ireland lies on the western edge of the British Isles. Ireland is located farther north than Maine or Vancouver. The country's weather is very mild. Temperatures range from above freezing in the winter to near 70 in the summer. There is rarely much snow in Ireland. Rain is very common in Ireland. Some areas receive as many as 40 inches of precipitation per year.

Ireland is known as the Emerald Isle. The countryside is green year round. Tourists enjoy the long walks they can take through the countryside. The walks follow national trails that cover every area of the country. Many Americans are of Irish descent. They enjoy uncovering their roots in the old country. Visitors enjoy walking or biking over hills and along the cliffs to the sea. Tourists do not want to leave this lovely island.

# Chapter 31

## Sentence Variety

Good writers vary their sentences. Effective communication takes place when the reader is paying attention to each new sentence and not getting bored by repeated patterns. Imagine listening to a teacher who began every sentence throughout an entire class period with the words *Students will. . .* The repeated words at the beginning of every sentence would probably turn you off and maybe even annoy you. Similarly, a paragraph or an essay that repeats the same pattern in a number of sentences puts off readers. Learning sentence variety techniques will give you strategies to make each sentence fresh.

Writers use sentence variety strategies both while writing and while revising. The strategies are fairly simple, yet they create powerful results. In this chapter, you will examine revised paragraphs to learn how writers can improve sentence variety. In addition, you will practice these strategies so that you will be ready to use them in your own writing.

### Steps to Creating Sentence Variety

1. Vary the beginnings of sentences.
2. Vary the length of sentences.
3. Vary the placement of important information in sentences.
4. Vary the sentence structures.

We will look at each strategy in turn, but before we do, let's look at an overall example of revision to achieve sentence variety.

#### Peer Example



Beth

*All important information comes at the end of your supports. Vary the placement so information sometimes comes at the beginning.*

“ I eventually received a high grade on this paragraph about the supermarket after I revised my paragraph using the sentence variety guidelines. Read my first draft below, and then see how I followed my instructor's comments to improve the presentation of my ideas. ”

*Don't overuse "supermarket."  
Vary the first words of sentences.*

*Good start!*

*Combine simple sentences to use different sentence types.*

#### One-Stop Shop

The supermarket has become a one-stop shopping center for the entire family. The supermarket still sells the usual groceries. What's new is the variety of choices from around the world. There are Italian olive oils and pastas, Asian noodles, and South American plantains. The supermarket's bakery bakes everything from breads to donuts and birthday cakes. Supermarkets have become our primary drugstore because we can fill prescriptions while we shop. Many supermarkets stock videos, flowers, and even perfumes. Most supermarkets provide stamps, check cashing, and photo processing. Now a lot of stores house a deli that makes sandwiches and salads for busy workers on the go. Shopping is becoming a pleasure at supermarkets these days.

*Use transitions to improve the flow of ideas.*

#### Peer Example

Beth

“ My teacher liked the content of my paragraph because it provided a lot of factual information. However, she pointed out that most sentences were long and began with the subject *supermarkets*. Also, the important information came at the end of each sentence. These repeated patterns made the paragraph sound monotonous. My instructor showed me ways to improve the sentence variety, and I received a much higher grade on the revision below. ”

*I avoided starting sentences with the same words & I used synonyms for supermarket.*

#### One-Stop Shop

The modern American supermarket has become a one-stop shopping center for the entire family. While the neighborhood supermarket still sells the usual groceries, what's new is the variety of choices from around the world such as Italian olive oils and pastas, Asian noodles, and South American plan-

*I tried to use different sentence types.*

tains. The store bakery bakes everything from breads to donuts and birthday cakes, and because we can fill prescriptions while we shop, supermarkets have become our primary drugstore. Videos, flowers, and even perfumes are a few of the expanded lines of merchandise that grocery stores stock. Also, most stores provide stamps, check cashing, and photo processing, and they house a deli that makes sandwiches and salads for busy workers on the go. Shopping is becoming a pleasure at supermarkets these days.

*I placed important information at the beginning of the sentence*

*I used a transition to make sentences flow.*

## Vary Sentence Beginnings

One of the easiest ways to get variety in your sentences is to change the way they begin. **In general, avoid starting two consecutive sentences with the same words.** The following sections give you some techniques for varying sentence beginnings.

### Use a Synonym

- Use a **synonym** (a word with a similar meaning) for repeated words at the beginning of sentences.

**Writing letters** to send by electronic mail is a great way to communicate with friends around the world. **Composing messages** on the computer can also improve one's writing ability because one has the support of a spell check and grammar check program. **Corresponding** is fast and cheap with e-mail.

The words in bold are synonyms for *writing letters*.

### Exercise 1

Replace the underlined words with a synonym by writing it above the word.

1. Teachers should hold office hours. Teachers need to meet privately with their students.
2. My math course is challenging. My math class usually requires me to spend two hours on homework every night.
3. A policewoman patrols our neighborhood. The policewoman usually parks at the corner.
4. The Cadillac Escalade is a very popular vehicle. The Cadillac Escalade can be seen on all kinds of music videos.
5. A parent must accompany children on the field trip. A parent should pack a lunch too.

### Use a Transition

- Use a **transition** (such as a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression—see Chapter 30) to begin the sentence. Not only do the transitions change

the beginning of sentences, they also show the relationship between the sentences.

Writing letters to send by electronic mail is a great way to communicate with friends around the world. **For instance**, writing letters on the computer can also improve one's writing ability because one has the support of a spell check and grammar check program. **Furthermore**, writing letters is fast and cheap with e-mail.

## Exercise 2

Fill in the blank with an appropriate transition to improve sentence variety. Choose from the following transitions: **moreover**, **in fact**, **therefore**, **for example**, **however**.

1. Training a dog requires time. \_\_\_\_\_, training a dog requires patience.
2. Our apartment is dirty. \_\_\_\_\_, the apartment hasn't been cleaned in a month.
3. Math is a challenging subject to master. \_\_\_\_\_, math requires a student to have good computational skills.
4. The house has old electrical wiring. \_\_\_\_\_, the house has a new heating system.
5. The play was very popular. \_\_\_\_\_, the play has been sold out for weeks.

## Rearrange the Sentence

- **Rearrange** the sentence so that it starts with different words. Use information from the sentence to create an introductory element from a dependent clause, prepositional phrase, or infinitive phrase.

### Original Sentence with Dependent Clause

Writers can also improve their writing ability **because** they have the support of a spell check and grammar check program.

### Rearranged Sentence with Introductory Element

**Because** they have the support of a spell check and grammar check program, writers can also improve their writing ability.

### Original Sentence with Prepositional Phrase

Writing letters is fast and cheap **with** e-mail.

### Rearranged Sentence with Introductory Element

**With** e-mail, writing letters is fast and cheap.

### Original Sentence with Infinitive Phrase

Writers use e-mail **to communicate** with friends around the world.

### Rearranged Sentence with Introductory Element

**To communicate** with friends around the world, writers use e-mail.

## Exercise 3

Rearrange the words in the second sentence so that it starts with different words.

1. The instructor lectures most of the class. The instructor hands out lecture notes because she wants the class to concentrate on listening.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Kites have become popular. Kites come in all kinds of shapes, from square to round.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Water has become America's favorite beverage. Water is the most effective drink to quench our thirst.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Gardeners must consider the weather. Gardeners will be uncomfortable in hot weather.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Pizza is a very popular snack. Pizza can be nutritious if made with fresh vegetables.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Use a Pronoun

- Use a pronoun (*he, she, it, they, etc.*) that takes the place of the subject of the previous sentence.

Writers have a fast and cheap method of communication with e-mail. **They** use e-mail to communicate with friends around the world.

## Exercise 4

Substitute a pronoun for the underlined words.

1. Swimming improves a swimmer's muscle tone. Swimming exercises all muscles of the body.
2. Students should register early for classes. Students can often sign up for courses on line.
3. A new mother faces many challenges. A new mother rarely has time for herself.
4. A dog's best friend is its owner. A dog's worst enemy is sometimes the cat next door.
5. New cars have become terribly expensive. New cars are often financed for up to six years.



## Combine Two Sentences

- Combine two sentences to avoid repetitive wording. For example, use a compound sentence or a complex sentence.

### Original Sentences

Writing letters is fast and cheap with e-mail. Writing letters electronically is becoming very popular.

### Compound Sentence

Writing letters is fast and cheap with e-mail, **so** writing letters electronically is becoming very popular.

### Complex Sentence

Because writing letters is fast and cheap with e-mail, writing letters electronically is becoming very popular.

## Exercise 5

Combine the two sentences into one sentence.

1. High speed Internet access makes using the Internet so much more convenient. High speed Internet access costs twice as much as a dial-up connection.

---

---

2. Original artwork can make any room more interesting. Original artwork can add color and variety to the room.

---

---

3. Newspapers are having trouble keeping their readers. Newspapers must compete with television and Internet news outlets.

---

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4. Belize offers fantastic underwater diving. Belize also has interesting archaeological ruins.

---

---

5. Cell phones can be dangerous. Cell phones emit radiation.

---

---

## Writing Practice 1

Revise the paragraph using the strategies for varying sentence beginnings. Make sure that no more than two sentences begin with the word *laughter*.

## The Gift of Laughter

Laughter has many health benefits. Laughter stimulates the immune system. Laughter activates germ-killing T-cells and speeds up the manufacture of new immune cells. Laughter makes us feel good and have a better sense of well-being by pumping extra adrenaline into our bloodstream and bringing on a rush of endorphins, the body's natural painkillers. Laughter greases the mental gears and stimulates creative thinking. Laughter exercises the heart, the lungs, and the muscles in our upper body and back. Most important, laughter reduces or eliminates stress. Laughing a hundred times a day may definitely keep the doctor away.

## Vary Sentence Length

- The second sentence variety strategy is to vary sentence length. Alternate long sentences with short ones.

If all the sentences are short, use sentence combining (described in Chapter 30) to make some longer ones. If all the sentences are long, break some up. Your writing should have a rhythm to it, just as music has rhythm. Following a long sentence with a shorter one keeps your writing from sounding monotonous.

“ When I read this first draft of my paragraph out loud, it sounded choppy. Then my teacher pointed out that most of the sentences in my paragraph are short. ”

## Eating Out and Spending Less

Paying attention to the bill when dining out can keep the cost down. Diners should avoid the bar. Drinks raise the bill substantially. Choosing à la carte items is expensive. Meals that include salad or soup are usually cheaper. Don't allow the waiter to top off the wineglasses. This encourages more drinking. Substitutions to specials can be costly. Ask the price of a different vegetable or side dish before ordering. Dessert and coffee can add 25 percent to the bill. Think about skipping them. Diners can save a lot of money by being aware of what they order.

## Peer Example



Alicia

## Peer Example

Alicia

“ In this final draft of my paragraph, I combined most of the short sentences into longer ones; however, I left a few short sentences to create variety for the longer ones. Now the writing seems to flow better. ”

## Eating Out and Spending Less

Paying attention to the bill when dining out can keep the cost down. Diners should avoid the bar **because** drinks raise the bill substantially. Choosing à la carte items is expensive, **but diners can save money if they order** meals that include salad or soup. The waiters should not be allowed to top off wine-glasses **because** this encourages more drinking. **Since** substitutions to specials can be costly, alert consumers will ask the price of a different vegetable or side dish before ordering. **Also, skipping** dessert and coffee can often save 25 percent of the bill. Diners save money by being aware of what they order.

## Writing Practice 2

Revise the paragraph so that short and long sentences alternate.

## Barcelona

Barcelona is a fascinating city. This city is home to Portuguese, Jewish, and Moroccan communities. These cultures give Barcelona an international air. The museums in Barcelona include the Picasso Museum and the Miró Foundation. In fact, the city has a very artistic feel to it. An important Spanish architect, Antonio Gaudi, built many buildings in Barcelona. He is renowned for his bizarre imagination and modern designs. The city is also blessed with special treasures. There are bullfights, cable car rides across the harbor, and church services at the cathedral. Of special interest to Americans is the Plaza del Rey. Christopher Columbus announced his discovery of the New World there. Barcelona has a lot to offer.

## Vary the Placement of Important Information

- The third sentence variety strategy is to vary the placement of important information in sentences.

If the important information is always at the end of the sentence, the reader will pay attention only to the sentence endings. Placing important information at the beginning, middle, and end of different sentences will

keep the reader alert. (However, in certain rhetorical patterns such as classification, repetition of a pattern of support within a paragraph is sometimes necessary.)

“ I wasn’t aware that I had fallen into a boring pattern in this first draft. Then, my instructor pointed out that I use the same pattern to present information about each kind of meditation. First I name and define a type of meditation, and then I explain it in a second sentence. ”

### Kinds of Meditation

There are three basic kinds of meditation. Passive meditation happens when we just sit and observe the movement of our breath. This type of meditation develops our concentration. Openness meditation focuses on being open to the sensations we experience in our bodies. We become aware of sights, sounds, and feelings in our body. Creative meditation helps us use our imagination to unlock creative energy. In this meditation, we imagine experiences such as unlocking doors or taking a sauna that will relax us and allow us to realize our potential. Each kind of meditation is useful for different purposes.

### Peer Example



Tony

“ To improve the variety of the sentences, I put the important information about openness meditation at the beginning of the sentence. I also changed the pattern of development in the last two types of meditation and included examples in the third type. ”

### Kinds of Meditation

There are three basic kinds of meditation. Passive meditation happens when we just sit and observe the movement of our breath. This type of meditation develops our concentration. Being open to the sensations we experience in our bodies is the focus of openness meditation. Sights, sounds, and feelings in our body are the object of our attention. When we use our imagination to unlock creative energy, we are using creative meditation. We imagine experiences such as unlocking doors or taking a sauna that will relax us and allow us to realize our potential in this meditation. Each kind of meditation is useful for different purposes.

### Peer Example

Tony

### Writing Practice 3

Revise the sentences of this paragraph so that the important information is not always at the end of the sentence.

#### Parents Matter

Parents play a vital role in helping their children do well in school. First, parents set an example by the way they relate to their own work. Kids learn to value hard work when they observe their parents succeed through persistence. Parents can also make the job of learning fun by incorporating educational activities into everyday life at home. For example, parents can foster good reading skills in their children by reading frequently to them from the time they are toddlers until they are teenagers. Finally, the parents' view of learning influences how kids view their education. Students will value their hard work to develop good skills if parents value the kids' hard work more than the grades they get. Parents' attitudes about learning affect their kids' performance in school.

## Vary the Sentence Structure

- The fourth and final sentence variety strategy is to mix the four sentence structures (described in Chapter 27 and reviewed in the box below) in paragraphs. Sometimes you will have to combine sentences to form these structures (see Chapter 30).

### The Four Sentence Structures

#### Simple Sentence

Independent clause.

#### Compound Sentence

Independent clause, coordinating conjunction + independent clause.

Independent clause; independent clause.

Independent clause; transition, independent clause.

#### Complex Sentence

Independent clause + dependent clause.

#### Compound-Complex Sentence

Two independent clauses + one or more dependent clauses.

## Writing Practice 4

Revise the following paragraph to improve the variety in sentence structure.

At the Fair

The county fair entertains the entire family. Many people bring their kids to enjoy the carnival rides. Teenagers especially like the bumper cars and roller coaster. Grownups test their skill by trying to win prizes at the rifle shoot or basket throw. Some people get a kick out of the sideshows. The fortune-teller always has something interesting to say about romance or money. Townsfolk eventually get hungry. They start looking for their favorite junk food such as hot dogs, hamburgers, cotton candy, or candied apples. Of course, people-watching is a popular activity too. Teenagers like to be seen with their dates. Adults get a chance to meet friends' families and see how much the kids have grown. The fair is a community event we all look forward to.

Alone or with a partner, revise the paragraph using the sentence variety techniques.

## Editing Exercise



The Highwaymen

A group of African-American artists called the Highwaymen have become popular with art collectors. The group created art back in the 1960s and 70s. The group got its name because the artists sold their paintings from the trunks of their cars. They parked along the major highways of south Florida and sold to tourists. They painted nature scenes of Florida. They drew palm trees, billowy clouds, and sunsets on the beach. They also painted pictures filled with marshes and cypress trees. They sold their paintings for as little as ten or twenty dollars. Now the work of these artists commands thousands of dollars.

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# Chapter 32

## Commas

Knowing how to use commas correctly is an important skill for writers. Examine any piece of good writing, especially academic writing, and you will see commas in many of the sentences. Writers use commas to **organize information**. They also use commas to **add information to sentences** and to **create sentence variety** in paragraphs.

Most teachers and students rank commas as the most difficult punctuation mark to use correctly. In this chapter, you will learn a number of important rules through easy-to-remember formulas and examples. In addition, you will get practice using the rules and avoiding common errors.

### Dates and Addresses

- Use commas between items in dates and addresses.

My grandfather was born on Friday, June 7, 1902, in Atlanta, Georgia, of Irish immigrants.

### Misuses

- Don't separate the month from the year if the day is not given.
  - ✗ The last time to apply for the scholarship is May, 2006.
  - ✓ The last time to apply for the scholarship is May 2006.



## Series

- Use commas to set off items in a series.

A series is a list of at least three items. The items may be single words, phrases, or clauses.

The flag is red, white, and blue.

I enjoy walking on the beach, sitting on the sand, and swimming in the water.

Although some grammarians now consider the comma before the final *and* to be optional, using the last comma makes the series clear to the reader.

## Misuses

- Do not use commas when there are only two items in a list.

✗ I like coffee, and donuts for breakfast.

✓ I like coffee and donuts for breakfast.

- Do not use commas when *and* or *or* joins each item.

✗ I enjoy a warm bath, and a soft bed, and a good night's sleep.

✓ I enjoy a warm bath and a soft bed and a good night's sleep.

- Do not use a comma after the last item in the series.

✗ Red, white, and blue, are my favorite colors.

✓ Red, white, and blue are my favorite colors.

## Exercise 1

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. Frank Larry and Sheena live in New Orleans Louisiana.
2. My brother loves to eat to sleep and to play.
3. Marcus and Nicole got married on March 1 2005 at 3 P.M.
4. Hiring firing and training employees are all parts of a supervisor's job.
5. The Eason's oldest child was born on Saturday September 18 2004 in Chicago Illinois at 2 A.M.

## Compound Sentences

- Use a comma between **two independent clauses** joined by a **coordinating conjunction** (see Chapters 27 and 30). The comma comes after the first independent clause and before the conjunction.

### ➤ Formula

Independent clause, coordinating conjunction + independent clause.

### ➤ Key Words

Coordinating conjunctions: **for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so**  
(Remember *fanboys* to memorize these key words.)

Independent clause      Coordinating conjunction      Independent clause

I love my job at Shands Hospital, and I hope I can work there for a long time.

Independent clause      Coordinating conjunction      Independent clause

Rock climbing is exciting, yet it is also dangerous.

## Misuses

- Do not use a comma before a coordinating conjunction that does not join two *independent* clauses. (This is the most common comma error.)

S                      V                      V

✗ **Sarah** borrowed my car, and drove her mother home.

The word group following the conjunction is not an independent clause because it does not have a subject.

✓ Sarah borrowed my car and drove her mother home.

- Do not use a comma before *so that*. (*So* is a coordinating conjunction, but *so that* introduces a dependent clause, not an independent one.) This can be tricky when the *that* is left out, which often happens in informal writing.

✗ I am on a diet, so (that) I can lose weight.

✓ I am on a diet so (that) I can lose weight.

### Tips to Using the Compound Sentence Comma Rule

To use the compound sentence comma rule correctly, identify the subject and the verb in each clause to make sure that the coordinating conjunction joins two independent clauses.

### Exercise 2

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. We chose to drive on the turnpike for we needed to get home quickly.
2. Joe and Ted play football together and they help each other with their homework each night.
3. Our dog can run hard to catch a cat yet will only walk slowly when he is called back home.
4. My car broke down so I had to take it to a mechanic.
5. I exercise regularly so I can stay in good condition.

### Exercise 3

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. My neighbors are gone a lot during the day and their dogs get bored.
2. One dog has a loud bark but the other dog likes to whine.
3. The dogs run along the fence and bark at people walking on the street.
4. People walk quickly or cross the street to avoid the dogs.
5. I actually like the dogs so I give them treats when I go out.

## Introductory Elements

- Use a comma after most **introductory elements**. An introductory element is either a dependent clause or a phrase that introduces an independent clause. Most introductory elements begin with verbals, prepositions, or subordinating conjunctions.

### ➡ Formula

Dependent clause or phrase, independent clause.

Remember that an introductory element is a sentence fragment that introduces a sentence.

## Verbal Phrases

- **Verbal phrases** begin with present participles (such as *going, buying, seeing*); past participles (such as *gone, bought, seen*); or infinitives (such as *to go, to buy, to see*).

Present participial phrase                      Independent clause  
**Sleeping** on the job, I missed an important call from my boss.

Past participial phrase                      Independent clause  
**Built** in the 1890s by a timber baron, the mansion was the grandest building in town.

Infinitive phrase                      Independent clause  
**To see** the latest results, the scientists met in the laboratory.

## Prepositional Phrases

- Prepositional phrases begin with a preposition.

Prepositional phrase                      Independent clause  
 On the first day of the term, the professor informed her class of her attendance policy.

## Subordinating Conjunctions

- **Subordinating conjunctions** turn an independent clause into a dependent clause (see Chapter 30).

### Subordinating Conjunctions

after	although	whereas	unless	since
before	even though	as	whether	until
when	though	if	because	while

Dependent clause      Independent clause  
**Although** it was raining, they took a walk.

Dependent clause                      Independent clause  
**Since** it was raining, they decided not to have a picnic.

Dependent clause                      Independent clause  
**If** the rain didn't stop soon, they would have to go inside.

## Misuses

- A comma is usually *not* needed if the verbal phrase, prepositional phrase, or dependent clause **follows** the independent clause.

✗ My neighbor always catches the bus, at 8:00 in the morning.

Independent clause

Prepositional phrase

✓ My neighbor always catches the bus at 8:00 in the morning.

✗ Computers are very useful, because they can perform calculations very quickly.

Independent clause

Dependent clause

✓ Computers are very useful because they can perform calculations very quickly.

### Exercise 4

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. Whenever I go to the computer lab I always forget to remove my disk from the computer.
2. After winning the football game the players went to a celebration party.
3. Talking to a friend helps when you are sad and blue.
4. To succeed in business the business owner must make lots of contacts in the community.
5. Since the roads were icy the weather service issued a warning not to drive.

### Exercise 5

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. Although spring just arrived the temperatures will not reach above freezing tonight.
2. Through the window in the kitchen I can watch my children playing in the backyard.
3. Carved by hand five hundred years ago the violin has a beautiful sound when played by a master musician.
4. To receive a full refund, you must bring the broken appliance back to the store where you bought it.
5. The budget was passed in March by the legislature.

## Interrupters

Commas are used to set off **interrupters**, which are single words or groups of words that change the flow of a sentence. Interrupters include

- Certain small words at the beginning of sentences.
- Names in direct address.
- Transitions.

- Appositives.
- Nonrestrictive elements.

The various rules regarding interrupters cover words, phrases, and clauses at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a sentence.

## Small Word Interrupters

- Use a comma after certain **small words** at the beginning of a sentence. Such words include *Yes, No, Oh, Well, Hey, and Hi*. These words are not used often in formal writing, but they are common in informal writing such as letters, memos, and e-mail.

### ➤ Formula

Small word, independent clause.

### ➤ Key Words

Yes, No, Oh, Well, Hey, Hi

Yes, this rule is easy to learn.

Well, the Patriots will have a chance to beat the Giants next year.

## Misuse

- The previous rule applies only when the small word actually functions as an interrupter, not when it is part of the subject.
  - ✗ No, students have registered yet.  
*No* is part of the subject of the sentence; it's not an interrupter coming before the sentence.
  - ✓ No students have registered yet.

## Direct Address

- **Direct address** means communicating directly to the person or group being named. Names or titles can be placed anywhere in the sentence and should be separated from the rest of the sentence by commas when they interrupt the flow of the sentence.

### ➤ Formula

Name or title, sentence.

Sentence, name or title.

Sentence beginning, name or title, sentence ending.

Sir, your order will take two weeks to deliver.

Please complete the assignment by Friday, students.

Your appointment, Andre, is on Thursday at noon.

## Misuse

- Do not use commas to set off a name or title unless the person is in fact being directly addressed. When writing *about* a person or group of people, do not use commas to set off the name or title.
  - ✗ I think, Mr. Jordan, is the best athlete ever.
  - ✓ I think Mr. Jordan is the best athlete ever.

## Exercise 6

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. Yes you may pick up your car after work Mr. Chen.
2. No students have made appointments Professor Garcia.
3. Well I am sure that Doctor Turner will see us.
4. Oh I forgot to tell you Sir that I cannot work on Saturday.
5. Hey stop playing around with the dog kids.

## Transitions

- If a **transition** can be removed from a sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence, it is an interrupter. These interrupters can be **conjunctive adverbs** or **transitional expressions** (see Chapter 31), and they can be placed anywhere in the sentence. Interrupting transitions should be separated from the rest of the sentence by commas.

### ➤ Formula

Transition, sentence.

Sentence, transition.

Sentence beginning, transition, sentence ending.

**Moreover**, he had trouble reading the test because he didn't have his eyeglasses.

The design is flawed because it allows no wheelchair access, **for example**.

The reason for the delay, **however**, was the severe thunderstorm.

## Misuses

- A transition that is a *necessary* word in the sentence should not be separated by commas. If the transition cannot be removed from the sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence, it is a necessary part of the sentence and not an interrupter.

✗ My best friend is, also, my neighbor.

Also is a necessary word and not an interrupter in this sentence.

✓ My best friend is also my neighbor.

## Exercise 7

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. My father's wish however was for me to attend college.
2. The rules prohibit running on the pool deck also.
3. The students passed the test as a result of their hard work.
4. Thus the tide rose and lifted the boat off the shoal.
5. Consequently it's time to take stock of our priorities.

## Appositives

- Use commas to set off an **appositive**, a word or group of words that defines or explains the word or phrase that comes before it. Usually an appositive comes immediately after the word or phrase it defines. An appositive must be the same part of speech as the word it defines.

### ➡ Formula

Sentence, appositive.

Sentence beginning, appositive, sentence ending.

APP

I like George, **my next-door neighbor**.

APP

My mother's native land, **Colombia**, is located in South America.

## Tips for Recognizing Appositives

Because an appositive phrase must be the same part of speech as the word it renames, the appositive and its referent are interchangeable. In other words, the sentence should make sense either without the appositive or with only the appositive.

Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, is beautiful in April when the cherry trees bloom.

Read the sentence without the appositive: "Washington, D.C., is beautiful in April when the cherry trees bloom." Then read the sentence without the word or phrase the appositive defines. "The nation's capital is beautiful in April when the cherry trees bloom." Since both sentences mean the same thing, the phrase *the nation's capital* is clearly an appositive.



## Misuse

- The most common error with appositives occurs when the writer fails to end the appositive with a comma.

✗ Bill, my next-door neighbor is a great golfer.

✓ Bill, my next-door neighbor, is a great golfer.

Don't forget the final comma to define where the appositive ends.

## Exercise 8

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. The plane crashed because its altimeter a gauge that measures altitude was malfunctioning.
2. The golden retriever one of the most popular dogs in America is known for its obedience and gentle disposition.
3. Our study group met at Joe's Deli a popular snack shop in order to plan our class presentation.
4. The traffic light on the corner of Main Street was stuck on green.
5. I always enjoy going to class when my favorite instructor Ms. Taylor gives the lecture.

## Nonrestrictive Elements

- Use commas to separate information that is **nonrestrictive**, or nonessential to the meaning of the sentence.

Nonrestrictive information is not necessary to understand the meaning of the word or phrase that the information is modifying or explaining. This rule governs when to use commas to separate information that modifies or explains a word or phrase in a sentence. The nonrestrictive comma rule is one of the hardest to learn because it is not always easy to tell whether a certain word or word group is necessary in a given sentence.

My family's first house, which was in Vermont, had a fireplace.

The information inside the commas interrupts the flow of the sentence. *Which was in Vermont* is not necessary information to understand what house the sentence is about since there is only one house that was "my family's first house." Commas *should* separate this nonessential information.

Our history teacher, who is from Vermont, told us about New England's rich history.

The information inside the commas interrupts the flow of the sentence. It is not necessary to understand what teacher is being written about. Commas *should* separate this nonessential information.

## Restrictive Elements

- Do *not* use commas to separate **restrictive** information in a sentence; this is information that is essential to the meaning of the sentence.

Restrictive information limits (that is, restricts) the meaning of the word or phrase it modifies and is therefore necessary to the meaning of the sentence.

The teacher who is from Vermont has not yet arrived at the teachers' conference.

The clause *who is from Vermont* is restrictive; it provides essential information that is necessary to understand which teacher, out of all the teachers at the conference, has not yet arrived. The clause *should not* be separated by commas from the rest of the sentence.

### Tips for Recognizing Nonrestrictive versus Restrictive Information

One good test of whether or not information is essential to a sentence is to take the information out of the sentence to see if the information is necessary to the meaning of the sentence. If the meaning of the sentence changes without the information, then the information is essential and therefore should not be separated by commas.

All students who have not paid their fees will be dropped from the course.

*Who have not paid their fees* is necessary information; it tells which students will be dropped from the course. Commas should *not* separate this essential information.

Newspapers will not print stories that have not been checked twice.

*That have not been checked twice* is necessary information to identify which stories will not be printed. Commas should *not* separate this essential information.

## Misuses

- Writers make comma errors when they are not sure whether a word or phrase is restrictive or nonrestrictive.

Here are some ways to help decide whether commas are needed:

### Tips for Deciding When Commas Are Needed

1. If the information begins with *that*, then the information usually is restrictive and no commas are needed.

✗ The building, that was condemned last week, burned down yesterday.

The clause *that was condemned last week* identifies which building burned down and is necessary information, so no commas should separate it from the rest of the sentence.

✓ The building that was condemned last week burned down yesterday.

2. If the information describes a noun that needs no identification or clarification, then the information is nonrestrictive.

✗ The firefighters surrounded the burning building which was condemned last week.

The clause *which was condemned last week* is not necessary to identify the building (since only one building is burning), so this is extra information that must be separated by commas.

✓ The firefighters surrounded the burning building, which was condemned last week.

## Exercise 9

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. The students received their awards which were foot-high trophies.
2. My mother who likes to crack jokes is crazy.
3. El Indio Restaurant located on 15th Street is great.
4. My exercise class which is in the gym starts at 9:00.
5. The English class that begins at 9:00 is in the auditorium.

## Exercise 10

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. We will stay at our vacation home which is in Vermont during the month of July.
2. Our oldest child who is twenty-five will be married soon.
3. The woman that he is marrying was born in Japan.
4. Her parents whom we have not met will come for a visit next month.
5. Our son's wedding scheduled for next May will be held in our hometown.

Review  
Exercise 1

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. New Jersey is one of the most populous states and although it is not a large state in land area New Jersey has a great deal of variety.
2. Because of its beautiful beach and scenic boardwalks the Jersey shore is a popular vacation spot and it is always crowded in peak tourist seasons.
3. In the northern part of the state many people commute to jobs in New York City New York.
4. The airport in Newark New Jersey is always crowded at rush hour even though it is very spacious but it is often less congested than Kennedy International on Long Island which is busy twenty-four hours a day.
5. There is a rivalry nevertheless between New York and New Jersey.
6. According to native New Yorkers anyone not from New York City is to be pitied.
7. Some New Yorkers think that their city is the most important place on earth and maybe they are right.
8. Yes David the five boroughs of New York are Manhattan Brooklyn the Bronx Staten Island and Queens.
9. Although New York was founded by Dutch settlers there is not much Dutch influence visible today.
10. Certainly it is very interesting to live in New York City one of the largest cities in the world.

## Review Exercise 2

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. Humanities which is my favorite class meets every day at noon.
2. We study architecture and music but I enjoy studying artists and their paintings most of all.
3. My favorite artist is Vincent van Gogh a Dutch Impressionist painter.
4. Van Gogh who painted in France painted very few pictures and died at an early age.
5. Another Impressionist Claude Monet is famous for his paintings of water lilies.
6. On the other hand I don't care much for contemporary art.
7. The crayons string and bicycle wheel in that sculpture turn me off.
8. Well Mr. Smithers would you paint a picture of my house for me?
9. At a museum in Genoa Italy on June 25 2005 there was an exhibit of Renaissance paintings.
10. Many art lovers toured the gallery and they enjoyed the show.

## Review Exercise 3

Add commas where needed. (Some sentences may not need any commas.)

1. A conference was held in Seattle Washington on May 25 2000 and scientists presented research on the subject of caffeine.
2. Coffee one of the most popular beverages in the world is known for its stimulating effects and caffeine is the active ingredient that gives coffee its jolt.
3. Because so many people drink coffee every day caffeine is probably the most widely used drug in the world.
4. In fact more than 85 percent of Americans consume significant amounts of caffeine daily.
5. Coffee is full of caffeine for one cup holds around 100 milligrams of caffeine.
6. The most sensitive coffee drinkers can feel a lift from as little as 20 milligrams of caffeine but many people don't notice any effects until they have taken in more than 350 milligrams.
7. Along with coffee caffeine is present in teas colas and chocolate.
8. Since caffeine is a stimulant many people think they are sharper after drinking coffee or tea or soda.
9. Also some people report getting headaches when they don't have their usual dose of caffeine.
10. Yes caffeine speeds up brain activity and increases concentration for most people.

Alone or with a partner, add commas where needed.

## Editing Exercise 1

### A Good Sport



Racquetball one of the fastest-growing sports in America is an easy game to learn. It can be played on a court of three or four walls but according to the best players the four-wall game is the most challenging. In the game of four-wall players can also use a fifth wall which is the ceiling and if the players are very good the game will consist of high lobs kill shots and Z shots. Of course even beginners have fun playing racquetball but are more likely to receive injuries. With so many racquets and players in such a small area it's easy to get hit and eye injuries are the most serious.

## Editing Exercise 2

Alone or with a partner, add commas where needed.



William Faulkner

William Faulkner is one of the most important writers in twentieth-century literature. In a series of novels and short stories Faulkner created a fictional place in Mississippi Yoknapatawpha County. Although Faulkner became famous for his stories about the South he is now recognized throughout the world for his ideas on mankind's nature suffering and dignity. His vision of man has been compared to that found in the Greek tragedies.

Faulkner lived most of his life in his native state Mississippi and although fame came late in his life he did receive the Nobel Prize the National Book Award and two Pulitzer Prizes. His power of imagination his intense style of writing and his experimentation with form made him one of the few American writers who unmistakably deserve to be called great.

William Faulkner was born on September 25 1897. When he was five years old his family moved to Oxford the home of the University of Mississippi and except for a few years during World War I this was to be his home for most of the rest of his life. Faulkner was admitted to the University of Mississippi after World War I but did not complete his freshman year. He soon began writing short stories and novels and after years and years of very little writing he started to write about what he knew best the people of Mississippi. His best-known works all take place in Yoknapatawpha County and include *Sartoris* *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*

## Chapter 33

# Apostrophes

Apostrophes give writers trouble for two reasons. First, apostrophes don't appear as often as periods and commas, especially in formal writing in which contractions are not used. Second, a missing or misplaced apostrophe doesn't affect the sound of a sentence the way other misused punctuation does, so writers have a harder time detecting apostrophe errors. This chapter will make you aware of when and how to use apostrophes.

### Contractions

- Use an apostrophe to indicate missing letters in a **contraction**, a combination of two words in which some letters have been left out.

there's = there is

we'll = we will

can't = cannot

it's = it is or it has

you're = you are



## Possession

- Use an apostrophe to show a **possessive relationship**, that is, to show ownership.

**Singular owner:** an author's viewpoint (the viewpoint of an author)

**Plural owner:** some neighbors' yards (yards of some neighbors)

**Irregular plural owner:** the men's club (the club of the men)

### Determining Possession

The most important step to using possessive apostrophes correctly is to determine if there is a possessive relationship between words in a phrase. A common mistake is to put an apostrophe in a word that is plural but not possessive. Not every word with an *s* ending should have an apostrophe. You must check carefully for a possessive relationship. Once you are aware that you are using a possessive phrase, the rules for where to place the apostrophe are easy (we cover these in the following sections).

- Test for ownership by converting the form of the phrase from **owner(?) + object to the object of the owner(?)**.

If the restated phrase makes sense and shows the relationship of ownership, an apostrophe is needed. (You can perform this check in your head, without writing down the words.)

Bill's friend = friend of Bill (apostrophe needed)

horses raced = raced of horse (no apostrophe needed)

- Another test for possession is to ask whether the second word or word group belongs to the word before it.

Bill's friend: *Friend* belongs to *Bill*, so there is a possessive relationship.

horses raced: *Raced* doesn't belong to *horses*, so no apostrophe is needed to show possession.

### Word Order in Possessive Phrases

Remember that the object owned must immediately follow the owner. The only words that might come between the owner and the object are adjectives that describe the object.

Bill's dear old friend = dear old friend of Bill

the lawyer's detailed defense = detailed defense of the lawyer

## Placement of the Apostrophe in Possessive Phrases

There are only three rules for placing the apostrophe in possessive phrases.

1. To make a singular word possessive, add 's.
2. To make a regular plural word possessive, add an apostrophe after the final s.
3. Some plural words do not end with an s. With irregular plural owners, add 's. The most common irregular plurals are *children*, *women*, *men*, and *people*.

### SINGULAR OWNER

- To make a singular word possessive, add 's.

Charles's books                      summer's heat  
 a day's work                         a book's title page  
 an essay's thesis

Note that this rule holds true even if the singular owner is a word that ends with s.

Mr. Bliss's daughters  
 Russ's car  
 the class's field trip

### Exercise 1

Add apostrophes where needed.

1. Mrs. Smiths daughter was married yesterday.
2. I want to visit Jacksonvilles beautiful beaches.
3. Februarys weather is always the worst of the winter.
4. It is someone elses fault, not mine.
5. Larry Jones old dog barked all night.

### PLURAL OWNERS

- To make a regular plural word possessive, add an apostrophe after the final s.

three weeks' pay  
 cities' mayors  
 doctors' conference

## Exercise 2

Add an apostrophe where needed.

1. The two boys bikes are in the garage.
2. Three hours wait was too long.
3. Two dollars difference is not much.
4. Some families homes have been damaged in the storm.
5. Most companies employees receive sick leave.

### Tips for Determining Singular and Plural Owners

Avoid mistakes with possessive apostrophes by paying attention to determiners that signify plural owners (*some, all, many, most, few*) and determiners that signify singular owners (*a, an, one*).

**Some** kids' parents will chaperone the school dance.

**A** kid's parents will chaperone the school dance.

- Pronouns that refer to possessive phrases can also help writers determine whether the owner is singular or plural.

The student's teacher told **him** to study hard for the test.

The students' teacher told **them** to study hard for the test.

## Exercise 3

Add an apostrophe where needed.

1. A dogs best friend is its owner.
2. Many cars air conditioners break in the summer.
3. The girls friends told her not to worry.
4. The neighbors dog got out of their yard.
5. I left our neighbors paper on her doorstep.

### IRREGULAR PLURAL OWNERS

- Some plural words do not end with an *s*. With irregular plural owners, add '*s*. The most common irregular plurals are *children, women, men, and people*.

children's toys

people's reaction

men's boots

women's salaries

## Exercise 4

Add an apostrophe where needed.

1. The mens talent was obvious to everyone.
2. The womens paintings were displayed in the main gallery.
3. Most policemens jobs include talking to the public.
4. The childrens balloons were distributed at the birthday party.
5. Peoples opinions can change as they get older.

## Possessive Pronouns

- Despite the word *possessive* in their name, do not use apostrophes with possessive pronouns.

### Possessive Pronouns

its	ours
hers	theirs
his	yours

The tire lost **its** hubcap.

Shall we take my car or **yours**?

## Letters and Numerals

- To avoid confusion, use an apostrophe to make letters and numerals plural.

Many of my instructors have Ph.D.'s.

My son is writing his 3's and 9's backwards.

Follow directions carefully to make A's.

- Apostrophes are generally not used with all-capital acronyms, with single capital letters where misreading is not likely, or with plural decades.

I have many CDs in my collection.

He got all Bs and Cs on his last report card.

My mother loves the music of the 1960s.

I was born in the 80s.

## Exercise 5

Add an apostrophe where needed.

1. My sons degrees include two M.A.s in his specialty, which is engineering.
2. In the 1990s, some bands songs began to be offered on the Internet.
3. Its sometimes difficult to distinguish Is in a persons signature.
4. WLXRs radio tower is being repaired by the companys technicians.
5. Many peoples VCRs are being traded in for DVDs.

## Review Exercise 1

Add an apostrophe where needed.

1. The clerks job bored her to death.
2. The players coach told them to return to the teams hotel after the game.
3. Many classes tests are given on Mondays.
4. The familys dog dug underneath a neighbors fence.
5. The childs mother complained to the other childrens mothers about their kids misbehavior.
6. Many families health insurance protects them in times of crisis.
7. A letters weight determines how much the stamps will cost.
8. During the night, some peoples sleep was interrupted by the loud noise coming from the factorys warehouse.
9. Last week, the teachers principal told them that they wouldnt be getting a raise in the next years budget.
10. A songs lyrics can stay in peoples minds for a long time.

## Review Exercise 2

Add apostrophes where needed.

1. I cant figure out what is wrong with Jordans car.
2. Every morning, its my husbands job to brew coffee.
3. A secretarys job includes keeping track of her bosss schedule.
4. Some mens wives make their husbands take out the trash on garbage days.
5. Theres too much work for the few doctors in the hospital.
6. Sometimes peoples beliefs are tested during times of crisis.
7. The hospitals nurses rotate shifts, and most nurses schedules include three days off each week.
8. One plants pot has a crack in its side, but the other pots are in perfect condition.
9. The students are using the schools computers because they left theirs at home.
10. In the plays last act, an actors hairpiece fell off.

## Editing Exercise 1

Alone or with a partner, read the following passage to find apostrophe errors. Add apostrophes where needed, and cross out any incorrect apostrophes.



## Cooking

Cooking is not one of my hobbies', and I didnt bother to learn when I was young because it was always my parent's job to make meals. I dont have a microwave oven, so I always have to drag out pots' and pans' just to heat my leftovers. Its' not very convenient for me since Im a student with little time to spare for leaning over my stove's burners. Whats even more difficult is that not one of the burners works completely. Each one has at least one malfunctioning heat level, so when I want to boil water for rice and then to simmer rice for flavor, I have to move the pan from one burner to another. What a pain cooking can be sometime's! To be honest, I lack the patience and the know-how needed for good cooking skills'. My two favorite cookbooks' pages are yellowed from age, grease, and use, but they didn't get that way because I have used them. Ive never understood how my mother and father could spend an entire days' work for one single meal, but I have to admit, those meals were usually pretty fancy and quite delicious creation's. I remember one time when my father cooked his famous mushrooms in wine sauce side dish. The dish's flavor is "tangy but tasty" as my father says. Usually, it's my family's favorite, but one time he added too much lemon juice. When we dug into the mushrooms, our lips puckered, and our eyes' watered because Dad's mushrooms were so sour! It's that kind of simple yet embarrassing mistake that discourages me from learning how to cook.

## Editing Exercise 2



Alone or with a partner, read the following passage to find apostrophe errors. Add apostrophes where needed, and cross out any incorrect apostrophes.

### Staying Fit

Regular exercise has become more and more important in Americans lives. Although everyones budget is tight, many Americans' are joining health clubs. Every clubs fee's and facilities are different, so its important for a person who wants to join a club to visit several clubs to get a feel for each clubs atmosphere. Many clubs offer aerobics classes, as well as free weights and exercise equipment. Sauna's, hot tubs, and steam baths are also included in all members fees. Perhaps the most important feature offered by top clubs is trained personnel to supervise each clients workout. These trained specialists' set workouts, record performance, and cheer all clients efforts. In addition, exercise counselors work on peoples diets and motivation. Todays health club offers so much to it's customers.

# Chapter 34

## Pronoun Agreement

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns. Pronouns cause problems in writing when the incorrect pronoun is used or when it is not clear what noun the pronoun refers to. Pronoun errors can create misunderstandings for the reader and are particularly important in official papers. For example, imagine an accident report that misidentifies who is at fault because a wrong or an unclear pronoun is used.

Many people misuse pronouns in their speech. Therefore, writers have difficulty identifying pronoun errors because the errors do not sound wrong. In order to learn how to use pronouns correctly, students need to pay particular attention to the rules and not rely on their ear to tell them what is correct.

Below are the personal pronouns. Other types of pronouns include relative pronouns, reflexive pronouns, and interrogative pronouns.

	Subjective case	Objective case	Possessive case
<b>Singular</b>	I	me	my/mine
	you	you	your/yours
	he/she/it	him/her/it	his/her/its
<b>Plural</b>	we	us	our/ours
	you	you	your/yours
	they	them	their/theirs



## Antecedents

- Pronouns take the place of nouns (see Chapter 19). The noun to which the pronoun refers is called the **antecedent**, a Latin word meaning “what precedes.”

Antecedent      Pronoun

The **employee** filled out **her** time card incorrectly.

Antecedent      Pronoun

Our **college** registers **its** students by phone.

Antecedent      Pronoun

Our **neighbors** lost **their** dog.

- A pronoun must **agree in number** with its antecedent. If the antecedent is **singular**, any pronouns referring to the antecedent must also be singular.

My favorite **restaurant** raised **its** prices last week.

The **girl** took **her** mother’s hand.

The **boy** grabbed **his** coat.

- If the antecedent is **plural**, any pronouns referring to the antecedent must also be plural.

The **lawyers** take money from **their** clients.

### Avoiding Sexist Language

- Pronoun use is changing to **avoid sexist language**. Always using *he* to refer to an unspecified individual is considered sexist.

A **student** left **his** umbrella in the auditorium.

Here are some options for avoiding sexist language when referring to an unknown singular antecedent:

- Use *his or her*.

A **student** left **his or her** umbrella in the auditorium.

- Use *his/her*.

A **student** left **his/her** umbrella in the auditorium.

- Alternate *he* and *she*.

A **student** left **his** umbrella in the auditorium.

Another **student** left **her** book in the auditorium.

- Use an article instead of a pronoun.

A **student** left **an** umbrella in the auditorium.

- Change the antecedent to a plural.

Some **students** left **their** umbrellas in the auditorium.

Each of these alternatives requires careful practice to avoid sounding awkward. Because there is no single accepted solution to the problem of how to refer to an antecedent that may be male or female, it is best to consult with your instructors for their preferences.

## Agreement Errors

- **Pronoun agreement errors occur when the wrong pronoun is used. The most common error is the use of a plural pronoun with a singular antecedent.**

✗ **Everyone** must turn in **their** test.

*Everyone* is a singular noun. Therefore, the plural pronoun *their* doesn't match the noun it refers to. The pronoun must agree in number (singular or plural) with the noun.

✓ **Everyone** must turn in **his or her** test.

✗ A **student** forgot **their** book bag.

The word *student* is a singular noun, and *their* is a plural pronoun. The pronoun must agree with the noun.

✓ A **student** forgot **his or her** book bag.

Cross out any incorrect pronouns and write a correct pronoun above. Not every pronoun is incorrect.

### Exercise 1

1. A shopper left their umbrella in the store.
2. The lost dog was returned to their owner.
3. The students who passed their tests received awards.
4. The Air Force requires their recruits to attend six weeks of basic training.
5. The cup had a crack in its side.

## Problem Antecedents

### Compound Antecedents

- **Compound antecedents joined by *and* are plural.**  
**Sarah and Julie** decided to try **their** luck at the game.
- **With compound antecedents joined by *either . . . or* or *neither . . . nor*, the pronoun should agree with the nearest antecedent.**

Neither my sister nor her **friends** can find **their** tickets to the play.

Neither my friends nor my **sister** can find **her** ticket to the play.

## Exercise 2

Cross out any incorrect pronouns and write a correct pronoun above. Not every pronoun is incorrect.

1. The dog and cat played with its toys while the children watched.
2. Either the employees or the boss will contribute their ideas to the debate.
3. The explorer and his friends celebrated their accomplishments.
4. Neither the teacher nor the students were certain of their exact location.
5. Either the sheriff or the campers will become famous for his courage.

## Indefinite Pronouns as Antecedents

**Indefinite pronouns** refer to nonspecific nouns (see Chapter 19). They themselves can serve as antecedents to personal pronouns.

- Most indefinite pronouns are singular, but some are plural. Writers must pay careful attention to agreement between indefinite pronoun antecedents and the pronouns that refer to them.

another	both	no one	several
any	each	nobody	some
anybody	everybody	none	somebody
anyone	many	nothing	someone
anything	neither	one	something

### SINGULAR EXAMPLES

**Everybody** should know **his/her** license number.

**Someone** forgot **his or her** book.

**No one** is bringing **his or her** family to the party.

### PLURAL EXAMPLES

**Many** lost **their** books.

**Few** are chosen to lead **their** country.

- A few indefinite pronouns may be either singular or plural (*none, some, all, any, most*) depending on the noun or pronoun to which they refer.

**None** of the money has lost **its** markings.

**None** of the books are missing **their** pages.

## Exercise 3

Cross out any incorrect pronouns and write a correct pronoun above.  
Not every pronoun is incorrect.

1. Everyone chose their favorite poem to read to the class.
2. Nobody remembered to bring her umbrella.
3. One of the visitors forgot their book.
4. Each of the members of the department wanted the chance to bring their suggestions up at the meeting.
5. Any of the students needing help with their essays should let their teacher know as soon as possible.

## Collective Nouns as Antecedents

- Most **collective nouns**—words that refer to one whole made up of parts (see Chapter 25)—are singular and, when they serve as antecedents, must take a singular pronoun.

A **business** just moved **its** operations into the building next door.

The **team** elected **its** best player as captain.

The **school** and **its** principal were featured in the newspaper.

## Exercise 4

Cross out any incorrect pronouns and write a correct pronoun above. Not every pronoun is incorrect.

1. The IRS expects all tax returns sent to their office to be postmarked by April 15.
2. Rangehill Community College registers its students using the latest automated phone registration system.
3. The team celebrated their victory.
4. The jury filed back into the room to announce their verdict.
5. Bubba's Steak House flame-broils their steaks.

## Avoiding Shifts in Number

While it's important to check for pronoun agreement within a sentence, it is also important to be consistent from sentence to sentence.

- Do not shift from singular subjects to plural subjects or vice versa within a paragraph.
  - ✗ A **dentist** can be scary. **They** almost always have needles next to **their** examination chair.

Do not shift from singular *dentist* to plural *they*. Remain consistent in using plural subjects or singular subjects.

- ✓ **Dentists** can be scary. **They** almost always have needles next to **their** examination chair.

OR

- ✓ A **dentist** can be scary. **She** almost always has needles next to **her** examination chair.

## Avoiding Shifts in Person

- Pronouns are classified according to **person**: first person (*I, me, we*); second person (*you*); and third person (*he, she, it, they*). Do not shift from one person to another within a sentence or paragraph.

- ✗ I like golf because **you** can enjoy nature while **you** exercise.

Do not shift from *I* to *you* when the same person is clearly meant. Remain consistent in using the same person.

- ✓ I like golf because **I** can enjoy nature while **I** exercise.

### Exercise 5

Cross out any pronouns that shift in number or person and write a correct pronoun above.

1. When a student registers for classes, you are given a student identification card.
2. Committee members should attend all meetings. If a member does not attend regularly, they will not be able to vote on important matters.
3. If a driver hears a siren or sees flashing lights, you must pull to the side of the road.
4. Golfers must reserve playing times, and he or she must pay higher fees for weekend time slots.
5. Students who are concerned about doing well in their classes will do everything they can to stay healthy. If a student visits the infirmary on campus, they can get a free flu shot.

## Limiting Use of the Second Person

- Although the second-person pronoun *you* is useful when giving instructions or getting the readers' attention, in most academic writing it is considered vague. Its use should be limited to specific kinds of writing.

- ✗ **You** should pay **your** fees before **your** classes are canceled.

It is not clear who the *you* in this sentence is. Be specific in naming who the subject is.

- ✓ A **student** should pay **his** or **her** fees before **his** or **her** classes are canceled.

OR

- ✓ **Students** should pay **their** fees before **their** classes are canceled.

## Related Agreement Errors

- When correcting pronoun errors, correct any related errors (such as verb errors).

- ✗ **Every** student should pay **their** fees before **they** lose **their** classes.

If an incorrect pronoun is used with a verb, sometimes the verb ending must be changed when the pronoun is corrected. Be sure to make pronoun subjects agree with their verbs.

- ✓ **Every** student should pay **her** fees before **she loses her** classes.

Cross out any incorrect pronouns and write a correct pronoun above. Make sure to correct any related verbs also. Not every pronoun is incorrect.

## Review Exercise 1

1. Someone left their book in my car.
2. The football team lost their last football game.
3. Many of the students took their tests.
4. Every student who wants to pass their test must study.
5. All of the teachers agreed that they would grade on a curve.
6. Each roommate should do his share of the housework.
7. Neither my brother nor my friends have their license.
8. A student should do their homework every day.
9. Mary and Bob lost their favorite book.
10. Someone took the car, and they didn't return it.

## Review Exercise 2

Cross out any incorrect pronouns and any incorrect verbs and write the corrections above. Make sure that both verbs and pronouns agree with their subjects. Not every pronoun is incorrect.

1. Someone has left their calculator on the table.
2. The awards committee has made their decision.
3. None of the students have taken their final exams.
4. Every athlete who wants to excel in sports knows they have to practice regularly.
5. All of my friends have promised that they will attend my party.
6. Each movie has their own storyline.
7. Neither my mother nor my aunts has lived in her house for long.
8. A teacher who doesn't treat their students fairly loses their respect.
9. Elena and Tasha are meeting at their favorite restaurant for dinner.
10. My brother and his friend has given me his word to return my car by eleven.

## Editing Exercise



Alone or with a partner, correct any pronoun errors. Make sure pronouns agree with their antecedents, and avoid shifting between singular and plural. Remember that you also may need to change related words such as verbs.

### Amtrak

Amtrak has really improved their train service. A passenger can avoid the fatigue of driving while they relax in comfort and enjoy the scenery. They don't have to pay a great deal, either. You can often ride to a major city for a fraction of the plane fare. Because passengers take the train a lot on holidays and weekends, he or she should make their reservations a week or so in advance. They usually run on time, so you'd better not be late. The train is also a good place to meet a fellow traveler because they can make the time go faster. Enjoying a tasty lunch with someone in the dining car is much more pleasurable than fighting the traffic on the interstate highway.

## Chapter 35

# Pronoun Reference and Case

Unclear pronoun references and errors in pronoun case are even more common in our everyday speech than pronoun agreement errors are. Writers must avoid these pitfalls with pronouns so that the reader can get a clear and correct understanding of writers' ideas.

## Pronoun Reference

- A pronoun should refer clearly to its **antecedent** (see Chapter 34).

**Carlos** lent me **his** bicycle.

The **boys** decided to return **their** library books.

## Ambiguous Pronoun Reference

- In a sentence that contains more than one noun, writers must be careful to avoid **ambiguous pronoun reference**—that is, constructing the sentence so that the pronoun can refer equally well to either the subject or another noun in the sentence.

✗ Ambiguous: Doctors always tell patients if **they** need a vacation.



Does the pronoun *they* refer to the doctors or the patients? Since there are two plural antecedents, we can't be sure. One way to correct an ambiguous pronoun is to restate the noun.

✓ Clear: Doctors always tell **patients** if the **patients** need a vacation.

Another option is to reword the sentence, avoiding the ambiguous reference.

✓ Clear: Doctors always tell the **patient** if **he or she** needs a vacation.

✗ Ambiguous: Jose told Keith that **he** didn't like math.

Does the pronoun *he* refer to Jose or Keith? Since both antecedents are singular, we can't be sure. One way to correct an ambiguous pronoun is to restate the noun.

✓ Clear: Jose told Keith that Jose didn't like math.

Another option is to reword the sentence, avoiding the ambiguous reference.

✓ Clear: Jose told Keith, "**I** don't like math."

## Exercise 1

Correct the unclear pronouns. Not every pronoun is incorrect.

1. Janet told Ruby that she was late for work.
2. A veterinarian will tell a client if he or she needs to medicate his or her pet.
3. Antonio explained to his teachers why he had been late for class.
4. Chan asked Mario if he could join the team.
5. The girls waved to the boys when they saw them at the mall.

## Vague Reference

- The pronouns *it*, *this*, *that*, and *which* should refer to a specific noun, not an entire idea.

✗ Vague: My aunt fell down the stairs and broke her leg, **which** was unfortunate.

What does the pronoun *which* refer to? Because it doesn't refer to any of the nouns in the sentence, but to an entire idea, the reference is vague. The only way to correct the error is to rewrite the sentence.

✓ Clear: Unfortunately, my aunt fell down the stairs and broke her leg.

OR

✓ Clear: My aunt fell down and broke her leg; her accident was unfortunate.

✗ Vague: My brother wrecked my car. **This** caused our argument.

What does the pronoun *this* refer to? It cannot refer to *wrecked* because *wrecked* is a verb. Because there is no noun for the pronoun to refer to, the reference is vague.

✓ Clear: My brother wrecked my car. This **accident** caused our argument.

OR

✓ Clear: My **brother** and I got into an argument because **he** wrecked my car.

Identify the pronoun as clear or vague.

## Exercise 2

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Reading romance novels is a pastime that I enjoy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Not studying caused me to fail the class, and it was a big mistake.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. After my brother wrecked my car, I had to take it to the shop for repairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I overslept and missed the bus, which caused me to be late for class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The city commission spends too much time arguing. This causes citizens to feel alienated.

## Implied Reference

- Avoid using a pronoun for which no antecedent exists; an implied reference is usually unclear. The noun must be mentioned first before a pronoun can refer back to it.

✗ Implied: If a student's car won't start, **they** will jump start it for her.

To whom does *they* refer? Only the student has been mentioned in the sentence.

✓ Clear: If a student's car won't start, the campus police will jump start it for her.

When *the campus police* replaces *they*, there is no question about who will help the student.

✗ Implied: As soon as an employee makes one little mistake, **they** are right there to notice.

To whom does *they* refer? No antecedent is mentioned. *They* might refer to bosses, peers, or inspectors.

✓ Clear: As soon as an employee makes one little mistake, her boss is right there to notice.

When *her boss* replaces *they*, we know who "is right there to notice."

Identify the pronoun reference as correct or implied.

## Exercise 3

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Before a suspect can be arrested, they have to read him his rights.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. At a car dealership, sales representatives are offered a commission on their sales.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A customer shouldn't believe a word they tell him during a sales pitch.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The test was unfair because he asked questions that were not covered in class or in the book.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. When I take my car to the garage, the mechanics always make me feel incompetent when they explain what is wrong.

## Pronoun Case

Like nouns, pronouns can function as either subjects or objects in a sentence. How the pronoun functions in a sentence determines its form, or **case**.

### Subjective Case

- Pronouns in the **subjective case** perform the action.

Subjective-Case Pronouns	
Singular	Plural
I	we
you	you
he/she/it	they

S V

**They** *play* golf on Sundays.

S V

**She** *studies* every night.

### Objective Case

- Pronouns in the **objective case** receive the action or complete a thought. The object pronoun tells who or what was affected by the action.

Objective-Case Pronouns	
Singular	Plural
me	us
you	you
him/her/it	them

OBJ

Sam met **him** at the park.

OBJ

She gave **us** a present.

### After Prepositions

- A pronoun may also serve as the object after a preposition. Use the objective case when a pronoun follows a preposition.

OBJ

Sarah is standing **by him**.

OBJ OBJ

**Between you and me**, Luka prefers pistachio ice cream.

## Tips for Determining Case

Two easy tests can help writers decide whether to use subjective or objective case.

### Test 1

- Ask yourself whether the pronoun is performing the action or receiving the action.

Lorren's dad and **(he or him?)** are going to the baseball game.

Lorren's dad and the other person are performing the action in the sentence, so the subjective-case pronoun (*he*) should be used.

S S

**Lorren's dad** and **he** are going to the baseball game.

S

The **officer** thanked Bill and **(I or me?)**.

In this sentence, the officer is performing the action. Bill and the speaker are receiving the action. The objective-case pronoun (*me*) is correct.

OBJ OBJ

The officer thanked **Bill** and **me**.

### Test 2

- When the pronoun is connected by a conjunction to a noun, temporarily remove the other noun from the sentence. (In order to read the sentence with the other noun removed, you may have to change the verb.) Your ear should tell you which pronoun case is correct.

Lorren's dad and **(he or him?)** are going to the baseball game.

Remove *Lorren's dad and*. Which sounds better: *He is going* or *Him is going*? Your ear should tell you that the subjective-case pronoun (*he*) is correct.

S S

**Lorren's dad** and **he** are going to the baseball game.

The officer thanked Bill and **(I or me?)**.

Remove *Bill and* from the sentence. Now, which sounds better: *The officer thanked I* or *The officer thanked me*? Your ear should tell you that the objective-case pronoun (*me*) is correct.

OBJ OBJ

The officer thanked **Bill** and **me**.

## Exercise 4

Choose the correct pronoun for each sentence.

1. Susan and I / me used to ride our bikes on Saturday.
2. Carly, please stand by Dickson and he / him.
3. There are many reasons for Margaret and I / me to be mad.
4. Tisha and she / her studied chemistry.
5. Don't laugh at Ed and they / them.

## Comparisons and Pronoun Case

- In comparisons using *than* or *as*, complete the clause to find the correct pronoun.

Are you as hungry as (**he or him**)?

The subjective pronoun *he* should be used because the complete clause is *Are you as hungry as he is?*

You talked to Tyrone more than (**I or me?**).

The objective pronoun should be used if the writer means *You talked to Tyrone more than **you** talked to me*. However, the subjective pronoun should be used if the speaker means *You talked to Tyrone more than **I** did*.

In formal writing, it is a good idea to complete the comparison. Incomplete comparisons can be confusing, and a mistake in pronoun case can give the reader the wrong idea.

## Exercise 5

Choose the correct pronoun. If you cannot tell which pronoun is correct, complete the comparison in a way that makes sense.

1. My parents gave my sister more money than I / me.
2. My sister is taller than I / me.
3. I wish I could be as smart as he / him.
4. My friends studied as hard as they / them.
5. Janine was in love with Mark more than he / him.

## Pronouns within an Appositive

- A pronoun in an **appositive** (an interrupter that renames the word that comes before it—see Chapter 32) should use the same case as the noun it renames.

The two hosts, Terry and **I**, scheduled the party.

*Terry and I* renames the subject, *hosts*, so the subjective case must be used.

An award was given to the winners, Blake and **her**.

*Blake and her* renames the direct object, *winners*, so the objective case must be used.

## Exercise 6

Choose the correct pronoun.

1. The two recent graduates, LaDona and (he / him), will be applying for that job.
2. Masako gave the American girls, Jane and (she / her), a very interesting lecture on Japanese customs.
3. The two top students, Terrell and (I / me), are allowed to leave class early.
4. Everyone likes my children, Brian and (he / him).
5. The relay team, Sharon, Chandra, Kelly, and (I / me), came in first place at the track meet.

## Who/Whoever and Whom/Whomever

Who/whoever and whom/whomever are **relative pronouns**. Relative pronouns relate or refer back to nouns, and they introduce a set of words (a subordinate clause) that helps describe or tell about those nouns (see Chapters 19 and 30).

- *Who* and *whoever* are subjective-case pronouns like *I*, *you*, *he*, *she*, *we*, and *they*.

Shannon is the woman **who** won the race.

*Who* refers back to the noun *woman*. *Who* is also the subject of the subordinate clause and therefore takes the subjective case.

- *Whom* and *whomever* are objective-case pronouns like *me*, *you*, *him*, *it*, and *them*. One way to remember that *whom* and *whomever* are objective-case pronouns is to associate the *m* in each word with the *m* in *him* and *them*.

The counselor **whom** I requested was not available.

*Whom* refers back to *counselor*. *Whom* is also the object of the subordinate clause (think, *I requested whom*, which is equivalent to *I requested him*).

## Tips for Determining When to Use *Who* or *Whom*

### Test 1

- Determining whether to use *who* or *whom* can be tricky. Writers must first identify the subordinate clause and then determine whether the pronoun functions as the subject or object of the clause.

S      V

José Rodriguez is the man **who rescued** the child.

In the subordinate clause, *rescued* is the verb and *who* is its subject.

OBJ S V

Mr. Rodriguez is a hero **whom we all admire**.

In this clause, *admire* is the verb, and *we* is its subject, so *whom* is the object.

### Test 2

- Writers can also rearrange the subordinate clause in normal sentence order (subject-verb-object) to help determine the case of the relative pronoun.

S V OBJ

José Rodriguez is the man **who rescued** the **child**.

Mr. Rodriguez is a hero whom we all admire.

S V OBJ  
we all **admire whom**

### Test 3

- Another test is to substitute a different subjective- or objective-case pronoun for the relative pronoun. If *he*, *she*, or *they* fits, use *who* or *whoever*. If *him*, *her*, or *them* fits, use *whom* or *whomever*.

Travis is the student (**who or whom?**) made an A.

Since *he made an A* sounds better than *him made an A*, use the subjective-case relative pronoun, *who*.

✓ Travis is the student **who** made an A.

Patrick, (**who or whom?**) the president mentioned, has designed our Web site.

First, rearrange the subordinate clause in subject-verb-object order: the president mentioned (he or him?). *Him* sounds better, so *whom* is correct.

✓ Patrick, **whom** the president mentioned, has designed our Web site.

- The above tests also can be used when the relative pronoun follows a preposition.

PREP OBJ

Victor is the student **for whom** the test was hard.

The test was hard for *him*; therefore, use the objective-case pronoun *whom*.

S V

The madman yells **at whoever is** in the room.

PREP

Although *at* is a preposition and seems to indicate that the object pronoun *whomever* should be used, the verb *is* needs a subject, so the subjective-case pronoun *whoever* must be used.

## Exercise 7

Choose the correct pronoun.

1. Whoever / Whomever wins the contest will be crowned king.
2. John married Pam, who / whom I met yesterday.
3. I will negotiate with whoever / whomever you elect as your captain.
4. Jake is the athlete who / whom I most admire.
5. Jessica and Parker, who / whom are best friends, always study together.

## Exercise 8

Choose the correct pronoun.

1. Please face the person to (who / whom) you are speaking.
2. I have no idea about (who / whom) you are talking.
3. Do not ask for (who / whom) the bell tolls.
4. I will give a prize to (whoever / whomever) walks in the door next.
5. Shirlane is tired of listening to (whoever / whomever) wants to dominate the conversation.

## WHO AND WHOM IN QUESTIONS

- In questions, if the pronoun functions as a subject, use *who* or *whoever*; if the pronoun functions as an object, use *whom* or *whomever*.

S V

Who is at the door?

In this question, *who* is the subject for the verb *is*.

OBJ S V

**Whom** did the group elect as their leader?

In this case, *group* is the subject and *elect* is the verb. *Whom* is the object. The word order in questions must sometimes be rearranged into normal sentence order (subject-verb-object) in order to determine whether the pronoun is functioning as a subject or object.

## Exercise 9

Choose the correct pronoun.

1. (Who / Whom) will you vote for?
2. (Who / Whom) won the contest last year?
3. (Who / Whom) do they suspect?
4. (Who / Whom) will have to do that job?
5. (Who / Whom) is calling?



## Review Exercise 1

Cross out each incorrect pronoun and write in the correct one. (Not every pronoun is incorrect.)

1. I like to eat at Chaucer's because they offer excellent vegetarian food.
2. The poet, who is internationally known, recently won a major prize.
3. The police said that they were looking for Ed and me.
4. The two students with perfect attendance records, Katya and I, were recognized at the awards ceremony.
5. Sally hopes to be accepted into the cosmetology program because she wants to learn it.
6. Pam lied to me about the girl who stole my purse. This was wrong.
7. Tom is jealous because Paolo and me have always shared our deepest secrets.
8. Please save some ice cream and cake for Elizabeth and me.
9. My aunts and uncles took different roads to the beach, but they arrived late.
10. The photographer whom I selected was expensive.

## Review Exercise 2

Cross out each incorrect pronoun and write in the correct one. (Not every pronoun is incorrect.)

1. My brother and me go to soccer camp every summer.
2. He likes going to camp better than I.
3. My mother always tells us to behave ourselves.
4. She kisses us goodbye, which is embarrassing.
5. We had a two-hour bus ride, which was boring.
6. When we get to camp, they tell us to find our cabins.
7. My brother told his counselor that he could make his bed.
8. The counselor thought that was a problem.
9. The other campers and me tried to cheer him up.
10. By the second day, my brother was as happy as I.

## Editing Exercise

Alone or with a partner, correct the pronoun errors.



## Study Partners

Larissa and Rodney like to study together, which explains why they get such good grades. She and him make a good team. She remembers details well, and he remembers concepts. She is better than him at remembering names and dates. He can help her put the details into perspective. When the two of them, her and him, study together, they do better on tests. They complement each other, which is why they do so well on tests. Their instructor, who they both respect, asked them to help her teach the class how to study effectively. The teacher and him talked about preparing for tests, and the teacher and her discussed taking good notes in class. The class had lots of questions for them both, and the teacher and them stayed after class to answer more questions.

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## Chapter 36

# Semicolons and Colons

Semicolons and colons are not used as often as periods and commas. However, they are important because they give writers options that other punctuation marks do not. Also, they are used primarily after independent clauses, and their misuse can create serious English errors.

## Semicolons

### With Independent Clauses

- Typically, writers use a coordinating conjunction and a comma to join two independent clauses. However, writers sometimes choose to use a **semicolon (;)** to connect two independent clauses when the relationship between the two clauses is clear and no connecting word is needed to show the relationship.



or transition and a comma after it. The semicolon must be placed before the conjunctive adverb or transition in order to end the first independent clause.

### ➤ Formula

Independent clause; conjunctive adverb, independent clause.  
Independent clause; transition, independent clause.

### ➤ Common Conjunctive Adverbs

accordingly	conversely	instead	next	still
also	finally	likewise	nonetheless	subsequently
anyway	furthermore	meanwhile	otherwise	then
besides	hence	moreover	similarly	therefore
certainly	however	nevertheless	specifically	thus
consequently	indeed			

### ➤ Common Transitional Expressions

after all	for example	in conclusion	on the contrary
as a result	for instance	in fact	on the other hand
as a matter of fact	in addition	in other words	

IC
Conj. Adv.
IC

The band will lead the parade; next, the floats will follow.

IC
Transition
IC

Water conservation can be practiced at home; for instance, your garden's soil should be made of materials that hold water.

## MISUSES

- If the conjunctive adverb or transition is merely interrupting the flow of one sentence (not joining two independent clauses), do not use a semicolon. Simply use commas to set off the conjunctive adverb or transition from the rest of the sentence when it serves as an interrupter (see Chapter 32).
  - ✗ The problem; however, was easily solved.
  - ✓ The problem, however, was easily solved.
- When placing a semicolon in sentences with conjunctive adverbs or transitions, make certain that the semicolon is placed where a period could be used to separate the two independent clauses. Generally, the semicolon follows the first independent clause.
  - ✗ John was certain he wanted to learn French, therefore; he enrolled in an introductory French class.
  - ✓ John was certain he wanted to learn French; therefore, he enrolled in an introductory French class.

## Exercise 2

Identify the following sentences as correct (C) or incorrect (I) in their use of punctuation.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. My sailboat was damaged in the storm; as a result, I had to pay for repairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The newest fad among elementary school children is virtual pets, as a matter of fact, half of my daughter's second grade class owns a computerized pet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Olympics have always been my favorite sporting event, therefore; I was excited to get tickets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I have learned a great deal by studying the rulebook; however, practice is what has made me a croquet champion.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Algebra; for example, is my hardest course.

## With Items in a Series

- Use semicolons between **items in a series** when one or more of the items use commas. Each comma goes with the information about the item, so semicolons must be used to separate the items.

### ➤ Formula

A, a; B, b; and C, c.

The tour includes visits to Helsinki, Finland; Riga, Latvia; Warsaw, Poland; and Kiev, Ukraine.

Ms. Smith introduced Mr. Bradley, a lawyer; Dr. Elliot, a surgeon; and Ms. Lathrop, an accountant.

## Exercise 3

Identify the following sentences as correct or incorrect in their use of punctuation.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. My favorite vacation destinations are Fairbanks, Alaska; Seattle, Washington; and Washington, D.C.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. He ordered shrimp cocktail for an appetizer, steak, baked potato, and broccoli with cheese for dinner, and strawberry shortcake for dessert.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My brother's three favorite baseball teams are the Florida Marlins, who won the World Series last year; the New York Yankees, who won the year before; and the Atlanta Braves, who won three years ago.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. In my family, I most respect my mother, Lenora Jones; my father, Isaac Jones; and one of my brothers, Jacob Jones.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Most workers in the company get the day off on July 4, Independence Day, December 25, Christmas, and Thanksgiving Day.





### ➤ Formula

Independent clause . . . as follows: . . .

Independent clause . . . the following: . . .

Tomorrow's test will include the following punctuation skills: commas, semicolons, and colons.

My plans are as follows: get my college degree, find a good job, and have a family.

To make a basic piecrust you need the following: flour, salt, shortening, and cold water.

The dictionary defines an ecosystem as follows: "An ecological community and its environment considered as a unit."

## Exercise 5

Identify the following sentences as correct or incorrect in their use of punctuation.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. There are three hard courses I'm taking this term: French, algebra, and statistics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. My friends are always nagging me to: quit my job, try out for the baseball team, and go out with them more often.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My coach defines good sportsmanship as follows: trying hard and respecting your opponent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. My favorite dishes are: chicken pot pie, spaghetti, and pizza.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I most enjoy water sports such as: swimming and water skiing.

## Review Exercise

Identify the following sentences as correct (C) or incorrect (I) in their use of punctuation.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I like attending a community college; moreover, it costs less than a university.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. My favorite courses are: math, science, and psychology.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My roommate is from Milwaukee; and he knows how to ski.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Always remember to pack: a toothbrush, a comb, and a book.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. When my mother visits at Thanksgiving; we cook together.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I haven't seen or heard from him; but I think he is coming today.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. My car overheats; therefore, I put water in the radiator daily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. A car phone is great for emergencies; for example, when my car breaks down on the highway.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. My three favorite teachers are my chemistry teacher, Mr. Blass; my French teacher, Ms. Leclerc; and my English teacher, Ms. Jones.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I've had to give up my three favorite foods: peanut butter, chocolate cake, and ice cream.

Alone or with a partner, correct the semicolon and colon errors.

## Editing Exercise



### History Class

My history class is particularly demanding, for example, I often have two hours of homework a night. Last night, my instructor gave three assignments: read chapter 3, answer the discussion questions, and turn in an outline of the chapter. The chapter covered the period leading up to the Revolutionary War, including tensions over taxation, the Revolutionary War, with its many battles, and the post-war period. After two hours of taking notes; I took a break and made myself a snack. I fixed: a sandwich, a hard-boiled egg, and a drink. By the time I decided to go to bed; I had prepared well, therefore; I felt confident that I understood the material. At the beginning of class, my instructor asked us to take out: paper, pens, and dictionaries. I looked around the room at the shocked faces of the students and knew that: I was the only one who had studied. The moral of the story is as follows better safe than sorry.

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# Chapter 37

## Modifiers

Modifiers are words or phrases that explain, describe, or limit one or more other words in a sentence. The word *modifier* can be used for many of the parts of speech and parts of sentences we have discussed in the preceding chapters: adjectives, prepositional phrases, dependent clauses, and so on. Mistakes with modifiers can create confusion about the meaning of a sentence. Writers sometimes make these mistakes when they are not paying attention to word order.

- Whether they come before or after, modifiers should be placed as close as possible to the word or words they modify.

**Exhausted after the race,** *Renata* collapsed at the finish line.

I sent the *letter* **in a pink envelope** to the woman.

Julio was the **only** *one* who voted.

### Misplaced Modifiers

- Modifiers that modify the wrong word or words because of their placement are called **misplaced modifiers**. To avoid confusion, place modifiers as close as possible to the word, phrase, or clause they describe.

✗ He gave ice cream to the children **covered with chocolate**.

Are the children covered in chocolate? The phrase *covered in chocolate* is supposed to modify *ice cream* not *children*. To correct the error, place the modifier next to the word it describes.

✓ He gave ice cream **covered with chocolate** to the children.

✗ The woman walked down the stairs **wearing the slinky black gown**.

The phrase *wearing the slinky black gown* incorrectly modifies the words *the stairs*. To avoid confusion, place the modifier as close as possible to the word it describes.

✓ The woman **wearing the slinky black gown** walked down the stairs.

## Exercise 1

Draw a line from the misplaced modifier to its correct place in the sentence.

1. The child set the paper plane in the house *on fire*.
2. The mechanic worked on the car *with a wrench*.
3. The movie star left the auditorium *dressed in a fur coat*.
4. The homeowner gave a box to the mail carrier *wrapped in brown paper*.
5. The bus picked up the elderly woman *full of passengers*.

## Exercise 2

Underline the misplaced modifier and draw an arrow to the word it should explain, describe, or limit.

1. The horse won the race with the white mane.
2. The woman sold the bicycle to her friend with bad brakes.
3. The woman ran after the bus in the blue dress.
4. The police car chased the speeder with flashing lights.
5. He read the announcement about the meeting in the paper.

## Limiting Modifiers

- **Limiting modifiers** usually come before the word or words they modify. Different placements of these modifiers *change the meaning* of the sentence.

### Limiting Modifiers

almost	merely
even	nearly
every day	never
frequently	only
hardly	scarcely
just	

Different placements of the modifier *only* completely change the meaning of the sentences.

Mario **only had** three dollars in his pocket. (Mario had nothing else in his pocket.)

Mario had **only three** dollars in his pocket. (Mario had no more than three dollars in his pocket.)

**Only Mario** had three dollars in his pocket. (Mario alone had three dollars in his pocket.)

Mario had three dollars in his **only pocket**. (Mario had no more than one pocket.)

- Do not place limiting modifiers in front of a verb unless they are intended to modify the verb.

✗ I **almost** cooked all the potatoes.

This sentence is unclear because it could mean that *I partially cooked all of the potatoes* or that *I started to cook all of the potatoes but changed my mind and cooked only some of them*. Placing the modifier in front of the phrase it modifies makes it clear that *I cooked some of the potatoes but not all of them*.

✓ I cooked **almost** all the potatoes.

✗ The doctor **only** spoke with me for five minutes.

This sentence is unclear because *only* modifies *spoke*, which could mean that the doctor didn't do anything but speak or that he spoke with *only me* and no one else. Placing the modifier in front of *five minutes* makes it clear that the amount of time I had with the doctor was limited.

✓ The doctor spoke with me for **only** five minutes.

## Squinting Modifiers

- Generally, limiting modifiers are placed before the word or words they modify. However, if doing so means that the modifier is placed between two words such that it could describe either one, the sentence will be unclear. Modifiers that have such placement are sometimes called **squinting modifiers**.

✗ He told her **every day** to say her prayers.

In this sentence *every day* could modify how often he tells her or how often he'd like her to say her prayers. This is a squinting modifier. Even though limiting modifiers generally come before the word they modify, it may be necessary to place the limiting modifier **after** the word it modifies in order to avoid confusion.

✓ He told her to say her prayers **every day**.

✗ Going to rock concerts **frequently** damages one's hearing.

In this sentence *frequently* could modify how often one goes to rock concerts or how often one damages one's hearing. In this case we can put the modifier before the word it modifies to make the sentence mean frequent attendance at rock concerts damages one's hearing.

- ✓ **Frequently** going to rock concerts damages one's hearing.

### Exercise 3

Underline the limiting modifier and tell whether it is correct (C) or incorrect (I) in its placement.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The teacher told Yasmin regularly to study.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When the whistle blew, we jumped almost out of our shoes.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My father travels frequently for business reasons.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. He told her to exercise regularly.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 5. He bicycles to school often with a backpack.

## Split Infinitives

- In general, do not **split parts of an infinitive** (*to* plus the base form of the verb: *to be*, *to go*, *to dance*, *to think*) with a modifier.

- ✗ I like to **frequently** exercise.

The modifier *frequently* splits the infinitive *to exercise*. Placing the modifier after the infinitive corrects the sentence.

- ✓ I like to exercise **frequently**.

## Dangling Modifiers

- Some modifiers are incorrect because what they modify has been left out of the sentence. If a modifier has no word to describe, it is called a **dangling modifier**. Dangling modifiers can be corrected by adding a subject after the modifier or rewriting the modifying phrase to include a subject.

- ✗ **Running down the street**, my heart was pounding.

What does *running down the street* modify? Who was running down the street? A heart can't run down the street. One way to correct the dangling modifier is to change the subject of the independent clause to say who was running down the street. Another way to correct the dangling modifier is to rewrite the modifying phrase to include a subject.

- ✓ **Running down the street**, I felt my heart was pounding.

- ✓ **As I was running down the street**, my heart was pounding.

- 
- ✗ **Using a telephoto lens**, the pictures of the soccer match turned out beautifully.

What does *using a telephoto lens* modify? Pictures can't use a telephoto lens. Who was using a telephoto lens? One way to correct the dangling modifier is to change the subject of the independent clause to express who was using the telephoto lens. Another way to correct the dangling modifier is to rewrite the modifying phrase to include a subject.

- ✓ **Using a telephoto lens, Leslie** took beautiful pictures of the soccer match.
- ✓ **Because Leslie was using a telephoto lens,** the pictures of the soccer match turned out beautifully.

## With Verbal Phrases

- Often, a dangling modifier occurs when a sentence begins with a verbal phrase:

A present participial phrase (a phrase that begins with a verb ending in *-ing*).

A past participial phrase (a phrase that begins with a past tense verb).

An infinitive phrase (a phrase that begins with *to* + a verb).

- ✗ **Dancing at the club,** the music was too loud.
- ✓ **Dancing at the club,** I thought that the music was too loud.
- ✓ **When I was dancing at the club,** the music was too loud.
  
- ✗ **Defeated by their enemy,** the war was lost.
- ✓ **Defeated by their enemy,** the soldiers lost the war.
- ✓ **When the soldiers were defeated by their enemy,** the war was lost.
  
- ✗ **To fly an airplane,** instructions are needed.
- ✓ **To fly an airplane,** a pilot needs instructions.
- ✓ **In order for a pilot to fly an airplane,** instructions are needed.

Underline the modifier in each sentence and tell whether it is used correctly (C) or incorrectly (I).

## Exercise 4

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Caught in my headlights, the deer froze in the road.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To excel in sports, practice is required.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Running to catch up, my heart was pounding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Exhausted by the long hike, the camper collapsed by the fire.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Waking at 2:00 A.M., the night was silent.



## With Imperatives

- In an imperative sentence (one that gives a command—see Chapter 27), a modifier may describe the implied subject (you). In this case, no dangling modifier occurs.

To run a business successfully, (you) emphasize good customer service.

*To run a business successfully* correctly modifies the implied *you*, which is the subject of a command sentence.

### Exercise 5

Underline the modifier in each sentence and tell whether it is used correctly (C) or incorrectly (I).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. After tilling the soil, plant the seeds.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When taking a dog for a walk, a leash is needed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. To win an election, votes are needed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Before crossing the street, look both ways.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. In order to arrive early, set the alarm for 6:00 A.M.

### Review Exercise 1

Underline the modifier in each sentence and tell whether it is used correctly (C) or incorrectly (I).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Crossing the finish line, the runner collapsed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. After studying for four hours, the test was easy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The car was pulled over by the police with a missing license plate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Although frightened by the storm, my dog crept out from under the bed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The dog crossed the road with a limp.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Exhausted by a day in the park, the toddler fell asleep.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Unraveling the loose thread, my dress came apart.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. To avoid a ticket, do not speed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I said on Saturday I will go fishing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The backpack was left on the table that was stained with dirt.

## Review Exercise 2

Circle the modifier in each sentence and tell whether it is used correctly (C) or incorrectly (I).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. While channel surfing, the TV remote control broke.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Yelling at the top of their lungs, the cheerleaders welcomed the team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. My trainer advised me regularly to work out.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. After talking with my friends, the decision was made to run for office.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The bird was given shelter in the animal refuge with a broken wing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. While skiing in Vale, I broke a leg.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I had trouble competing in the race with a bruised ankle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Caught in the thunderstorm, the campers were frightened.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. On Monday, my teacher said she would not accept late homework.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Having finished the main course, dessert was ordered.

Alone or with a partner, edit the following passage for modifier errors. Circle misplaced modifiers and draw a line to the place they should go, and rewrite the sentences with dangling modifiers.

### Editing Exercise



#### Bargain Hunting

Bargain hunting can be an adventure for children's clothes. There are great buys at garage sales on children's clothes. Marie found a wonderful party dress for her daughter in pink chiffon. However, carrying the dress to pay for it, her purse was missing. Marie remembered that she had left her purse in the car on the front seat. To retrieve her purse, the cashier at the sale made Marie leave the dress on a table. Returning with the money, the dress was gone! In the checkout line, Marie saw another woman holding her dress. Marie approached the woman with a smile. After explaining the situation, the woman was nice enough to give the dress back.

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# Chapter 38

## Parallelism

In geometry, parallel lines run side by side. In writing, **parallelism** means using the same grammatical forms to express similar ideas. Being able to identify the parts of speech (see Chapter 19) is an important part of understanding different grammatical forms. Parallelism is particularly important in the thesis statement of essays. If a thesis statement lists the ideas the essay will develop, the ideas must be expressed in parallel structures.

### Items in a Series

- To be parallel, **items in a series must all be expressed in the same grammatical form.**

✗ The workers in the warehouse **pushed, pulled, and had to carry** the boxes.

The last item of the series is not parallel with the first two members of the series because a different verb form is used. To correct the error, the same form of *carry* should be used.

✓ The workers in the warehouse **pushed, pulled, and carried** the boxes.

---

ADJ ADJ V  
✗ Yolanda is **pretty, tall,** and **acts** friendly.

Two items in the series are adjectives and one is not. To balance the series, change the last item to an adjective.

- ADJ   ADJ   ADJ
- ✓ Yolanda is **pretty**, **tall**, and **friendly**.

## Exercise 1

Identify the parallelism as correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. My father is proud, intelligent, and acts brave.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. My grandmother loves weaving, knitting, and sewing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Jack is strong, agile, and fast.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Julie is brunette, slender, and has brown eyes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The seagulls squawk, flap, and soar.

## Exercise 2

Identify the parallelism as correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Our old computer has a small process, very little memory, and the screen is tiny.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Running, swimming, and weightlifting are all good ways to stay in shape.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Our new puppy is so easy to care for because she is housetrained, doesn't bark, and sleeps through the night.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. For the test, students must bring a pencil, calculator, and some paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Parents should take care to give praise, to correct misbehavior, and give their children quality attention.

## Pairs

- Use parallel constructions for **pairs**—that is, for words joined by the coordinating conjunctions (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*).

- ✗ She likes **spicy pumpkin pies** and **cakes that are chocolate and delicious**.

The second item in this pair does not follow the same grammatical form as the first item. To correct the error, put the second member of the pair into the same grammatical structure as the first.

- ADJ   ADJ   N   ADJ   ADJ   N
- ✓ She likes **spicy pumpkin pies** and **delicious chocolate cakes**.

- ✗ I like **to cook**, but I don't like **cleaning up**.

The first verb phrase includes the infinitive *to cook*, but the second verb phrase includes a gerund, *cleaning*. Using the same verb form for each will help the sentence follow a pattern.

INF

INF

✓ I like **to cook**, but I don't like **to clean up**.

- Use parallel construction in pairs joined by **correlative conjunctions** (both . . . and, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, not only . . . but also, and whether . . . or).

Gerund phrase

Gerund phrase

Either **going for a ride** or **lying in the sun** is my idea of a good time.

N

N

I like neither the **taste** nor the **texture** of this cake.

ADJ

ADJ

My current job is both **stressful** and **demanding**.

PREP PHRASE

PREP PHRASE

Not only am I late **for my appointment**, but also I am **out of breath**.

NOUN CLAUSE

NOUN CLAUSE

Whether **you drive a car** or **you take a bus**, you should leave early.

Identify the parallelism as correct (C) or incorrect (I).

### Exercise 3

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Either I will graduate with honors or I will take a job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Not only is this food unattractive, but also bad service.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Neither my answers nor the way I explained myself satisfied the teacher.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Not only was my hair cut too short, but also uneven.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. When I met Clara, both my instinct and my intuition told me she was honest.

## Comparisons

- As with series and pairs, the different parts of a comparison must be parallel.
  - ✗ I prefer **to make** Christmas presents rather than **buying** them at a store.
 

This sentence is awkward because an infinitive form, *to make*, is used in the first part of the comparison and a gerund form, *buying*, is used in the second part of the comparison. The sentence becomes parallel when two infinitive forms or two gerund forms are used.
  - ✓ I prefer **to make** Christmas presents rather than **to buy** them at a store.
  - ✓ I prefer **making** Christmas presents rather than **buying** them at a store.

## Exercise 4

Identify the parallelism as correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I enjoy snowboarding more than to hike.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Riding a bicycle to school is actually faster than driving a car.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The police usually prefer that motorists remain in their car during a traffic stop rather than getting out to meet the officer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Some computers are faster than other computers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. There is more rain this winter than the rainfall last winter.

## Phrases and Clauses

Recall from Chapter 27 that **phrases** are groups of words that are missing a subject or a verb or both, while **clauses** contain a subject and a verb. Independent clauses express a complete thought, and dependent clauses do not express a complete thought.

- Pairs and series of phrases and clauses in sentences should have similar grammatical structures. You should balance a phrase with a phrase and a clause with a clause.

My mother likes to vacation <sup>PREP PHRASE</sup> **at the beach** and <sup>PREP PHRASE</sup> **in the mountains**.

My seventh-grade teacher would not allow us <sup>INF PHRASE</sup> **to chew gum** or <sup>INF PHRASE</sup> **to wear shorts**.

I don't want to go to the game <sup>CLAUSE</sup> **because it is raining** and <sup>CLAUSE</sup> **because I am tired**.

No matter <sup>CLAUSE</sup> **how much I study** or <sup>CLAUSE</sup> **how hard I work**, I still have difficulty in algebra.

## Parallel Words

- When writing sentences that include series and pairs, you should balance an article with an article, a preposition with a preposition, and a subordinating conjunction with a subordinating conjunction.

I'd like **a** milkshake, **a** hot dog, and **a** piece of apple pie.

Annalise is looking for a bike **with** handbrakes and **with** a basket.

I was given the scholarship **because** I was the first eleventh grader to win a National Science Foundation award and **because** I was an A student.

- One way to tell whether items are parallel is to organize them in a table. If the same grammatical forms appear in each column, then the items are parallel.

My grandfather owns **a new blue car** and **an old red truck**.

To check for parallelism in these phrases, take each word and place it into a table. The phrases are parallel if the words in each phrase match for each part of speech.

ART	ADJ	ADJ	NOUN
a	new	blue	car
an	old	red	truck

My mother informed me **that I could not watch TV** and **that I was grounded for a week**.

A clause depends on the rest of the sentence for meaning, but it contains a subject and verb. In this case, the subjects are repeated for each of the verb phrases.

CONJUNCTION	PRONOUN	VERB PHRASE
that	I	could not watch TV
that	I	was grounded for a week

Identify the parallelism as correct (C) or incorrect (I).

## Exercise 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I promise to be a good husband and that I will clean the apartment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The puppy is energetic and behaves well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The campers returned tired yet happy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I will be glad to go to the play with you on Friday but not paying for it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. My father told me that I should go to college or get a job.

Identify items that have correct parallelism and fix the faulty parallelism in the items that are incorrect.

## Review Exercise 1

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. This weekend I will either clean the garage or play tennis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. For my graduation, I received a blue pickup truck and a pen that was gold.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Traffic congestion is a problem in many large cities but not in areas that are rural.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The woods are lovely, dark, and deep.



- \_\_\_ 5. Kennedy Space Center is known for its historic spacecraft and hangars that are huge.
- \_\_\_ 6. The workers fought for better pay and greater job security.
- \_\_\_ 7. Scientists blame global warming for the increasing frequency of killer tornadoes and flooding that is severe.
- \_\_\_ 8. The party was fun because the music was great and because the food was delicious.
- \_\_\_ 9. Ashley decided that she would invite the neighbors to dinner and to make pot roast.
- \_\_\_ 10. Our instructor said our paper had to be typed, documented, and that it should be double-spaced.

## Review Exercise 2

Identify items that have correct parallelism and fix the faulty parallelism in the items that are incorrect.

- \_\_\_ 1. The city should close the downtown area to traffic in order to reduce noise, congestion, and crime.
- \_\_\_ 2. Ewen was so upset about his grade that he refused to talk, eat, or to sleep.
- \_\_\_ 3. Consistency, not creativity, is my strong point.
- \_\_\_ 4. My mother asked me to be home by ten and that I should not ride with anyone who had been drinking.
- \_\_\_ 5. My son can punt, pass, and he can kick a football.
- \_\_\_ 6. Urban sprawl affects the air quality, soil quality, and water quality.
- \_\_\_ 7. Staying out late and to miss class are problems for students.
- \_\_\_ 8. Claudia admires Michael Jordan for his talent and because he works hard.
- \_\_\_ 9. Karen likes to fish, but not hunting.
- \_\_\_ 10. I like neither the pay nor the hours.

## Chapter 39

# Editing for English Errors

Editing means reading a piece of writing a number of times to check for English errors. As explained in Chapter 4, it follows the drafting and revision stages in the writing process. In many ways, editing is one of the most challenging tasks for any writer.

Effective editing is developed through practice. You have been taking the first important steps by learning the rules for using proper grammar and punctuation. Now you are ready to put your individual skills together in the complex task of finding a variety of errors in a piece of writing. This chapter is meant to help you develop a step-by-step routine for effective editing. You can practice the routine on the editing exercises provided in this chapter, and then you will put your skills to work when editing your own writing.

### The Art of Editing

Effective editing takes place in a step-by-step process that you use every time you write. The key to successful editing is to read your paper over a number of times, looking for only one kind of error at a time. This way, you are less likely to become overwhelmed or confused.

## Editing Plan

Read the piece of writing over five to ten times, looking for one error at a time.

1. Check each word group that ends in a period to make sure it is a complete sentence. (Identify the subject and the verb, and make sure the word group makes complete sense.)
2. Make sure that subjects and verbs agree and that the verb tenses are correct and consistent.
3. Check for correct capitalization.
4. Use your dictionary or spell checker to look up the spelling of any words you are not sure about.
5. Check for any problem words—that is, for words that sound alike or are close in spelling to other words.
6. Verify your use of commas; make sure you know what rule you are using and why the comma fits the rule.
7. Check for contractions and possessive phrases that need apostrophes.
8. Be sensitive to pronouns in the writing. Does each pronoun have a clear antecedent? Does it agree with that antecedent?
9. Edit for modifiers and parallelism.
10. Look for any missing words or letters by reading slowly from the last sentence to the first.

### Tips for Effective Editing

- All writers, including authors, make errors. Assume that there are errors in any piece of writing you do. Careful editing is necessary for every writer.
- Slow down your reading while editing. Many, if not most, errors we make are the result of thinking and writing rapidly. When reading over something we have just written, we have a tendency to read it very quickly because we know what it says already. However, to find mistakes, we need to slow down our eye. Many writers try reading the writing from the last sentence to the first.
- Read your writing over a number of times in order to catch errors. Every time you write or take a writing skills test, use the Editing Plan given above to check for errors. The editing process gets easier and more effective with practice.
- Keep a list of errors you make in your writing and review the list before writing. When editing, concentrate on looking for errors you have made in the past.

## Basic Editing Practice

The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	capitalization
fragments	problem words
verb errors	

### Basic Editing Exercise 1



#### Back to School

The summer has passed, and now college is already starting again. The school year use to begin at the end of September, now the term starts in the middle of august. I don't know how I am suppose to keep a tan when I have to start back to school so early.

The principal benefit of starting classes is meeting new classmates. Attending classes are great. Because I make so many new friends and have a different date every night. The only problem with my courses is all the homework that is gave to me. For example, their is homework in my science class every night, I have problems to solve in math 101 every evening to. Its unbelievable how much time I have spent in the lab doing experiments. I am already looking forward to thanksgiving.

The passage on the next page contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	capitalization
fragments	problem words
verb errors	

### Basic Editing Exercise 2



## Audrey Arroyo Exercise Hour

Many television viewers in my hometown enjoy the Audrey Arroyo Exercise Hour, which is on television every Saturday morning. Ms. Arroyo help people loose weight and have fun while exercising. She teaches the principals of physical fitness and the way to eat well to. She always present healthful recipes. Sometimes with the help of a guest. My friends and I watch her and laugh because she do such crazy things to get her point across. She will lay on the floor and hold her legs above her head until she barely has the strength to speak. She should of been an actress because she is so good at dramatizing what she teaches. Audrey dresses up like a Policewoman to teach about watching what we eat, the audience is suppose to learn from her skit. The hole show is pretty silly, but everyone agree that its fun to watch with friends.

### Basic Editing Exercise 3



The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons                      capitalization  
 fragments                  problem words  
 verb errors

## Underwater Adventure

Scuba diving at john pennekamp state park in florida is quite an exciting experience. A boat driven by park rangers take the divers to a Coral Reef about two miles from shore. Beneath the surface of the water, a hole different world awaits. Lots of giant green brain coral and slender red sea fans. Thousands of brightly colored fish will swam by in a endless procession. Sometimes divers sees sharks, but sharks is not nearly as frightening as barracudas. Sharks usually

don't bother swimmers, divers should just leave them alone. Their is to many sights in this underwater world for divers to see everything.

The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons                      capitalization  
 fragments                  problem words  
 verb errors

## Basic Editing Exercise 4



### New College Friends

I have made many new friends at Centerville community college. I met an interesting women in my english class who lives in my apartment complex. Also, my instructor in sociology 101 is very nice she is alway willing to help me with my assignments. Although my math class has over thirty-five students in it. I have gotten to know the four student who sit near me, and we are all suppose to go out for pizza next friday. One of my most important new acquaintances are Nancy Kingston, the counselor. Its great being a college student because everyone are so friendly.

## Intermediate Editing Practice

The passage on the next page contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons                      problem words  
 fragments                  commas  
 verb errors                  pronouns  
 capitalization              apostrophes

## Intermediate Editing Exercise 5



## A New Frontier

My little nissan truck has been a good by for me, after owning an old six-cylinder american truck. First of all they get great gas mileage, over thirty miles per gallon on the highway. It has a four-cylinder engine and a five-speed transmission, and because of these performance features my truck is both economical and fun to drive. Another attractive feature of this line of trucks are the automatic locks on both of the doors. I like my trucks compact looks it's racing wheels, and its chrome bumpers. The low price tag was my trucks biggest advantage. I still cant believe that I could find such a great truck.

## Intermediate Editing Exercise 6



The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	problem words
fragments	commas
verb errors	pronouns
capitalization	apostrophes

## A Fine Food Place

Mamma lou's café is one of the best places to eat in town. When diners go to this restaurant they will find a wide variety of food to chose from. Along with the menus variety the waiter or waitress is almost always friendly. This restaurant serves a full course dinner. Which includes a meat dish with two vegetables and a dessert, for under ten dollars. If customers want one of Mamma Lou's specialties their fried chicken with rice is suppose to be the best in town, I believe that it's true. This restaurants entertainment includes a jukebox and a television. With

great food friendly service, and enjoyable entertainment its hard to beat Mamma Lou's.

The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	problem words
fragments	commas
verb errors	pronouns
capitalization	apostrophes

## Intermediate Editing Exercise 7



### A Great Bike

One of my most prized possessions are my ten-speed bicycle. A beautiful Viceroy 2000 that weighs only seven pounds and has special racing tires. I love the exercise I get riding it and when I ride through the park or out in the country its really enjoyable to be close to the tree's, sky, and nature. Also since Ive started riding my bike and meeting so many other riders my social life has improve tremendously. I save money to, my viceroy doesn't require gasoline or oil. Best of all, I don't have to borrow my folks car as long as I can ride my bicycle. Of all the thing's that I own, my bike is one of the most valuable to me.

The passage on the next page contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	problem words
fragments	commas
verb errors	pronouns
capitalization	apostrophes

## Intermediate Editing Exercise 8





### An Animal in Danger

Whales the largest mammals on earth are a species in danger. Because they have been hunted for centuries. One kind of whale that has been hunted is the right whale. This whale received their name, because it was the right whale to kill. The whales body contains high-quality oil, and its a slow swimmer. This whale grows up to sixty feet long, and may weigh up to fifty tons, and although this whale use to be common in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans today it's almost extinct. Since all of the products that are made from whales' can be produced from other sources there is no longer any reason to kill whales, also there's so few whales left that the whaling industry can't make a profit. However, Japan and Russia still hunts whales and reduce their population more each year.

## Advanced Editing Practice

### Advanced Editing Exercise 9



The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	pronouns
fragments	apostrophes
verb errors	semicolons and colons
capitalization	parallelism
problem words	modifiers
commas	

### The Natives

Thousands of years before Columbus ever set sail, North America and South America was inhabited by native people that came to be called Native Americans. Unlike europeans

who usually saw themselves as masters over all creation. Native Americans think of themselves as brothers and sisters of other creatures and as sons and daughters of the earth. Thus, when spring came, they walked softly on the ground, since they didn't want to disturb the earth. Afraid of hurting the earth, the plow was not used by Native Americans. For thousands of years, they live by fishing and hunting, later, they farmed and used tools and weapons of stone, shell, or made of wood. The Native Americans many languages were complex; in fact, they might have spoke any one of 15,000 different languages and none of these are related to any European languages. From the northern to the southernmost tip of South America: Native Americans have existed in harmony with nature for centuries.

The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	pronouns
fragments	apostrophes
verb errors	semicolons and colons
capitalization	parallelism
problem words	modifiers
commas	

## Advanced Editing Exercise 10



### River of Grass

Although it was described as a vast and dismal swamp for many years; the Florida Everglades are today consider a unique and beautiful natural wonder. The Native Americans called it "Pa-hay-o-kee," which means grassy water, and that is indeed what visitors see as they gaze across the miles and miles of long grass. The Everglades, however, contain more then just grass, in fact, thousands of plants and

animals thrive there. Throughout the Everglades, there is small and large “hammocks” or islands. Which provide a foothold for plants such as: palmettos, mangroves, and coontie, and provide homes for such animals as alligators, flamingos, and wildcats.

The coontie, a foot-tall green plant that resembles a fern, has been use by the native inhabitants of the area for centuries. They grate and squeeze the roots and sift them into flour to make a stew. According to legend, when the native inhabitants once prayed to their god to ease the famine, he sent down his little boy to walk along the edge of the Everglades, and wherever his heels made a mark the coontie grew for the native inhabitants to eat. Later, Europeans used it to make starch, and called it arrowroot.

The alligator is well suited to the Everglades because an alligators eggs must have heat and moisture to incubate. Matting together masses of wet weeds, the nest is prepared by the female alligator. Later, she lays her eggs, covers them, and she leaves them to incubate in the sun for eight weeks. When the babies begin to squeak in their shells, she returns to uncover them and free the tiny alligators. The coontie and the alligator are only two of the many natural wonders of the Everglades.

## Advanced Editing Exercise 11



The passage on the next page contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	pronouns
fragments	apostrophes
verb errors	semicolons and colons
capitalization	parallelism
problem words	modifiers
commas	

### California, Here I Come

For many years California has seemed like paradise to people whom have flocked there. Pioneers, gold miners, people who are interested in surfing, and actors have answer its call and come looking for fame and fortune. If scenery is what a visitor wants; they can choose from: wide beaches, 15,000-foot mountains, or awesome redwood forests. In contrast, if one fears heights or loves gentler plant life, he or she can descend 282 feet to Death Valley, the lowest point in the United States, or strolling through the fragrant fields of the Burpee Seed Company. In addition to the spectacular scenery the suns golden rays add to Californias attraction. Not only does the sun ripen grapes in the vineyards and tanning people on the beach but it is also one of the reasons why the motion picture industry settled there. Early moviemaking involved primitive lighting, therefore, most pictures were made outside in the brilliant sunshine.

The passage below contains ten to fifteen errors. Correct all errors, and underline the corrections. You may need to add words. Edit for the following kinds of errors:

run-ons	pronouns
fragments	apostrophes
verb errors	semicolons and colons
capitalization	parallelism
problem words	modifiers
commas	

### Zoo Babies

The habitats of many wild animals are disappearing the animals have nowhere to live. Moreover, many animals are killed because people feel threatened by them or being that

## Advanced Editing Exercise 12



people can sell some part of the animal for a large profit. The result is that zoos is trying to increase the number of baby animals, that are born and raised in captivity, in order to keep the species from becoming extinct. However, many of the animals are unwilling to breed outside of its natural environment and the zoos are having to learn more about the animals mating behaviors. To make the zoo environment more like home, the zoos are also having to provide the animals with more natural food and making the surroundings natural. Even when the animals do breed in captivity, the mothers often do not know how to care for their babies, as a result, they have to be taught by other animals or by humans. In one case at the San Diego Wild Animal Park, a rare African gorilla named Dolly rejected her first baby because she didn't know how to be a good mother. First, the zookeepers showed her movies of other gorilla mothers and babies, but Dolly wasn't interested. When that attempt failed: the zoo hired an animal psychologist to teach Dolly what to do. Using a rag doll as a model baby, Dolly was taught how to care for her baby. Because the zoo cared enough to help her, Dolly have been a perfect mother with her two babies ever since.

# Part V

## Readings

P

art V contains professional examples of successful writing that illustrate different rhetorical patterns. While many of the essays are journalistic rather than academic, they all deal with important topics of interest. To help you analyze successful writing, each reading begins with a section called Special Topics and concludes with comprehension questions, discussion questions, and writing assignments. Each reading also includes vocabulary glosses. All of these features will help you see how professional writers use the same skills that you are learning.

We begin Part V with an introduction to successful reading strategies to help you get the most out of your reading. We believe that reading good writers helps everyone develop writing skills. We hope you enjoy the selections.

# Successful Reading Strategies

You will learn active reading techniques to help you understand what you read and remember it more effectively.

- Active Reading
- SQ3R
- Using a Reader's Journal

All of your college classes will require that you read and comprehend material from textbooks and a variety of other sources. Reading means more than passing your eyes over the words on a page. It means understanding the content well enough to be able to explain it. This introduction will familiarize you with active reading techniques that will help you become a more successful reader. We suggest you use one or more of the techniques with each reading you are assigned this semester.

## Active Reading

Active reading means just that—being active as you read. Most students find that to understand and remember what they have read, they must “do it, say it, and write it.” Let’s take a simple example.

Read this list of ten words once or twice.

smell	refrigerator	fountain	teddy bear	sand
firefighter	rose	milk	beach	fly

Now cover the list and see how many of the words you can write from memory.

Now read this second list of ten words once to yourself. Next, read the words aloud. Last but not least, write each word once.

starfish	milkshake	car	tree	fountain
monkey	footstool	pear	lamp	taste

Now, cover the list and see how many of the words you can write from memory.

If you are like most people, you could remember more words after you said them aloud and wrote them. “Do it, say it, write it” is a tried-and-true method of learning material, and you should apply this principle to your reading.

### DO IT

Apply the principles you learn in this introduction to your reading. Read every word of a selection and look up any words you are not familiar with. Identify the main idea of each paragraph and of the entire selection. Review what you have learned when you finish reading the selection.

### SAY IT

Read the title, headings, subheadings, and any end-of-reading questions aloud. Try to turn the headings into questions that you ask aloud. Look for answers as you read.

### WRITE IT

Take a pencil or pen in hand before you start reading, and use it to write down questions and comments in the margin of your text. Underline words that seem particularly important or that you don’t understand and need to look up in the dictionary. Write question marks in the margins if you don’t understand a point and would like to come back to it later or ask about it during class discussion. Write out one-sentence summaries of each paragraph in order to make sure you understand the author’s points.

### SQ3R

You may or may not already be familiar with SQ3R from taking a reading class. SQ3R is an acronym (a word made up of the first letters of a phrase) that will help you remember the steps to active reading. SQ3R stands for

- S**urvey
- Q**uestion
- R**ead
- R**ecall
- R**eview

The five steps of SQ3R will help you become a better reader.



### STEP 1: SURVEY

Look through the entire reading selection and preview what the piece is about. Try to get a general idea of what the piece covers.

*Read the title.* What does the title tell you about the piece? Make a guess about what the piece is about based on the title.

*Read the summary,* if there is one, or the introduction. Can you pick out the author's main idea statement? After reading the summary or introduction, what do you think the piece is about?

*Read all headings and subheadings,* if there are any. Jot down one or two words for each heading and subheading. What do the headings and subheadings tell you about the organization of the piece? Can you see a rough outline of the piece through the headings?

*Look at all graphs, charts, diagrams, and/or graphics and special type treatment of words.* What are the graphics about? What do they tell you about the piece? Notice words that are in italics or bold. Are certain vocabulary words defined? Are there end-of-chapter questions? Read the questions to see what you will need to answer as you read the selection.

### STEP 2: QUESTION

Turn any headings into questions and look for answers as you read the selection. For example, a heading such as "Run-ons" could be turned into the question, "What is a run-on?" The more you are actively involved in looking for answers to questions, the more you are likely to remember.

If there are no headings, ask yourself questions about each section of the reading. For example, if you are reading a narrative about a series of events, pause every paragraph or two and ask yourself, "What has happened so far?" Summarize the reading to yourself one paragraph at a time. Ask yourself how what you are reading relates to what you already know or have experienced.

### STEP 3: READ

Read the selection one paragraph at a time, answering the questions you have created for yourself and summarizing the main idea of each paragraph. Ask yourself, "What is this paragraph about?" Try to write a one-sentence summary of each paragraph. As you read, keep asking yourself how each paragraph fits into the overall structure of the essay. How does each paragraph support the main idea of the essay? As you read, keep revising or refining your idea of the main point of the essay.

### STEP 4: RECALL

At the end of each section or at the end of the reading, try to summarize the main points of the reading. Look back at the questions you created based on the headings and see if you can answer the questions without looking back at the passage itself. It helps to answer the questions aloud.

### STEP 5: REVIEW

Identify what you think the main idea of the essay is. Does the author state the main idea or thesis in a sentence or two? If so, underline it. If not,

write the main idea in your own words. See how well you were able to answer the questions you created before you began reading. Answer any questions at the end of the chapter or selection. Look back at the reading to answer any questions you are uncertain of.

## Reader's Journal

Using a reader's journal, in which you write an informal response to a reading, can also help you understand and process the ideas in an essay. The reader's journal is discussed in more detail in the Appendix (page 505), which includes a sample reader's journal. Many of the readings in Part V also include journal topics to encourage you to reflect on the essays you read.

# Readings

## Special Topics

### Introduction/Conclusion

The author gets the reader interested in the topic by telling a story that exemplifies or illustrates how easy it is to slip into the habit of telling white lies to children in order to control their behavior in public. The story helps parents relate the topic to their own lives. The thesis is not introduced until paragraph 8, the end of the introductory narrative, and then it is not overtly stated, but rather implied. The conclusion returns to the anecdote used in the introduction.

### Rhetorical Patterns: Cause/Effect and Example

The author examines the reasons parents tell white lies (paragraphs 9, 11, 12); the negative effects of white lies (paragraphs 9, 10, 14–16); and the positive effects of telling the truth (paragraphs 17–21).

The author also uses examples throughout the essay to illustrate her points (paragraphs 1–7, 13–16, 18, 20).

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## Comprehension Questions

1. According to the author, what is the main motive people generally have for lying?
  - a. personal benefit
  - b. economic gain
  - c. convenience
  - d. guilt
2. Why is the habit of telling white lies to children damaging?
  - a. They will discover the deception and lose respect.
  - b. They will learn to tell white lies themselves.
  - c. It doesn't help them learn to deal with reality.
  - d. All of the above.
3. How should a parent respond when her child cries for a toy or a piece of candy in a store?
  - a. She should tell the child she doesn't have enough money in her wallet.
  - b. She should tell the child she can't afford to buy everything the child wants.
  - c. She should tell the child that there are special occasions for giving or suggest that the child do something to earn the desired object.
  - d. b or c
4. There are often justifiable reasons to lie to a child. (T/F)
5. Why is it harmful to tell your child white lies to protect him or her from stress?
  - a. Your child won't learn to deal with reality.
  - b. Your child will be emotionally comfortable.
  - c. Your child will have trouble in school.

## Discussion Questions

1. How effective is the introductory anecdote used by the author?

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2. Why do people tell white lies to children?

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3. How does telling white lies to children affect their ability to deal with reality?

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4. What effects can the habit of telling white lies have on the relationship between parents and children?

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5. What are the benefits of being honest with a child?

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## Journal Topic

Describe a situation in which you or someone you know used a white lie with a child. How might you handle such a situation differently after reading this article?

### Writing Assignments

1. Discuss the negative effects of lying to children.
2. Agree or disagree with the author's contention that parents should not lie to children.
3. Think of other situations in which people commonly tell white lies. Discuss whether other kinds of white lies have negative effects.
4. Argue that using a white lie in a certain situation had positive or negative effects.
5. Classify types of white lies.
6. Compare and contrast two types of white lies.

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Patterns: Narration, Example, and Cause/Effect

Notice how the author incorporates narration, example, and cause and effect in telling the story of how one community took a stand against racism. The story focuses on one person in the town, Tammie Schnitzer, in order to show how the events affected the townspeople. The author uses dialogue to dramatize the events, and he explores both the causes and the effects of the townspeople's actions.

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### Comprehension Questions

1. The hate group in Billings, Montana, was linked to
  - a. the Ku Klux Klan.
  - b. a foreign government.
  - c. another hate group in Ohio.
  - d. the Nazis.

2. The hate group in Billings, Montana,
  - a. killed an Ethiopian man.
  - b. distributed hate literature.
  - c. dug up graves.
  - d. beat up citizens.
3. Who was the prominent townspeople who had a bottle thrown through his front door?
  - a. the police chief
  - b. the mayor
  - c. the school superintendent
  - d. the music director of the symphony
4. What is a menorah?
  - a. a candleholder
  - b. a cross
  - c. a fountain
  - d. a star
5. What famous person identified himself as a Jew in order to protect the Jews of his country?
  - a. the King of England
  - b. the President of Israel
  - c. the King of Denmark
  - d. the Prime Minister of Germany

## Discussion Questions

1. What events led the people of Billings to realize that there were hate groups in town?

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2. Discuss how the individuals, churches, and businesses in Billings responded to the harassment of their Jewish citizens.

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3. Why was the town's display of menorahs effective in protecting people like the Schnitzers?

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4. Explain the meaning of the quote "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." What do you think would have happened if no one had protested the hate group's actions in Billings?

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5. Discuss how the hate group's actions actually encouraged the residents of Billings to love and accept one another.

## Journal Topic

Which groups of people are most likely to be the targets of hate crimes today? Could strategies such as those used in Billings be successful in combating hate crimes in your community?

### Writing Assignments

1. Explain how we can eliminate hate crimes in our culture. You may wish to consider how education, the legal system, and religion could play a part in eradicating prejudice.
2. Write a cause/effect essay or two paragraphs recounting the events that led the people of Billings to discover a hate group in their town and the effects the hate group had on the town.
3. After the police chief of Billings said, "Silence is acceptance" (paragraph 10), residents of Billings decided to take a stand against the tactics of hate groups. Discuss their response and its effectiveness. Could their actions serve as an example to other communities?
4. Have you or has anyone else in your community experienced a hate crime? Or have you ever experienced discrimination based on your age, race, sex, nationality, dress, hair, weight, or some other factor? Describe an incident of hate or of discrimination that you have witnessed, and tell how you responded.
5. Discuss a controversy your town has experienced recently. Explain what caused the controversy, how people reacted, and what the results were. What were your feelings about the controversy?

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Persuasion

The author attempts to persuade the reader that friends are important to a person's physical and mental well-being by examining the beneficial effects of close friendships.

### Audience

Although the author's topic applies to everyone, he directs his comments specifically to older Americans.

### Evidence from Authority

Throughout the article, the author makes reference to scientific studies and experts in the field to support his claims. He quotes gerontologist Rosemary Blieszner (paragraph 2); a Stanford University School of Medicine study (paragraph 2); psychology professor Blair Justice (paragraph 3); and Robert Milardo, professor of family relationships at the University of Maine (paragraph 8).

### Introducing Evidence

Notice that for each study or authority cited, the author identifies the source with name, title, and affiliation; puts the selected words in quotation marks; and uses tag phrases such as *according to* or *says* to identify the speaker. Even when the author does not use direct quotes, but rather paraphrases (puts the source's ideas into his own words), he uses tag phrases to identify the source. Notice the punctuation used with quotations (commas and periods inside quotation marks) and tag phrases (commas before, after, or around the tag phrase, depending on where it is placed).

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## Comprehension Questions

1. Which of the following are characteristics of friendships?
  - a. They remain unchanged through the years.
  - b. There are never any disagreements.
  - c. They move through periods of disagreements and greater and lesser involvement.
2. In a 1989 Stanford University School of Medicine study, breast cancer survival rates were twice as high for women who
  - a. exercised regularly.
  - b. participated in support groups.
  - c. took medication to reduce pain.
  - d. had strong family support.
3. How does disclosing one's feelings benefit the body?
  - a. It strengthens the immune system.
  - b. It reduces stress hormones.
  - c. It reduces high blood pressure.
  - d. All of the above.
4. The more friends a person has, the healthier he or she is likely to be. (T/F)
5. Friends are more important than family members to the well-being of older adults. (T/F)

## Discussion Questions

1. What effects can friendship have on an individual's chances of surviving an illness?

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2. What are some of the beneficial effects of friendship?

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3. According to the author, how are men's and women's friendships different?

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4. Why are cross-gender friendships difficult to maintain?

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5. Why are friends more important than family members to one's mental and emotional health?

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## Journal Topic

Reflect on the role of friendship in your life.

### Writing Assignment



1. Describe the beneficial physical, mental, and emotional effects of friendship.
2. Agree or disagree with the author's claim that everyone needs friends.
3. Compare and contrast two different kinds of friendships (male/female, childhood/adult, etc.) or friendships at different ages (elementary school, high school, college, etc.).
4. Analyze the effects friendships have had on you.
5. Classify types of friends.

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Argument

The author argues that globalization is leveling the economic playing field between the United States and the rest of the world, and nations such as India and China can successfully compete with the United States for jobs, resources, and influence. **The author argues that the world has become flat.**

#### Attention-getter

The author uses for an attention-getter the well-known fact that Columbus discovered the New World. He contrasts Columbus's discovery that the world is round with his own discovery of a flat world.

Notice how effective Friedman's anecdotes are about meeting with businesspeople from around the world.

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## Comprehension Questions

1. The author uses evidence from his talks with businessmen from what country?
  - a. Russia
  - b. France
  - c. India
  - d. none of the above
2. Bangalore is a city in which country?
  - a. Russia
  - b. India
  - c. Ireland
  - d. the United States
3. According to the author, Globalization 3.0 is empowering \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. individuals
  - b. companies
  - c. countries
  - d. none of the above
4. According to the article, Microsoft Corporation set up a research center in which city?
  - a. Paris
  - b. Bangalore
  - c. Beijing
  - d. Jakarta
5. The author believes that globalization presents the United States with a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. challenge
  - b. setback
  - c. tragedy
  - d. success

## Discussion Questions

1. Explain what the author means by his statement that the world is flat.

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2. Do you believe that America is facing a challenge from the rest of the world? Give examples that Friedman uses and examples of your own.

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3. How can we meet the challenges facing this country and the world? How will you meet the challenge of finding a career in a flat world?

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4. How will your education help you meet the challenges the author discusses?

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5. What professions and jobs do you think will prosper in a flat world? Which jobs will be harder to find in America?

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## Journal Topic

How do you use technology, such as computers and cell phones, in your life? Explain all the ways you use e-mail and your cell phone to communicate with friends, family, and others.

### Writing Assignments

1. Imagine how your life will be in twenty years. What technology will you use, and how will technology and a flat world affect your life?
2. Choose a course that you have taken or are taking and explain how this course will help you prepare for life after college.
3. Write a paper explaining three ways that life has changed in the past five years due to technology.
4. Write a summary of this article that explains what Thomas Friedman means by "The world is flat."
5. Choose an event in the past ten years and explain how it has changed the way we live.

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Analysis/Division

The author divides runners into five different groups according to the stage of their running career.

### Use of Metaphor

In paragraph 1, notice how the author uses the metaphor of music to describe the changes in a runner's life.

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### Comprehension Questions

1. According to the author, the life of a runner
  - a. can remain unchanging for years.
  - b. includes growth and movement.
  - c. usually peaks at age thirty.
  - d. is most difficult in the beginning stage.
2. In which stage in a runner's life does the runner usually join a running group?
  - a. the beginner stage
  - b. the jogger stage
  - c. the competitor stage
  - d. the runner stage
3. Which stage in a runner's life is characterized by learning racing techniques?
  - a. the beginner stage
  - b. the jogger stage
  - c. the competitor stage
  - d. the runner stage

4. Which stage includes the enjoyment of all the other stages?
  - a. the beginner stage
  - b. the jogger stage
  - c. the competitor stage
  - d. the runner stage
5. According to the author, running can be enjoyable on
  - a. a physical level.
  - b. a mental level.
  - c. a social level.
  - d. all levels.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why does the author believe that a runner goes through different stages?

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2. What are the four stages of a runner's life, and what marks each stage as different from the other stages?

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3. How does the fourth stage, the runner, combine all of the other stages?

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4. How are the stages the author classifies similar to stages in other sports or learning activities?

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5. What stages have you gone through in learning to write?

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### Journal Topic

Reflect on your own development of a skill or hobby. What stages have you gone through? Which stages were easiest and hardest?

## Writing Assignments

1. Classify the different stages of a runner's life.
2. Classify the stages that you have gone through in some sport or hobby or skill that you have perfected.
3. Contrast a jogger and an athlete according to the author's definition of these two stages.
4. Compare the beginning stages of running and those of some other sport that you have participated in.
5. Explain why you enjoy a particular sport or hobby.

## Special Topics

### Introduction/Conclusion

Goleman opens his essay with a story (narrative example) of a man who is happy with himself and with his life and who is therefore a success. Goleman then contrasts this happy individual with a young man of high IQ who is unhappy and maladjusted. By opening with two contrasting examples, Goleman not only gets the reader's attention but goes a long way toward convincing the reader that traditional intelligence is not as important as emotional intelligence in determining someone's success in life.

### Rhetorical Patterns: Definition, Division, Example, Comparison/Contrast, Persuasion

The author makes use of several rhetorical patterns in this excerpt from his book *Emotional Intelligence*. He defines emotional intelligence by listing its characteristics or component parts and by giving examples of each. He also helps define the term by contrasting it with high IQ to show the reader how emotional intelligence differs from traditional intelligence as measured on tests.

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### Comprehension Questions

1. According to the author, IQ contributes what percentage of the factors that determine success?
  - a. 80
  - b. 50
  - c. 20
  - d. 10
2. What characteristic is the keystone of emotional intelligence?
  - a. the ability to recognize a feeling as it happens
  - b. strong family bonds
  - c. regular physical exercise
3. One of the best ways to defuse anger is to
  - a. express or vent it.
  - b. repress it.
  - c. reframe the situation.
4. Studies of world-class athletes and musicians show that they share
  - a. superior intelligence.
  - b. an ability to motivate themselves.
  - c. similar upbringings.
5. Youngsters who were able to delay gratification as four-year-olds were \_\_\_\_\_ as adolescents.
  - a. frustrated
  - b. socially and emotionally well adjusted
  - c. emotionally stressed

## Discussion Questions

1. How does the author define success? Do you agree with him?

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2. What qualities contribute to emotional intelligence?

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3. How does awareness of one's emotions contribute to emotional intelligence?

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4. What are some ineffective and effective ways to defuse anger?

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5. How does the ability to delay gratification affect achievement?

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## Journal Topic

Which of the qualities Goleman discusses do you have? Which are you lacking? How could you build on your strengths and control your weaknesses in order to develop your emotional intelligence?

1. Select three qualities that contribute to emotional intelligence, explain them, and give examples from the article or from your own experience.
2. "If you believe you can or if you believe you can't, you're right." Would Goleman agree or disagree? Why?
3. How could the qualities Goleman discusses affect a student's success in school?
4. How important do you think emotional intelligence is in life? Argue that it is or is not important.
5. Discuss the best ways to manage anger. What are some common triggers of anger, and how can they be defused?

Writing  
Assignments



## Special Topics

### Introduction

Hamill uses an anecdote, a short narrative, about a young junkie to get the reader's attention and introduce the devastating effects of drug addiction. Although he does not overtly state his thesis in his first paragraph, he does introduce television by describing its effects on the junkie's children.

### Rhetorical Patterns: Comparison and Contrast and Cause/Effect

Although Hamill's essay is largely a comparison between TV addiction and drug addiction, he also incorporates contrast (between watching news and reading a newspaper), and causes and effects.

### Style

Hamill uses italics to emphasize a variety of words throughout his essay.

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### Comprehension Questions

1. Hamill compares television addiction to
  - a. being crazy.
  - b. food addiction.
  - c. drug addiction.
  - d. being boxed.

2. According to the author, what percent of the world's hard drugs is consumed in the United States?
  - a. 15%
  - b. 50%
  - c. 65%
  - d. 90%
3. How many hours of TV does the average American family watch per day?
  - a. 2
  - b. 5
  - c. 7
  - d. 10
4. Thirty-three percent of 4- and 5-year-olds would give up \_\_\_\_\_ rather than TV.
  - a. candy
  - b. toys
  - c. friends
  - d. Daddy
5. According to the author, the unspoken assumption of TV is that life should be
  - a. easy.
  - b. funny.
  - c. violent.
  - d. rich.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Americans choose to spend so much time stupefied?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you agree with Hamill's assertion that getting news from TV is fundamentally different from reading it in a newspaper? What contrasts does he point out between watching television and reading?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What points of similarity does the author draw between TV and drug addiction?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What negative effects of TV does Hamill point out?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What solutions does Hamill propose?

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## Journal Topic

Reflect on your TV watching habits and the effect TV has on you. Does the essay make you think or feel differently about TV?

### Writing Assignments

1. Why do you think so many Americans choose to spend all or part of their time stupefied by drugs or alcohol?
2. What effect do you think the “all-pervasive diet of instant imagery” has on Americans? How do you think it has changed us as individuals and as a nation?
3. Write a paper in which you summarize the points of similarity the author draws between TV and drug addiction.
4. Do you agree or disagree with Hamill’s thesis that TV addiction is like drug addiction? Why or why not?
5. How has reading Hamill’s essay made you think differently about your TV viewing habits or their effect on you?

## Special Topics

### Introduction

The author gets the reader's attention by opening with three surprising examples of people whom we all recognize and yet who showed little promise early in life. The second paragraph poses several questions that the essay will answer, the last of which is really the thesis posed as a question.

### Rhetorical Patterns: Definition, Example

The author **defines** greatness by examining its characteristics and giving numerous **examples** of people from a variety of fields who are great.

### Use of Sources

Ryan relies primarily on the research done by Keith Simonton (paragraphs 4–17, 20–21), but also includes a 1985 Brandeis University study by Teresa Amabile (paragraphs 18–19), and cites Dr. Arnold Ludwig (paragraphs 22–23). Notice how each source is introduced and how tag phrases identify the source of each quote, fact, or idea.

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### Comprehension Questions

1. Albert Einstein
  - a. excelled in math in school.
  - b. did so poorly that his teachers thought him slow.
  - c. attended college at the age of thirteen.
  - d. developed no early interests.
2. The author relies primarily on
  - a. his own research.
  - b. quotes from famous people.
  - c. the research of Keith Simonton.
  - d. common knowledge.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ is/are primarily responsible for greatness.
  - a. Luck.
  - b. Intelligence.
  - c. Drive and passion.
  - d. Birth order.
4. Winston Churchill
  - a. was a popular leader after World War II.
  - b. became a leader during World War II.
  - c. was a middle child.
  - d. possessed superior intelligence.
5. Many great people
  - a. commit suicide.
  - b. have poor personal relationships.
  - c. are mentally unstable.
  - d. abuse drugs and alcohol.

## Discussion Questions

1. How does Keith Simonton define greatness?

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2. Who might his definition leave out and why?

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3. How does attitude affect greatness?

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4. What role does innate intelligence as measured by an IQ test play in greatness? Have the qualities associated with greatness changed over time?

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5. Is there a price associated with greatness?

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## Journal Topic

What role do you think drive and motivation play in determining greatness? Do you agree that drive is more important than intelligence in determining greatness?

1. Using both the essay and your own experience, define greatness.
2. What are the characteristics of greatness?
3. What factors influence the effectiveness of political and military leaders? Use examples from the essay and from your own knowledge.
4. Argue that one or more figures not mentioned in the essay are great.
5. Are the types of people described in the essay good role models? Why or why not?

Writing  
Assignments

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Cause/Effect, Example

Although this speech is not an essay, it is structured like an essay, with three main points. The author gives three pieces of advice about how to live a successful life. Each point is supported with stories from Jobs's life. Jobs provides illustrations of his points and explains how the illustrations help prove his points. Notice how effective Jobs's examples are because they are easy to understand, interesting, and clearly connected to the points he is making.

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### Comprehension Questions

1. What college or university did Steve Jobs attend?
  - a. Stanford
  - b. Columbia
  - c. Reed
  - d. None of the above.
2. Steve Jobs's biological mother
  - a. was unmarried.
  - b. was a graduate student.
  - c. wanted her son to attend college.
  - d. All of the above.
3. Jobs studied what subject at his college?
  - a. computers
  - b. calligraphy
  - c. math
  - d. None of the above.

4. At what age did Steve Jobs start Apple Computers?
  - a. 20
  - b. 25
  - c. 30
  - d. 35
5. Jobs had cancer in what part of the body?
  - a. throat
  - b. lungs
  - c. pancreas
  - d. liver

### Discussion Questions

1. Why does Jobs believe that being fired from Apple led to a creative period in his life?

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2. Jobs claims that remembering that he will be dead soon is “one of the most important tools I’ve ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life.” Discuss why he believes this. Do you think about your death, and does it help you set priorities?

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3. Jobs ends his address with, “Stay hungry. Stay foolish.” What do you think he means by this statement? Do you agree with him?

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4. Jobs advises college students not to live someone else’s life. What does he mean? Discuss the conflicts between what parents want and what their children want.

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5. Were you surprised that Steve Jobs did not graduate from college? What beneficial experiences did he have while living near the college that he had attended?

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## Journal Topic

Imagine yourself as the commencement speaker at a high school graduation. What advice would you give students finishing high school? What examples from your own life could you use to give the students some wisdom that you have gained from your experiences?

1. Steve Jobs had to start over after he was fired from Apple. What do you love enough to pursue even if you fail? Choose an interest or hobby that you love and explain why you love it.
2. Choose a job you have held and explain what you learned about yourself from doing the job.
3. Have you or a loved one faced a life-threatening illness? Tell about your experience and what you learned about yourself and about life.
4. Steve Jobs gives college graduates three pieces of advice based upon his life. What advice would you give young people who are still in high school, based upon your experiences?
5. Steve Jobs gives examples of failures or disappointments that turned out to be beneficial. Write a paper in which you give your own examples of failures that turned out to be successes because they led you in a new direction or made you grow in some way.

A graphic element consisting of a light blue rectangular box with a thin yellow border. Inside the box, there are several horizontal blue lines on the left side, and the text "Writing Assignments" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font on the right side.

Writing  
Assignments



## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Patterns: Definition and Classification

#### Negative Definition

Paragraphs 2–7 introduce characteristics of nonviolent resistance by explaining what nonviolent protest is *not* in order to clarify what nonviolent resistance is.

#### Classification

Paragraph 8 classifies three different kinds of love.

#### Definition

Paragraphs 9–13 define *agape*.

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## Comprehension Questions

1. King states that nonviolent resistance is “not a method for cowards” because it
  - a. advocates armed resistance.
  - b. does resist evil.
  - c. is used by those who are brave.
  - d. is used by those without guns.
2. The purpose of nonviolent resistance is to
  - a. overthrow those in power.
  - b. humiliate people who do evil.
  - c. break down a community.
  - d. create a community based on love.
3. According to King, nonviolent resisters should attack
  - a. those who do evil.
  - b. the forces of evil.
  - c. the police.
  - d. the racists.
4. King and Gandhi both believed that more powerful than force or the law of the jungle is
  - a. prayer.
  - b. money.
  - c. suffering.
  - d. action.
5. At the heart of nonviolent resistance stands the principle of
  - a. hate.
  - b. power.
  - c. fairness.
  - d. love and understanding.

## Discussion Questions

1. Explain King’s statement that nonviolent resistance “is passive physically, but strongly active spiritually.”

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2. Explain why King writes that suffering “has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities.”

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3. Why does King write that “at the center of nonviolence stands the principle of love”?

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4. King classifies different kinds of love. Why is agape the most important kind of love for the nonviolent resister?

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5. Discuss how nonviolent resistance can help create a “beloved community.”

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## Journal Topic

Do you think that you could have practiced nonviolent resistance if you had been part of the civil rights movement? Do you think that there are any uses for nonviolent resistance in today’s world?

### Writing Assignments

1. Classify three kinds of love according to King.
2. Define nonviolent resistance and give examples.
3. How do the beliefs King professes in this article demonstrate his greatness as an American leader?
4. Use an encyclopedia or the Internet to research the biography of Martin Luther King Jr., and write a report recounting his life and achievements.
5. Do you believe that all men and women are brothers and sisters? King states, “Because men are brothers. If you harm me, you harm yourself.” Is violence ever justified in righting a wrong?

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Persuasion

Patrick Mazza builds his argument on cause and effect, factual evidence, and evidence from authorities.

### Cause and Effect

Mazza goes to great lengths to establish a scientific cause-and-effect relationship between global warming and increased incidences of El Niño-related weather patterns. Because the weather patterns he discusses are complex, he explains them in detail. His careful use of cause-and-effect reasoning is central to his argument.

### Evidence from Authority

Throughout the article, the author makes reference to scientific studies and experts in the field to support his claims. Notice that each time a study or an authority is introduced, the author identifies the source with name, title, and affiliation; puts his or her words in quotation marks; and uses tag phrases such as *according to* or *says* to identify the speaker. Even when the author does not use direct quotes, but paraphrases or puts the source's ideas into his own words, he uses tag phrases to identify the source. Notice the punctuation used with quotations (commas and periods inside quotation marks) and tag phrases (commas before, after, or around phrase, depending on where it is placed).

### Refutation of Opposition

In paragraph 9, Mazza acknowledges critics and proceeds in paragraphs 10–11 to refute them. In paragraph 21, he acknowledges the opposition's case by conceding that the scientific community is “far from a consensus on the relationship between ENSO and global warming.” He then argues (in paragraphs 22–23) that the scientific method should not govern policy in the case of global warming.

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### Comprehension Questions

1. The most significant effect of global warming is
  - a. warmer temperatures.
  - b. an increase in the intensity of hydrologic cycle.
  - c. an increase in the numbers of forest fires.
2. We've had an equal number of El Niño and La Niña events in the past 20 years. (T/F)
3. Scientists at NCAR have concluded that the increase in frequency and intensity of El Niños in the past 20 years is highly *unlikely* to be caused by
  - a. the melting of polar ice caps.
  - b. natural variations in the cycle.
  - c. global warming.
4. Which of the following have scientists used to lengthen the historical record of El Niño occurrences?
  - a. studying accounts by Spanish explorers and colonists
  - b. studying ice cores
  - c. studying tree cores
  - d. both a and b
5. A two-degree rise in temperature puts how much more water vapor into the air?
  - a. 2%
  - b. 6%
  - c. 15%

## Discussion Questions

1. How does Mazza use his first paragraph to get the reader's attention?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How does El Niño influence storm patterns?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How does global warming influence El Niño?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why does the author argue that public policy should not wait for scientific consensus?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How effective is Mazza's argument? What did you find most persuasive about his argument?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Journal Topic

Have you or someone you know been personally affected by a natural disaster? Has the increasing frequency of natural disasters made you more aware of how human behavior may be affecting global weather patterns?

### Writing Assignments

1. How does global warming affect weather patterns?
2. Analyze the causes and effects of El Niño.
3. If human behavior is changing global weather patterns, do you believe we have a responsibility to change our behavior in order remedy the situation? What should individuals do and what should governments do to make a difference?
4. How well does the author argue his case? You might want to examine how effectively he uses facts, sets up rhetorical patterns, cites authorities, and acknowledges and refutes the opposition.
5. Using Internet resources as well as this article, examine the causes, effects, and/or solutions to global warming.

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Example

Notice how the use of examples throughout the essay helps the author communicate his ideas about what makes happy families different.

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## Comprehension Questions

1. Another way of describing the families that the author thinks are happy would be to describe those families as
  - a. strong and resilient.
  - b. free of fighting.
  - c. valuing each individual's happiness.
  - d. feeling good about themselves.
2. The author believes that families need to
  - a. follow his philosophy of how to be happy.
  - b. feel good to be happy.
  - c. follow rules set by parents.
  - d. be flexible in dealing with issues and problems.
3. The author's purpose is to explain
  - a. what makes happy families succeed.
  - b. how to make kids happy.
  - c. how to make parents happy.
  - d. what happiness means.
4. What does the author mean when he says that happy families make mistakes?
  - a. Families are happier making mistakes than being perfect.
  - b. Mistakes are expected and don't ruin family members' feelings for one another.
  - c. Happy families learn to be happy by making mistakes.
  - d. Mistakes are part of life and should be enjoyed.
5. Happy families are successful because they
  - a. allow family members the freedom to act how they want.
  - b. allow competition so that the best members can direct the others.
  - c. exhibit love and understanding in their interactions.
  - d. follow the guidelines designed by the author.

## Discussion Questions

1. The author states that happy families demonstrate flexibility. In the examples the author gives of happy families, how do these families exhibit such flexibility?

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2. Are the happy families always happy? If not, what does the author mean by the label “happy families”?

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3. Explain what the author means when he states that happy families “laugh at one another.”

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4. Which characteristics of happy families that the author discusses have you seen in your family or a family you have observed?

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5. Discuss examples of happy families that you have seen portrayed on television. Which characteristics discussed in the essay do they exhibit?

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## Journal Topic

Think about your family and write down reasons that you think you have a happy, strong family or an unhappy, troubled family. What could you and your family do to make your family stronger?

1. Define a “happy family” according to the author.
2. Summarize three to five guidelines for happy families, and give examples of each.
3. Using your family, a family you know, or one from television, analyze how this family fits the definition of a happy family.
4. Choose three characteristics that you think are most important for a happy family, and explain why they are so important.
5. Argue that families usually have a difficult time following the guidelines given in this article, and explain why this is so.



Writing  
Assignments



## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Narration

Notice how, in paragraph 4, the author sets the scene of his chemistry experiments in his living room. He supplies details of the scene such as the television program his father is watching. In paragraph 5, he relates just enough of what his mother has heard and what she says to him to show how it excited him.

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## Comprehension Questions

1. What most affected the author about growing up on the streets?
  - a. He had no interactions with people who were passionate about their lives.
  - b. He was victimized by crime and violence.
  - c. He didn't have the money for school.
  - d. He never saw any natural beauty in his surroundings.
2. The subjects the author remembers best in school are
  - a. physical education.
  - b. shop.
  - c. grammar and mathematics.
  - d. science.
3. When he didn't understand the lessons he was being taught, the author
  - a. misbehaved.
  - b. talked to other students.
  - c. raised his hand.
  - d. daydreamed.
4. The author's first job was
  - a. cleaning cages at a pet store.
  - b. raking leaves.
  - c. washing cars.
  - d. selling newspapers.
5. To become popular with the boys he worked with, the author
  - a. sold them lottery tickets.
  - b. told them stories.
  - c. did their homework for them.
  - d. lent them money.

## Discussion Questions

1. What does the author find wrong with growing up on the streets?

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2. What events in the author's childhood helped him to escape his every-day world and develop his curiosity and imagination?

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3. How did the author's parents help him develop his imagination?

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4. Do you think that the author had a happy childhood? Find support for your ideas in the article.

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5. How did reading open up the author's world?

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## Journal Topic

Explain what activities you participated in as a child that helped you develop into the person you are today. You may want to tell about one event that you think was a key moment in your development.

### Writing Assignments

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1. Trace the important events that take Mike Rose out of his everyday world and put him into a world of imagination.
2. Choose three events in the author's childhood and explain how they helped him develop his curiosity and imagination.
3. Identify an experience that you had while growing up that helped you develop your curiosity and imagination.
4. Explain how your parents helped or hindered your development as a child.
5. Explain your experience of school in the early grades. What do you remember of your classes? What were your strategies for dealing with the pressures of learning and socializing with the other kids?

## Special Topics

### Rhetorical Pattern: Process

The author explains the process parents should use to help their children adjust to a divorce.

### Using the Testimony of Experts for Support

This article employs a very strong strategy for developing its argument. It uses the words and thoughts of experts in child psychology to explain the best ways to handle divorce with children.

### The Use of Quotes

Notice how the author quotes experts on children and divorce. The author inserts the quotes into her own sentence so that the sentence is smooth and clear.

#### EXAMPLE

As Dr. Wallerstein, a psychologist at the University of California at Berkeley, explains, “A society that makes divorce so easy has a responsibility to help families through the inevitably difficult transitions.”

When the quote continues on to a second paragraph, no quotation mark ends the first paragraph, but a quotation mark does begin the next paragraph. See paragraphs 11 and 12.

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## Comprehension Questions

1. The thesis or main idea of this essay is that
  - a. parents need to recognize the ways their divorce will affect their children and handle the situation with sensitivity and love.
  - b. a couple's decision to divorce shouldn't be determined by the impact on their children.
  - c. helping children through divorce can be easy if couples follow certain guidelines.
  - d. it is the parents' responsibility to make their children happy.
2. According to the article, when announcing their divorce, couples should
  - a. tell the children as soon as they know that they might want to separate.
  - b. make the announcement separately.
  - c. explain to the children what the divorce will mean to the children.
  - d. always tell the children one at a time and never all together.

3. To “finish the divorce” means to
  - a. get the legal papers completed quickly.
  - b. stop contact between the parents except when necessary.
  - c. get over the emotional scars of the divorce and become friends for the children’s sakes.
  - d. refuse to see the other parent ever again.
4. At what years of age do children typically fear abandonment by a parent?
  - a. 1–5
  - b. 6–10
  - c. 11–16
  - d. 17–20
5. According to the essay, what may be the biggest challenge for children of divorce?
  - a. a parent’s infidelity
  - b. a parent’s remarriage
  - c. fear of losing the absent parent
  - d. changing households

### Discussion Questions

1. At what age do you think it is the hardest for children to accept divorce? Use the essay to support your answer.

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2. Which issue does the author bring up that you think is the most important consideration in helping children handle their parents’ divorce?

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3. Why shouldn’t parents consult their older children about their new social life after the divorce? Can you think of a situation in which talking to an older child could be good for the child and parent?

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4. Give examples from your own experience or families you know of to support any of the author’s guidelines that you agree with.

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5. Explain why you disagree with one or more of the author’s assertions.

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## Journal Topic

Tell about your own experiences as either a child or parent of divorce. Focus on how successful your parents or you were in making the divorce easy for the children involved.

1. Summarize the steps that parents should take to help their children through their divorce.
2. Define a three-stage process that parents should undertake to ensure that children cope well with the divorce.
3. Using the essay for support, explain how you would handle a divorce with your children.
4. Analyze a divorce that you have experienced or observed, and explain how the participants handled the divorce well or poorly for their children.
5. Compare and contrast how parents are advised to treat their children in divorce in this essay with the way parents are advised to treat their children in John Obedzinski's article, "Why Happy Families Are Different" (page 465).

A graphic element consisting of a light blue rectangular box with a thin green border. Inside the box, there are several horizontal blue lines representing text. Overlaid on the right side of the box is a white rectangular area containing the text "Writing Assignments" in a blue, sans-serif font.

Writing  
Assignments

## Special Topics

### Introduction/Conclusion

Staples begins with the shocking news of his brother's murder and, in a few short sentences, recreates the violent moment (notice the use of active verbs, "emerged," "fired," "fled"). He returns to the moment he hears of his brother's death in the conclusion.

### Rhetorical Pattern: Narration

Staples tells the story of his brother's murder, but he doesn't do so chronologically (in time order). Instead, he begins at the end of the story, with the murder, so that the reader will understand the importance of the story he is about to tell. He then jumps back to their childhood and moves chronologically up to the point of the murder.

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## Comprehension Questions

1. Brent Staples's brother was murdered by
  - a. a rival gang member.
  - b. a stranger.
  - c. someone who had been a friend.
  - d. the police.
2. Staples and his brother turned out differently because they were raised under different conditions. (T/F)
3. Staples uses the anecdote about the Vietnam War to illustrate that
  - a. more blacks than whites fought in Vietnam.
  - b. black soldiers were better than white soldiers.
  - c. soldiers from the inner cities saw battle as an opportunity to prove themselves.
  - d. there were a significant number of black casualties in the Vietnam War.
4. Staples's brother moved from Chester, Pennsylvania, to
  - a. Chicago, Illinois.
  - b. Richmond, Virginia.
  - c. Roanoke, Virginia.
  - d. New York City.
5. When Staples last saw his brother, his brother had been injured
  - a. in a fist fight.
  - b. by kickback from a shotgun.
  - c. in a construction accident.
  - d. in a car accident.

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the life Brent Staples and his brother knew when they were growing up.

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2. Describe the "circumstances under which black men in their teens and twenties kill one another with such frequency."

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3. How did Staples distance himself from his old neighborhood?

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4. What did Staples try to do to save his brother?

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5. Discuss the significance of Staples's dream about his brother.

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## Journal Topic

1. What, in your opinion, could or should Brent Staples (or someone in a similar situation) have done to save his brother?
2. Have you ever experienced a situation in which someone you knew was headed for trouble and you were unable to do anything about it? Describe the situation and your feelings.

1. Compare and contrast Brent Staples and his brother.
2. According to Staples, why are black males in their teens and early twenties "far and away the most likely to murder and be murdered"?
3. Describe the choices Staples made to escape the conditions of his youth and the different choices his younger brother made.
4. Describe a situation in which you felt helpless to save someone you loved who was headed for trouble. What conditions contributed to the person's difficulties?
5. Describe Staples's feelings toward his brother. Why was he unable to save the brother he loved?

A graphic icon for 'Writing Assignments' featuring a stack of lined paper with the text 'Writing Assignments' overlaid in a blue box.

Writing  
Assignments



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# Appendix

## Answer Key for Odd-Numbered Student Exercises

### Chapter 3

#### Exercise 1 (page 30)

- 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- 1, 2, 3, 4, 8

#### Exercise 2 (page 33)

- employers, persuade, serious

### Chapter 5

#### Exercise 1 (page 56)

- Credit cards can get consumers into trouble.
- Raising a child alone is a challenge.
- There should not be a required attendance policy in college.

#### Exercise 2 (page 57)

- Rissoto's serves delicious Italian food.
- I got a bargain when I bought my present automobile.
- Casino gambling should not be legalized in our state.

#### Exercise 3 (page 57)

- F
- O
- F

#### Exercise 5 (page 58)

- A
- A
- A

#### Exercise 7 (page 63)

- C
- D
- A

#### Exercise 4 (page 57)

- F
- F
- O

#### Exercise 6 (page 60)

C

## Chapter 19

### Exercise 1 (page 190)

1. children
3. women
5. churches

### Exercise 2 (page 194)

1. himself
3. themselves
5. themselves

### Exercise 3 (page 196)

1. On the first of each month, people from my church volunteer at the local food bank.
3. During class, students in the back of the room began talking to one another.
5. At the meeting of the club, many of the members voiced objections to the proposal.

### Exercise 4 (page 198)

1. steadily, badly
3. fiercely, sad
5. fearlessly, good

### Exercise 5 (page 199)

1. really, well
3. beautifully, skillfully
5. well, perfectly

## Chapter 20

### Exercise 1 (page 204)

1. OK
3. weigh
5. neither

### Exercise 4 (page 206)

1. babied
3. paid
5. OK

### Exercise 2 (page 205)

1. jogging
3. controlling
5. OK

### Exercise 5 (page 207)

1. all right
3. probably
5. several

### Exercise 3 (page 205)

1. OK
3. OK
5. OK

### Exercise 6 (page 208)

1. temperature
3. fulfill
5. expense

## Chapter 21

### Exercise 1 (page 216)

1. passed, and
3. through, thorough
5. should have, past, an

### Exercise 2 (page 216)

1. supposed to
3. than
5. C

### Exercise 3 (page 217)

1. know whether
3. should have
5. C

### Exercise 4 (page 221)

1. blew, already
3. bear, altogether
5. lose, already

### Exercise 5 (page 221)

1. C
3. C
5. C

### Exercise 6 (page 221)

1. C
3. C
5. whole

## Chapter 22

### Exercise 1 (page 226)

1. My wife and I believe that Aunt Mary will come to the party with Mr. Jackson.
3. Would you like to talk to Ms. Zhao, Doctor?
5. The doctor told Coach that I can't play this week.

### Exercise 2 (page 227)

1. My parents told me that Grandpa came to Chicago from the South.
3. There are mountains on Mars and a lake on Venus.
5. Experts predict that Dade County in the southern part of Florida will experience rapid growth.

### Exercise 3 (page 228)

1. This fall, we have no school on Veteran's Day.
3. My father works for IBM, and my mother is employed at NASA.
5. On Monday, my golden retriever had puppies.

### Exercise 4 (page 228)

1. My father got Mom a dozen Thompson roses for Mother's Day.
3. The plumber from Ward's Plumbing will come on Tuesday.
5. The Lincoln Memorial has been crowded the entire summer.

### Exercise 5 (page 229)

1. I asked, "What have I done wrong, Officer?"
3. I told the officer, "The sun was in my eyes because I was driving west."
5. Before putting the Toyota into gear, I thanked the officer for her advice.

## Chapter 23

### Exercise 1 (page 232)

1. concrete
3. concrete
5. abstract
7. concrete
9. abstract

### Exercise 2 (page 233)

1. general
3. general
5. specific
7. general
9. general

### Exercise 5 (page 236)

Correct answers are in bold.

My friend Marianella Rolla **lives** at the end of a long, winding dirt road that takes me forever to travel. There are so many potholes and tree roots that I must **creep** along at under ten miles per hour so I don't **snap** an axle. It is even worse after a hard rain when puddles **obscure** the potholes and make me **crawl** along the shoulder of the dirt road, or else my truck and I might **bog down**. When the weather is dry, I have to be careful that my truck's tires don't **slide** in the loose sand and get stuck. Nighttime **presents** the worst danger of getting lost because I can't **see** the landmarks that tell me where I am, and there is no street sign for the dirt lane that **leads** into her driveway. Picking up Marianella **presents** a real challenge!

### Exercise 6 (page 238)

Answers will vary.

### Exercise 7 (page 239)

1. likely
3. dessert
5. refunded

### Exercise 3 (page 235)

1. I bought a blue velvet dress for the prom.
3. I've always been afraid of large, growling dogs.
5. My mother is an honest, loving woman.

### Exercise 4 (page 236)

1. specific
3. general
5. specific
7. specific
9. general

### Exercise 8 (page 240)

1. decompose
3. casual
5. a clean

### Exercise 9 (page 242)

Correct answers are in bold.

**Discount** stores meet a lot of our needs today. First of all, the **merchandise consumers** can **buy** is **inexpensive**. For example, there are **stores** that **sell products** for the house that **shoppers** use every day including razors, cereal, and soap that can be **purchased** for less than half of the cost at a **full-priced** store. **Factory-second**s clothing stores are a real bargain too. **Customers** can **find designer wear** for **less**. Finally, **discount** auto parts stores are a great way to save because these places have things like oil, headlights, and batteries for less than a gas station charges. Try cut-rate **stores** to save money.

### Exercise 10 (page 246)

Answers will vary.

1. Rico is the best man for the job.
3. I agree that your brother is sly and cannot be trusted.
5. Last time I went to the beach, I ran into a nice surfer, and we rode some awesome waves.

## Chapter 24

### Exercise 1 (page 251)

1. ~~Around midnight during finals week, students with a need to stay up all night go out in search of coffee.~~
3. ~~Over the next few days, some students with research to complete will live in the library.~~
5. ~~With little sleep and lots of coffee, I am worried about my performance on the final exam.~~

### Exercise 2 (page 251)

1. ~~Without a doubt, the best time of the year is springtime.~~
3. ~~In the room, the lamp on the table went out.~~
5. The **dog** ~~behind the fence barked throughout the day.~~

### Exercise 3 (page 253)

1. **Someone** has taken my seat in the movie!
3. That **motorist** should move her vehicle.
5. My **parents** may arrive today.

### Exercise 4 (page 253)

1. **I** want to eat early tonight.
3. On Friday, **Chandra** asked to meet with me.
5. The **man** at the table seems to be angry.

**Exercise 5 (page 254)**

1. The **comedians** ~~who I enjoy~~ tell funny jokes and make funny faces.
3. ~~When I bought my car,~~ the **dealership** gave me a free cell phone.
5. ~~If you want to do well in life,~~ **you** should work hard to make friends ~~who will help you.~~

**Chapter 25****Exercise 1 (page 260)**

1. loves
3. has
5. plays

**Exercise 4 (page 263)**

1. is
3. gives
5. appears

**Exercise 2 (page 261)**

1. is
3. seem
5. relieves

**Exercise 5 (page 263)**

1. turn, receive
3. fly, stop
5. are, are

**Exercise 3 (page 262)**

1. is
3. are
5. does

**Chapter 26****Exercise 1 (page 270)**

1. ran, run
3. took, taken
5. had, had
7. ate, eaten
9. wrote, written

**Exercise 3 (page 272)**

1. arrived
3. have seen
5. had taken

**Exercise 2 (page 271)**

1. shook, shaken
3. saw, seen
5. swam, swum
7. drove, driven
9. stole, stolen

**Exercise 4 (page 273)**

1. The student completed the assignment after midnight.
3. Correct
5. The students took the exam last week.

**Exercise 5 (page 274)**

1. saw
3. played
5. gives

## Chapter 27

### Exercise 1 (page 281)

1. DC
3. PH
5. IC

### Exercise 2 (page 281)

1. DC
3. DC
5. PH

### Exercise 3 (page 282)

1. CX
3. CD
5. S

### Exercise 4 (page 282)

1. S
3. CD
5. CX

### Exercise 5 (page 283)

1. IM
3. IN
5. D

## Chapter 28

### Exercise 1 (page 286)

Answers will vary.

1. I stopped by around noon to talk.
3. Lucas couldn't wait for the end of the week.
5. My brother tried to use the phone without charging it.

### Exercise 2 (page 287)

Answers will vary.

1. The road taken by the driver was slippery.
3. Some students in the class are going to study together tonight.
5. The computer is sitting on the desk.

### Exercise 3 (page 288)

Answers will vary.

1. The girl studied from morning until late in the evening.
3. The machinery must be operated by a licensed technician.
5. In order to deliver the package, I need the correct address.



### Exercise 4 (page 289)

Answers will vary.

1. When I want to eat a home-cooked meal, I visit my parents for the weekend.
3. If it rains today, there will be no ball game.
5. I must study because the test is on Friday.

### Exercise 5 (page 289)

Answers will vary.

1. We need to weatherproof the house before winter begins this year.
3. I was happy about all the questions that I answered correctly on the last test.
5. I will have trouble doing well unless we have a review session before the test.

## Chapter 29

### Exercise 1 (page 294)

1. **Los**ing weight is difficult and takes motivation and knowledge. (S)
3. **Exp**erts believe changing lifestyle is the key to weight control; therefore **peo**ple must make changes in the way they live. (RO)
5. **Ch**ange requires awareness of eating habits that may be adding pounds. (S)
7. Concrete **go**als are better than vague ones, and **di**eters should set small goals that are realistic such as only eating ice cream twice a week. (RO)
9. With a clear picture of their behavior, **di**eters will realize when they are not sticking to their diet and exercise. (S)

### Exercise 2 (page 295)

Answers will vary.

1. The economy is good right now, and there are lots of job openings.
3. Banks are making loans, and almost everyone can qualify.
5. Sometimes saving money is the wise course of action, for later you can use the money for a down payment on a house or car.

### Exercise 3 (page 296)

1. Neighbors can be a source of support; however, the people in the neighborhood can also be a source of annoyance or danger.
3. Neighbors watch out for the houses around them; therefore, they will investigate or call the police if they see something suspicious.
5. Neighbors contribute to our quality of life; most people appreciate their neighbors.

**Exercise 4 (page 296)**

1. Neighborhood organizations can help a neighborhood come together because they provide a way for neighbors to meet and discuss common concerns.
3. If there are services that the neighborhood wants, the city may work well with the organization.
5. Although a few organizations were formed in the 1970s, now such organizations are quite common.

**Exercise 5 (page 297)**

Answers will vary.

1. **Los**ing weight is difficult and takes motivation and knowledge. (S)
3. **Experts** believe changing lifestyle is the key to weight control; therefore, **people** must make changes in the way they live. (RO)
5. **Change** requires awareness of eating habits that may be adding pounds. (S)
7. Concrete **goals** are better than vague ones, and **dieters** should set small goals that are realistic such as only eating ice cream twice a week. (RO)
9. With a clear picture of their behavior, **dieters** will realize when they are not sticking to their diet and exercise. (S)

**Chapter 30****Exercise 1 (page 301)**

1. but *or* yet *or* and
3. for
5. or

**Exercise 4 (page 305)**

1. since
3. Although
5. If

**Exercise 2 (page 302)**

1. and
3. and
5. or

**Exercise 5 (page 306)**

1. which
3. that
5. who

**Exercise 3 (page 304)**

1. indeed
3. as a result
5. also

**Exercise 6 (page 307)**

1. That telephone call was from Jose, the top student in my math class.
3. A major health problem for young women is bulimia, an eating disorder.
5. The neighbors' dog, a golden retriever, always chases cats.

**Exercise 7 (page 308)**

1. Carrying a platter of food, the waitress didn't see the customer bent over tying his shoe.
3. Done for the day, she counted her tips.
5. Unlocking her door, she remembered that she had forgotten to pick up her tips.

**Chapter 31****Exercise 1 (page 315)**

1. Instructors
3. The officer
5. The mother or father

**Exercise 2 (page 316)**

1. Moreover
3. For example
5. Therefore

**Exercise 3 (page 317)**

Answers will vary.

1. Because she wants the class to concentrate on listening, the instructor hands out lecture notes.
3. To quench our thirst, water is the most effective drink.
5. If made with fresh vegetables, pizza can be nutritious.

**Exercise 4 (page 317)**

1. It
3. She
5. They

**Exercise 5 (page 318)**

Answers will vary.

1. High speed Internet access makes using the Internet so much more convenient but costs twice as much as a dial-up connection.
3. Newspapers are having trouble keeping their readers because newspapers must compete with television and Internet news outlets.
5. Cell phones can be dangerous, for cell phones emit radiation.

**Chapter 32****Exercise 1 (page 326)**

1. Frank, Larry, and Sheena live in New Orleans, Louisiana.
3. Marcus and Nicole got married on March 1, 2005, at 3 P.M.
5. The Eason's oldest child was born on Saturday, September 18, 2004, in Chicago, Illinois, at 2 A.M.

**Exercise 2 (page 328)**

1. We chose to drive on the turnpike, for we needed to get home quickly.
3. Our dog can run hard to catch a cat yet will only walk slowly when he is called back home.
5. I exercise regularly so I can stay in good condition.

**Exercise 3 (page 328)**

1. My neighbors are gone a lot during the day, and their dogs get bored.
3. The dogs run along the fence and bark at people walking on the street.
5. I actually like the dogs, so I give them treats when I go out.

**Exercise 4 (page 330)**

1. Whenever I go to the computer lab, I always forget to remove my disk from the computer.
3. Talking to a friend helps when you are sad and blue.
5. Since the roads were icy, the weather service issued a warning not to drive.

**Exercise 5 (page 330)**

1. Although spring just arrived, the temperatures will not reach above freezing tonight.
3. Carved by hand five hundred years ago, the violin has a beautiful sound when played by a master musician.
5. The budget was passed in March by the legislature.

**Exercise 6 (page 332)**

1. Yes, you may pick up your car after work, Mr. Chen.
3. Well, I am sure that Doctor Turner will see us.
5. Hey, stop playing around with the dog, kids.

**Exercise 7 (page 333)**

1. My father's wish, however, was for me to attend college.
3. The students passed the test as a result of their hard work.
5. Consequently, it's time to take stock of our priorities.

**Exercise 8 (page 334)**

1. The plane crashed because its altimeter, a gauge that measures altitude, was malfunctioning.
3. Our study group met at Joe's Deli, a popular snack shop, in order to plan our class presentation.
5. I always enjoy going to class when my favorite instructor, Ms. Taylor, gives the lecture.

### Exercise 9 (page 336)

1. The students received their awards, which were foot-high trophies.
3. El Indio Restaurant, located on 15th Street, is great.
5. The English class that begins at 9:00 is in the auditorium.

### Exercise 10 (page 337)

1. We will stay at our vacation home, which is in Vermont, during the month of July.
3. The woman that he is marrying was born in Japan.
5. Our son's wedding, scheduled for next May, will be held in our hometown.

## Chapter 33

### Exercise 1 (page 343)

1. Mrs. Smith's daughter was married yesterday.
3. February's weather is always the worst of the winter.
5. Larry Jones's old dog barked all night.

### Exercise 2 (page 344)

1. The two boys' bikes are in the garage.
3. Two dollars' difference is not much.
5. Most companies' employees receive sick leave.

### Exercise 3 (page 344)

1. A dog's best friend is its owner.
3. The girl's friends told her not to worry.
5. I left our neighbor's paper on her doorstep.

### Exercise 4 (page 345)

1. The men's talent was obvious to everyone.
3. Most policemen's jobs include talking to the public.
5. People's opinions can change as they get older.

### Exercise 5 (page 346)

1. My son's degrees include two M.A.'s in his specialty, which is engineering.
3. It's sometimes difficult to distinguish I's in a person's signature.
5. Many people's VCRs are being traded in for DVDs.

## Chapter 34

### Exercise 1 (page 351)

1. A shopper left ~~their~~ **his or her** umbrella in the store.
3. No change
5. No change

### Exercise 2 (page 352)

1. The dog and cat played with ~~its~~ **their** toys while the children watched.
3. No change
5. Either the sheriff or the campers will become famous for ~~his~~ **their** courage.

### Exercise 3 (page 353)

Answers will vary (**his or her** could be **his/her**, etc.).

1. Everyone chose ~~their~~ **his or her** favorite poem to read to the class.
3. One of the visitors forgot ~~their~~ **his or her** book.
5. No change

### Exercise 4 (page 353)

1. The IRS expects all tax returns sent to ~~their~~ **its** office to be post-marked by April 15.
3. The team celebrated ~~their~~ **its** victory.
5. Bubba's Steak House flame-broils ~~their~~ **its** steaks.

### Exercise 5 (page 354)

1. When a student registers for classes, ~~you are~~ **a student is** given a student identification card.
3. If a driver hears or sees a siren, ~~you~~ **he or she** must pull to the side of the road.
5. Students who are concerned about doing well in their classes will do everything they can to stay healthy. If ~~a student visits~~ **students visit** the infirmary on campus, they can get a free flu shot.

## Chapter 35

### Exercise 1 (page 358)

1. Janet told Ruby that Ruby was late for work.
3. No change
5. The girls waved to the boys when the girls saw the boys at the mall.

**Exercise 2 (page 359)**

1. Clear
3. Clear
5. Vague

**Exercise 3 (page 359)**

1. Implied
3. Implied
5. Correct

**Exercise 4 (page 362)**

1. I
3. me
5. them

**Exercise 5 (page 362)**

1. me
3. he
5. him

**Exercise 6 (page 363)**

1. he
3. I
5. I

**Exercise 7 (page 365)**

1. Whoever
3. whomever
5. who

**Exercise 8 (page 365)**

1. whom
3. whom
5. whoever

**Exercise 9 (page 365)**

1. Whom
3. Whom
5. Who

## Chapter 36

**Exercise 1 (page 370)**

1. C
3. I
5. C

**Exercise 2 (page 372)**

1. C
3. I
5. I

**Exercise 3 (page 372)**

1. C
3. C
5. I

**Exercise 4 (page 373)**

1. I
3. C
5. I

**Exercise 5 (page 374)**

1. C
3. C
5. I

## Chapter 37

### Exercise 1 (page 378)

The word to which the arrow should be drawn is in bold.

1. The child set the paper **plane** in the house *on fire*.
3. **The** movie star left the auditorium *dressed in a fur coat*. (Arrow goes before The)
5. The **bus** picked up the elderly woman *full of passengers*.

### Exercise 2 (page 378)

The word to which the arrow should be drawn is in bold.

1. The **horse** won the race with the white mane.
3. The **woman** ran after the bus in the blue dress.
5. He read the **announcement** about the meeting in the paper.

### Exercise 3 (page 380)

1. regularly (I)
3. frequently (I)
5. often (I)

### Exercise 5 (page 382)

1. After tilling the soil (C)
3. To win an election (I)
5. In order to arrive early (C)

### Exercise 4 (page 381)

1. Caught in my headlights (C)
3. Running to catch up (I)
5. Waking at 2:00 A.M. (I)

## Chapter 38

### Exercise 1 (page 386)

1. I
3. C
5. C

### Exercise 4 (page 388)

1. I
3. I
5. I

### Exercise 2 (page 386)

1. I
3. C
5. I

### Exercise 5 (page 389)

1. I
3. C
5. C

### Exercise 3 (page 387)

1. C
3. C
5. C



## ESL Skills Appendix

### Exercise 1 (page 511)

1. The, the
3. an, the
5. the, a
7. The,—
9. a, the

### Exercise 2 (page 512)

Answers will vary.

1. any **turbulence**, Negative statement using a count or noncount noun
3. this **purse**, Singular countable noun
5. some **books**, Plural countable noun
7. another **headache**, Singular countable noun
9. those **cars**, Plural countable noun

### Exercise 3 (page 514)

1. accepted
3. will come
5. exercises
7. flunked
9. have seen

### Exercise 5 (page 518)

1. look out for my sister
3. figure out the answer *or* figure the answer out
5. look into the offer
7. pick me up
9. take the trash out *or* take out the trash

### Exercise 4 (page 516)

1. to give
3. studying
5. to swim
7. to apply
9. to run

### Exercise 6 (page 518)

Correct answers are in bold.

My friends **have studied** in the United States for three years. They **came** to this country after they **graduated** from high school because they wanted **to study** English and engineering. The school they **chose to attend was** the University of California at Berkeley. After they **had** been in school several months, they **decided to take** a vacation and **to visit** other parts of California. They wanted **to see** Disneyland and Hollywood. They **drove** for several hours before they **reached** their destination. They **stayed** in southern California for two nights and then they **drove** up the coast to see Big Sur and Carmel. They didn't **arrive** home until one in the morning. The next day they **were** sleepy, and they **hadn't** remembered **to do** their homework.

**Exercise 7 (page 519)**

1. Antonio **never** mows the lawn.
3. He **quickly** prepared for the conference *or* He prepared for the conference **quickly**.
5. Kim-le is **always** reading.
7. I **sometimes** like to cook dinner *or* I like to cook dinner **sometimes**.
9. My mother **seldom** travels by car.

**Exercise 8 (page 520)**

1. on, in
3. at, on
5. at, on
7. at, in
9. at, in

**Exercise 10 (page 521)**

1. in
3. on
5. on
7. in
9. in

**Exercise 9 (page 521)**

1. on, in
3. at, in
5. near *or* by
7. on, by
9. near *or* by

**Exercise 11 (page 522)**

1. on, at
3. in, on
5. on, in
7. in, in
9. at, on

**Exercise 12 (page 524)**

1. My brother **slowly** answered my question *or* My brother answered my question **slowly**.
3. I have **never** been to Spain.
5. When **is** the party?
7. Mario **seems sad** today.
9. Marta cooks spaghetti **well**.

**Exercise 13 (page 525)**

1. My sister doesn't eat **any** spinach.
3. Because the car is broken, **it** needs to be fixed.
5. One of the books **is** lost.

**Exercise 14 (page 525)**

Correct answers are in bold.

My two **best friends** are taking tennis lesson **lessons**. They **take** private **lessons** twice a **week** and group **lessons** once a week. They **say** that the **lessons** are **expensive** but they **are** worth it. Some **people** don't **believe** in paying **money** to **learn** to play tennis, but they **want** to be **able** to **impress** their friends and family when they **return** to Argentina this **summer**.

### Exercise 15 (page 525)

Correct answers are in bold.

**Students** have many **distractions** while they **are** in college. The biggest distraction is friends who **want** to go out and party at the **local** clubs. Some **clubs don't open** until 11 o'clock at **night** and they don't **close** until 2 o'clock in the **morning**. Students who **stay** out late **hurt** their **performance** in school. They may **forget** to do their **homework**, and they may **do** poorly on **tests**. They may feel sleepy, but if they **fall** asleep in class, their instructors will be **unhappy**.

### Exercise 16 (page 526)

Correct answers are in bold.

Many **students** who **come** to the United **States** want **to** study in American **colleges**. Since the September 11 attacks, it has **become** more difficult for international **students** to **obtain** the student visas needed to study in **this** country. Some **students report** having to wait several **months** for their visas to be **issued**. Once **a** student is here, he or she cannot **return** home to **visit** his or her family, or he or she may not be **allowed** back into the country. Many **American** universities are protesting these difficulties **experienced** by their students.

### Exercise 17 (page 526)

Correct answers are in bold.

**Studying** in **a** foreign country **is** exciting but difficult. **It is** interesting to **live** in another culture for a period of **time**. Students who **do** study abroad **discover** another way of **living**. At first, it is difficult to **adjust** to another **language**. Everyday activities such as driving, **shopping**, or doing the laundry **become** more difficult if a student **doesn't** speak the **language**. However, by participating in daily **activities** and getting to know native **speakers**, one can **make** the adjustment to a foreign **culture**.



# Using Journals

## Writer's Journal

The word *journal* comes from the French word meaning “daily.” As the name implies, journal writing is daily writing. The purpose of a journal is to explore and experiment with ideas, feelings, and experiences. A journal is personal writing, and it can serve different purposes for different people. Some writers like to write about their ideas and feelings; others like to write about external events. In a writing class, one of the purposes of a journal may be to help develop your voice or to experiment with the various writing strategies you’ve discussed in class or encountered in a reading.

If you’ve never done it before, journaling may seem awkward at first, but the more you do it—and we recommend writing two or three times a week, if not every day—the more you’ll get the hang of it, and hopefully the more you’ll enjoy it. By writing regularly in a journal you can record feelings and events, figure out what you think and feel, and experiment with ideas and writing styles.

## Peer Journal Example

### An Experience of Discrimination

Early this semester I went in to apply for a job waiting tables at The Courtyards, a retirement home. Amy, a friend in my algebra class, told me about the job. Her manager had said they were short-staffed and needed additional help desperately. I figured it would be the perfect job for me because I’ve had experience waiting tables. I could use some extra money, and it sounded like I’d only need to work on weekends, so it wouldn’t interfere with my schoolwork.

I wore a starched shirt and a tie to school that day because I know how important first impressions can be. As I was crossing campus, two African-American girls were walking toward me, and they laughed out loud as we passed and made comments like “Who does he think he is?” It’s frustrating when members of your own race put you down for trying.

When I got to The Courtyards, I asked the man at the front desk to speak with whoever was doing the hiring for wait staff, and he disappeared into the back looking none too happy. I’ve seen that look before, and I could tell right away that he wasn’t happy about a black male applying for the job. He came back out a few minutes later with an application, and said, “We’re not hiring right now, but you’re welcome to leave an application.” I knew he was lying. I knew the only reason they weren’t interested in me was the color of my skin. I looked him straight in the eye and said, “I can tell there wouldn’t be much point.” If they don’t want me, it’s their loss. I would have been perfect for the job, but if they have attitudes like that, I wouldn’t want to work there anyway.

## Suggested Journal Topics

1. If this is your first semester in school, discuss your first impressions of your college or university. What do you think of the classes, teachers, students, campus, workload, and so on? If this is not your first semester in school, discuss your experiences in school last term. What sorts of difficulty or success did you encounter? What do you plan to do differently this semester?
2. Discuss the differences between your experience of high school and college.
3. Consider your past experience with writing. What has given you the most problems? What do you think you need to do to improve your writing?
4. What will pose the biggest challenge to your success in this class this semester? How could you overcome one or more of those challenges?
5. Describe a situation in which you felt powerless. How might you have responded to the situation in a way that made you feel better about yourself?
6. How will getting organized improve your chance of success in this class? How will it improve your life?
7. What are you most proud of in your life thus far?
8. What do you most hope to accomplish in your life?
9. In what ways will reaching your goals make your life more satisfying?
10. What are the characteristics of successful people? Which of these characteristics do you share? How could you develop more of the characteristics that would make you successful?

## Reader's Journal

We all have a little voice in our heads that comments on what we are reading. The voice might make comments such as “I like this,” “I don’t get it,” “No way, I don’t buy that,” or “That reminds me of. . . .” Keeping a reader’s journal is a way of harnessing and exploring that little voice in your head.

The purpose of a reader’s journal is to allow the reader to respond to the ideas encountered in reading. The reader’s journal engages the reader in a dialogue with what the writer says (content) and how the writer says it (form).

One use for a reader’s journal is to explore what you like and don’t like about the essays you read, what seems effective and what doesn’t. Think about the strategies the writer uses and how you might use similar strategies in your own writing. Another advantage of a journal is that you can come up with ideas that you might develop in a paper. As you read, ask yourself what connections you can make to your own experiences. Often such ideas can be expanded and developed into an essay of your own.

## Peer Reader's Journal Example

### On "What's Your Emotional I.Q.?" by Daniel Goleman (page 433)

Reading this article was like turning on a light for me. It validated what I've always felt but never heard from anyone else before. Happy people are smart, no matter what their position in life may be. My dad was happy and he was smart, and I respect him as much as I respect any president or public figure in our culture. And yet because he is a farmer and never went to college and doesn't make a ton of money, our culture doesn't think of him as smart or successful. We seem to label people who have money as smart and successful, and we label people who don't have money as failures because if you were smart you'd have money, or so the reasoning goes. But I don't buy it and I never have. My mom's brother is rich—he lives in a big house and drives a fancy car and his kids go to the best schools, but I've never thought of him as happy, and if I had to choose today who I'd rather be like, my dad or him, there'd be no question that I would choose my dad because my dad is happy with himself. He's proud of the choices he's made, he loves his family, and he is involved in and respected in his community. He has what the author calls emotional intelligence. He lives according to his principles, and that seems like something we should respect a man for.

### Peer Example



Dan

## Questions to Ask When You Read

1. How does the writer begin the essay? Does the writer begin with a story or something personal or give background on the subject?
2. How does the writer get your attention and interest?
3. How does the writer help you see the scene he or she is describing?
4. What sorts of language and images does he or she use?
5. How does the writer help you understand his or her ideas?
6. Does the writer use examples? Does he or she use comparison/contrast or other traditional rhetorical patterns? Rhetorical patterns (explained in Part III and discussed in Part V) are traditional methods of structuring speech or writing in order to communicate effectively. They include example, narration, definition, description, process analysis, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, classification, and division.
7. How does the writer end the essay?
8. Who do you think the writer perceives as the audience (the intended reader of the work)? How would this perception affect the way the essay was written?
9. If you had written about the same subject, what would you have done differently?
10. Does your own experience confirm what the writer has to say or does your experience contradict the author's assertions?



# ESL Skills

This section of the textbook reviews common English problems experienced by students who are learning English as a second language.

In this section, you will review the following topics:

➤ **Nouns**

- Singular and Plural Nouns
- Count and Noncount Nouns

➤ **Adjectives**

- Indefinite Articles
- Determiners
- Participles Used as Adjectives
- Adjective Position
- Adjective Order

➤ **Verbs**

- Modals
- Verb Tenses
- Passives
- Gerunds and Infinitives
- Two-Word Verbs

➤ **Adverbs**

- Adverb Position

➤ **Prepositions**

- Prepositions of Time
- Prepositions of Location
- Prepositions of Transportation

➤ **Word Order**

- Basic Sentence Patterns

➤ **Common ESL Errors**

## Nouns

### Singular and Plural Nouns

- **Singular nouns do not end in -s or -es.**

cat, student, window, boat

- **Plural nouns end in -s or -es.**

cats, students, windows, boats, crises

- **Irregular plural nouns do not end in -s or -es.**

men, women, children, policemen, firemen, deer, sheep

(For spelling rules, see page 203.)

### Count and Noncount Nouns

- **Count nouns can be counted and have plural forms.**

a dog          dogs  
a hat          hats

- **Noncount nouns cannot be counted and do not have plural forms.**

Do not use *a* or *an* in front of noncount nouns. Noncount nouns may be preceded by indefinite adjectives (*some, a lot, more, any, much*) or by units of measure.

Noncount Noun	Indefinite Adjective	Units of Measure
wisdom	much wisdom	a piece of wisdom
furniture	a lot of furniture	two pieces of furniture
soup	a little soup	two bowls of soup
music	more music	three sheets of music
bacon	some bacon	three slices of bacon

- **Noncount nouns are singular and take singular verbs (with an -s).**

My homework **is** difficult.

A lot of information **has** been lost.

### Categories of Noncount Nouns

#### Abstract Nouns

Emotions (love, hate, jealousy, misery, etc.)

Qualities (beauty, honor, justice, wisdom, etc.)

Abstractions (health, success, friendship, freedom, etc.)

Activities (swimming, football, dancing, camping, baseball, etc.)

General categories (homework, information, jewelry, furniture, machinery, music, etc.)



**Mass Nouns**

Liquids (water, tea, cream, soup, gasoline, milk, etc.)

Solids (sugar, butter, lettuce, tin, bacon, toothpaste, etc.)

Gases (air, nitrogen, oxygen, smoke, steam, smog, etc.)

Natural phenomena or weather terms (darkness, rain, sleet, wind, thunder, lightning, etc.)

Subject areas (history, music, biology, politics, etc.)

## Adjectives

- Adjectives are not made plural in English.

three blue suits, six long poles

### Indefinite Articles

- **A** is used before singular, nonspecific nouns or adjectives that begin with a consonant sound.

a town, a house (*h* sound), a unit (*y* sound), a university (*y* sound).

- **An** is used before singular nonspecific nouns that begin with a vowel sound (*a, e, i, o, u*).

an apple, an owl, an apartment, an oven

- **The** is used with singular or plural nouns that have been specified.

I bought *a* sandwich. (singular, nonspecific noun)

I bought *the* biggest sandwich in *the* shop. (singular, specific nouns)

- **The** is used before a superlative.

My uncle is *the* worst driver I know.

- **The** is used before ordinal numbers.

*the* first, *the* third

- Use **the** before political unions, groups of islands, mountain ranges, rivers, oceans, and seas.

*the* United States, *the* Hawaiian Islands, *the* Rocky Mountains, *the* Amazon, *the* Atlantic Ocean, *the* Dead Sea

- Do not use *the* before a possessive noun.  
✗ *the* Juan's car
- Do not use *the* in front of the names of streets, cities, states, countries, continents, lakes, islands, and mountains.  
✗ *the* Pennsylvania Avenue, *the* Miami, *the* Florida, *the* Argentina, *the* South America, *the* Lake Alto, *the* Cuba, *the* Mount Rushmore



## Exercise 1

Write *a*, *an*, or *the* in each blank if needed.

1. \_\_\_\_ marine biology class I took last semester was \_\_\_\_ most interesting class I have ever taken.
2. \_\_\_\_ professor was a graduate of \_\_\_\_ Harvard University.
3. He gave \_\_\_\_ interesting lecture on \_\_\_\_ first day.
4. He used \_\_\_\_ computer to show \_\_\_\_ interactive model of \_\_\_\_ ocean.
5. After \_\_\_\_ first class, I asked him \_\_\_\_ question.
6. His answer was \_\_\_\_ five-minute lecture on \_\_\_\_ ocean ecosystem.
7. \_\_\_\_ first assignment he gave us was to study \_\_\_\_ plankton.
8. Plankton is \_\_\_\_ vital part of the food chain in \_\_\_\_ ocean.
9. I had to do \_\_\_\_ great deal of research in \_\_\_\_ library.
10. At \_\_\_\_ end of the term, I had to write \_\_\_\_ report and give \_\_\_\_ oral presentation.

## Determiners

- Use *this* and *that* with singular nouns. Use *these* and *those* with plural nouns.

this paper                      that paper

these papers                    those papers

- Use *many* with plural countable nouns. Use *much* with noncount nouns.

many news stories

much advice

- Use *few* (meaning not many) or *a few* (meaning several) with plural countable nouns.

*few* letters, *a few* roses

- Use *little* (meaning not very much) or *a little* (meaning a small amount) with noncount nouns.

*little* information, *a little* coffee left

*Note:* Little (meaning small) can be used with countable nouns.

a little house, a little boy

- Use *some* with positive statements about count or noncount nouns. Use *any* in negative statements about count or noncount nouns.

She gave me *some* good advice.

She doesn't want to hear *any* noise.

- Use *another* with singular nouns. Use *other* with plural nouns.

*another* sandwich, two *other* sandwiches

## Exercise 2

Write phrases with the following words.

Ex: some some houses

1. any \_\_\_\_\_
2. a few \_\_\_\_\_
3. this \_\_\_\_\_
4. little \_\_\_\_\_
5. some \_\_\_\_\_
6. other \_\_\_\_\_
7. another \_\_\_\_\_
8. many \_\_\_\_\_
9. those \_\_\_\_\_
10. much \_\_\_\_\_

## Participles Used as Adjectives

- Present participles (*-ing* form) and past participles can be used as adjectives.

shining sun, fried chicken, dried fruit, broken window

## Adjective Position

- Adjectives are generally placed before the noun or pronoun they modify, but they follow a linking verb.

ADJ   N            ADJ   N

I won a gold trophy at the tennis tournament.

N LV ADJ

Milan is crowded.

## Adjective Order

- Adjectives generally appear in front of the noun they modify, and when there are several adjectives in a row, they appear in the order listed below.

1. Determiners (a, an, the, that, those, some, his, her, our, etc.)
2. Evaluation (subjective) adjectives (perfect, beautiful, ugly, interesting, etc.)
3. Size and shape adjectives (tiny, enormous, square, triangular, etc.)
4. Age (antique, old, young, etc.)
5. Color (blue, rosy, dark, light, etc.)
6. Nationality (American, English, Spanish, etc.)
7. Religion (Baptist, Buddhist, Jewish, Islamic, etc.)
8. Material (glass, stone, plastic, wooden, etc.)
9. Qualifying adjectives that are often seen as part of the noun (beach chair, sports car, baby carriage, love letter, etc.)

**Example:** We had a *long, cold* winter. *The pine* trees were covered with *glistening white* snow. We took *long, leisurely* walks through *the silent, snowy* woods, and sipped *steaming hot* chocolate beside a *blazing* fire.

For comparative and superlative forms, see the sections on adjectives in Chapter 19 (page 197).

## Verbs

### Modals

- Modal auxiliaries (*can, could, will, would, shall, should, may, might, must, had better, would rather, have to, ought to, have got to*) take **no endings to show agreement or tense**.

Juan can walk. (No ending on walk)

Eliza would rather run than walk. (No ending on run or walk)

### Verb Tenses

For a review of the principal tenses, see Chapter 26, “Verb Tenses” (page 267).

### Exercise 3

In each blank, write the correct tense of the verb in parentheses.

1. Last month, I \_\_\_\_\_ (accept) a new job.
2. My father \_\_\_\_\_ (buy) a briefcase yesterday.
3. I promise that I \_\_\_\_\_ (come) to your party on Friday.
4. By six o'clock I had already \_\_\_\_\_ (eat) too much pie.
5. Ramón \_\_\_\_\_ (exercise) on Mondays.
6. Lola \_\_\_\_\_ (take) a nap right now.
7. My brother \_\_\_\_\_ (flunk) his math test.
8. She \_\_\_\_\_ (jog) when she fell.
9. I \_\_\_\_\_ (see) that movie twice already.
10. Last week, Susana \_\_\_\_\_ (break) her arm.

### Passives

- English speakers prefer the use of active voice rather than passive voice. Avoid using the passive construction.

In **active voice**, the subject performs the action.

S      V      OBJ

Antonio played golf.

Tang-Li won the award.

I wrecked the car.

In **passive voice**, the subject receives the action.

S + be + past participle

Golf was played by Antonio.

The award was won by Tang-Li.

The car was wrecked by me.

- Passives are acceptable if the doer of the action is unknown or unimportant.

Susana was elected class president.

The program was cancelled.

### Gerunds and Infinitives

A **gerund** is a verb + *-ing* used as a noun (reading, swimming, running).

- Use a gerund after a preposition (a word like *by*, *of*, *in*, or *about*).

Elena won the race by swimming the fastest.

- Use a gerund after these phrases:

to be accustomed to \_\_\_\_\_ing

to be used to \_\_\_\_\_ing

to look forward to \_\_\_\_\_ing

to object to \_\_\_\_\_ing

- Use a gerund after these verbs:

finish

stop (cease)

quit (give up)

avoid

postpone (put off)

delay

go

keep/keep on (continue)

enjoy

appreciate

mind

consider (think about)

discuss (talk about)

He stopped smoking last week.

I will consider playing the piano for you.

An **infinitive** is to + the simple form of the verb (to run, to sit, to play).  
Infinitives can be used as a subject or an object:

To play tennis in college would be fun. (Subject)

I would like to play tennis in college. (Object)

- Use an infinitive after these verbs:

hope

promise

decide

agree

ask

seem

appear

demand

offer

refuse

remember

forget

expect

want

need

claim

Sung-ling decided to go shopping.

The boys appear to be innocent.

When using a negative form, put *not* before the infinitive.

I decided not to play tennis.

- Use a noun or pronoun and an infinitive after these verbs:

tell

remind

advise

allow

require

force

encourage	order
warn	ask
permit	except
want	need

My coach reminded me to get a good night's sleep before the game.

My mother warned my brother not to stay out late.

- **Certain verbs may be followed by either a gerund or an infinitive.**

start	hate
begin	can't stand
continue	intend
like	try
prefer	remember
stop	regret
forget	

I prefer to stop every hour when I'm driving.

I prefer stopping every hour when I'm driving.

I hate to lose.

I hate losing.

Most verbs that can take either a gerund or an infinitive have no change in meaning. However, "stop," "remember," and "forget" are different. Although either a gerund or an infinitive can be used with these verbs, the meaning changes.

I stopped to water the flowers.

I stopped watering the flowers.

Both gerunds and infinitives may be used as singular subjects.

Reading is a great pastime.

To learn a second language is difficult.

## Exercise 4

Circle the correct gerund or infinitive.

1. The teacher offered (to give / giving) me extra time on the test.
2. Marco finished (to study / studying) at nine o'clock.
3. I avoid (to study / studying) late at night.
4. My mother expects (to win / winning) the lottery.
5. The coach warned me not (to swim / swimming) at night.
6. Sarah refused (to participate / participating).

7. My friends encouraged me (to apply / applying).
8. I need (to study / studying) tonight.
9. Norm agreed (to run / running) for class president.
10. Santiago enjoys (to ski / skiing).

## Two-Word Verbs

Two-word verbs are a verb and a preposition that have special meaning.

- **Nonseparable two-word verbs cannot be separated by a noun or pronoun.**

call on	get through
catch up	go over
check into	grow up
check out of	keep up with
come across	look after
drop by	look into
drop in	look out for
drop off	pass away
get along with	put up with
get in (into)	run into
get off	run out of
get on	show up
get over	take after

- **Separable two-word verbs can be separated by a noun or pronoun.**

call ___ back	figure ___ out	look ___ up	take ___ out
call ___ off	fill ___ out	make ___ up	take ___ over
call ___ up	find ___ out	pick ___ out	tear ___ down
cheer ___ up	give ___ back	pick ___ up	think ___ over
clean ___ up	give ___ up	point ___ out	try ___ on
cross ___ out	hand ___ in	put ___ away	turn ___ in
cut ___ out	hang ___ up	put ___ off	turn ___ off
do ___ over	look ___ over	take ___ off	turn ___ up
drop ___ off			



## Exercise 5

Circle the correct verb phrase. For some items, both answers may be correct.

1. My mother asked me to (look out for my sister / look my sister out for).
2. Tenday wanted to (keep his brother up with / keep up with his brother).
3. My teacher told me to (figure out the answer / figure the answer out).
4. This weekend I plan to (catch up on my homework / catch my homework up on).
5. My friend wants to (look into the offer / look the offer into).
6. I will (call on my friend / call my friend on) today.
7. Maria promised to (pick me up / pick up me) at eight.
8. I don't have to (put up with you / put you up with) any longer.
9. I told him to (take the trash out / take out the trash).
10. My mother told me to (clean my room up / clean up my room).

## Exercise 6: Editing for Verb Errors

Correct the twenty verb errors in the passage below. Do not make any unnecessary changes.

My friends has study in the United States for three years. They come to this country after they graduate from high school because they wanted studying English and engineering. The school they choose attending is the University of California at Berkeley. After they have been in school several months, they decide taking a vacation and visiting other parts of California. They wanted seeing Disneyland and Hollywood. They drive for several hours before they are reaching their destination. They stay in southern California for two nights and then they driving up the coast to see Big Sur and Carmel. They didn't arrived home until one in the morning. The next day they was sleepy, and they haven't remembered doing their homework.

## Adverbs

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

### Adverb Position

- Adverbs may be placed before or after the verbs, adjectives, or adverbs they modify.

Rosario answered the question.

*Quietly*, Rosario answered the question.

Rosario answered the question *quietly*.

Rosario *quietly* answered the question.

- Adverbs generally come before the verb, adjective, or adverb they modify.

Germaine *quickly* answered the question.

V

Parvati is a *very* hard worker.

ADJ

The house was *quite easily* painted.

ADV

- Many adverbs may be placed after the object or verb.

Germaine answered the question *quickly*.

The house was painted *quite easily*.

- Frequency adverbs (*often, always, never, usually, sometimes, seldom, frequently, never, occasionally*) are placed before most verbs, but they are placed after a *be* verb and between a helping verb and a main verb.

We *never* go to the beach in August. (Before main verb)

Montoya *is* usually late. (After *be* verb)

The dogs have *always* barked at night. (Between helping verb and main verb)

- Do not place an adverb between a verb and its object.

✗ They answered *quickly* the question.

✗ Ramón ran *quickly* the race.



Place the adverb correctly in the sentence.

## Exercise 7

1. Antonio mows the lawn. (never)
2. Paolo and Roberta are talking. (always)
3. He prepared for the conference. (quickly)
4. My baby sister fell asleep. (easily)
5. Kim-le is reading. (always)
6. My brother is wrong. (often)
7. I like to cook dinner. (sometimes)
8. They boarded the plane. (slowly)
9. My mother travels by car. (seldom)
10. The instructor distributed the tests. (quietly)

## Prepositions

Prepositions show relationships between things. They indicate where something is in relation to something else (*over, under, through, by, with*). They can also indicate direction, time, or origin (*to, toward, by, at, from, of*). For a more complete list of prepositions, see Chapter 19, “Parts of Speech” (page 196).

### Prepositions of Time

- Use *on* for a day of the week, a holiday, and a calendar date.

on Monday, on the Fourth of July, on August 2

- Use *in* for a year or a part of a day.

in 2006

in the morning

- Use *at* for a specific time of day.

at one o'clock

at noon

### Exercise 8

Write *in, on, or at* in each blank if needed.

1. Maria was born \_\_\_\_\_ August 6 \_\_\_\_\_ Miami, Florida.
2. I am having a party \_\_\_\_\_ 7 o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday.
3. The boat will dock \_\_\_\_\_ midnight \_\_\_\_\_ the 7th.
4. My brother always wants to arrive \_\_\_\_\_ the movies \_\_\_\_\_ time.
5. My speech is \_\_\_\_\_ two o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ December 21, we will have our office party \_\_\_\_\_ the end of the day.
7. I always jog \_\_\_\_\_ 6 o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ the morning.
8. Paula likes to wake up \_\_\_\_\_ 5 A.M. \_\_\_\_\_ the morning.
9. The play will begin promptly \_\_\_\_\_ 8 o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ the evening.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ three \_\_\_\_\_ the afternoon, the bell rings.

### Prepositions of Location

- Use *at* for a specific place.

at the store, at the movies

- Use *by* for beside.

by the fireplace, by the pool

- Use *in* for inside of.  
in a car, in a store, in a building
- Use *in* with a city, state, country, or continent.  
in Paris, in New Mexico, in France, in Europe
- Use *near* for close to.  
near the house, near the chair
- Use *on* for a surface.  
on the floor, on the table, on the roof

### Exercise 9

Write *in*, *on*, *at*, *by*, or *near* in each blank if needed.

1. Marta left her homework \_\_\_\_\_ the table \_\_\_\_\_ her room.
2. My homework is \_\_\_\_\_ the bag \_\_\_\_\_ the floor.
3. The party is \_\_\_\_\_ the largest house \_\_\_\_\_ Gainesville.
4. We went shopping \_\_\_\_\_ Harrods, the biggest store \_\_\_\_\_ England.
5. I live \_\_\_\_\_ the pool, so I can swim every day.
6. They placed the peaches \_\_\_\_\_ a bowl \_\_\_\_\_ the table.
7. The phone is \_\_\_\_\_ the chair \_\_\_\_\_ the door.
8. He passed \_\_\_\_\_ the school \_\_\_\_\_ his car.
9. I parked \_\_\_\_\_ the gate.
10. My aunt lives \_\_\_\_\_ the fire station.

### Prepositions of Transportation

- Use *on* if the means of transportation carries one person or many people.  
on a bike, on a horse, on roller skates, on a motorcycle  
on a plane, on a boat, on a train, on a bus
- Use *in* if the means of transportation carries four to six people.  
in a car, in a taxi, in a small plane

### Exercise 10

Fill in the blank with *on* or *in*.

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. _____ an automobile | 6. _____ a battleship  |
| 2. _____ a bike        | 7. _____ a convertible |
| 3. _____ a motorcycle  | 8. _____ a canoe       |
| 4. _____ a plane       | 9. _____ a sailboat    |
| 5. _____ a bus         | 10. _____ a ferry      |

## Exercise 11

Fill in the blank with the appropriate preposition (*in, on, by, at, of, near, to*) if needed.

1. We get \_\_\_\_\_ the plane \_\_\_\_\_ 6 o'clock.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Christmas, you give gifts \_\_\_\_\_ your friends and family.
3. I was born \_\_\_\_\_ Germany \_\_\_\_\_ January 1, 1985.
4. Americans celebrate their independence \_\_\_\_\_ the Fourth of July.
5. My report is \_\_\_\_\_ the table \_\_\_\_\_ the hall.
6. My mother won't ride \_\_\_\_\_ a subway \_\_\_\_\_ night.
7. I get up early \_\_\_\_\_ the morning and walk \_\_\_\_\_ the park.
8. The accident happened \_\_\_\_\_ the racetrack.
9. The test is \_\_\_\_\_ 9 o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ Friday.
10. We were married \_\_\_\_\_ St. Louis \_\_\_\_\_ December.

## Word Order

### Basic Sentence Patterns

#### SUBJECT—VERB

S    V  
The sun rises.

Other words and phrases may be added to modify or describe the subject or verb.

ADJ   S    V    Prepositional phrase  
The golden sun rises through the fog.

#### SUBJECT—VERB—DIRECT OBJECT

S        V        DO  
Wanda watched TV.

Other words and phrases may be added to modify or describe the subject, verb, or direct object.

S            V        DO  
After passing her exam, Wanda watched TV for several hours.

#### SUBJECT—VERB—INDIRECT OBJECT—DIRECT OBJECT

S        V        IO        DO  
Sarah sent her sister a card.

Other words and phrases may be added to modify or describe the subject, verb, or direct object.

S V IO DO  
Sarah sent her older sister a postcard from Spain.

If *to* or *for* appears before the object, then the sentence ends in a prepositional phrase rather than a direct object.

S V IO Prepositional phrase  
Sarah drove her older sister across town to school.

Do not use the words *to* or *for* before an indirect object.

S V IO DO  
Maria sent Juan a letter.  
No<sup>↑</sup>to

My sister bought me an ice cream cone.  
No<sup>↑</sup>for

### SUBJECT—LINKING VERB—ADJECTIVE OR NOUN

S LV ADJ  
Alfonso seems unhappy.

S LV N  
My father is an architect.

### QUESTIONS

In questions, the subject comes after the verb.

LV S  
Where is your sister?

LV S  
When is the show?

V S V  
Why are you crying?

*Not only . . . but also* phrases require the inverted word order of questions in the first clause.

V S V S V  
Not only does Andy know how to sing, but he also knows how to dance.

### SENTENCES THAT BEGIN WITH *THERE* OR *HERE*

In sentences that begin with *there* or *here*, the subject comes after the verb.

LV S  
There are three reasons I can't go.

LV S  
Here are the flowers you ordered.

- Use either a noun or a pronoun as a subject, but do not follow a noun with a pronoun.
  - ✗ Sarah she sings beautifully.
  - ✓ Sarah sings beautifully.
  - ✓ She sings beautifully.

## Exercise 12

Correct the faulty word order in the following sentences.

1. My brother answered slowly my question.
2. Santiago has seen many times the movie.
3. I have been never to Spain.
4. Uncle Eduardo gave to me a book.
5. When the party is?
6. Here the book you ordered is.
7. Mario sad seems today.
8. The clerk the book placed on the counter.
9. Marta she cooks well the spaghetti.
10. My dog is tired never of playing.

## Common ESL Errors

- Independent clauses need a subject (except for command sentences, where it is understood that *you* is the subject).
  - ✗ Is a pretty day.
  - ✓ It is a pretty day.
- One of \_\_\_\_\_s (plural noun) \_\_\_\_\_s (verb with -s ending)
  - ✓ One of the chairs seems broken.
- Do not use double negatives in English.
  - ✗ Sandra doesn't want no shrimp.
  - ✓ Sandra doesn't want any shrimp.
  - ✓ Sandra doesn't want shrimp.

## Exercise 13

Correct the common errors in the following sentences.

1. My sister doesn't eat no spinach.
2. Is cloudy today.
3. Because the car is broken, needs to be fixed.
4. Clara doesn't know nothing about the test.
5. One of the book is lost.

Exercise 14:  
Editing for "S"

In the passage below, correct words with missing -s endings. Also, correct the words that have unnecessary -s endings.

My two bests friend are taking tennis lesson. They takes private lesson twice a weeks and group lesson once a week. They says that the lesson are expensives but they is worth it. Some peoples don't believes in paying moneys to learns to play tennis, but they wants to be ables to impresses their friends and family when they returns to Argentina this summers.

Exercise 15:  
Editing for "S"

In the passage below, correct words with missing -s endings. Also, correct the words that have unnecessary -s endings.

Student have many distraction while they is in college. The biggest distraction is friends who wants to go out and party at the locals clubs. Some club doesn't opens until 11 o'clock at nights and they don't closes until 2 o'clock in the mornings. Students who stays out late hurts their performances in school. They may forgets to do their homeworks, and they may does poorly on test. They may feel sleepy, but if they falls asleep in class, their instructors will be unhappys.



### Exercise 16: Editing for Basic Errors

Correct all the errors in the passage below. Do not make any unnecessary changes. Watch for different kinds of errors, such as mistakes with run-ons, fragments, verbs, spelling, problem words, capitals, and common ESL errors.

Many student who comes to the United State want study in the American college. Since the September 11 attacks, it has became more difficult for international student to obtains the student visas needed to study in these country. Some student reports having to wait several month for their visas to be issue. Once student is here, he or she cannot returns home to visits his or her family, or he or she may not be allow back into the country. Many Americans universities are protesting these difficulties experience by their students.

### Exercise 17: Editing for Basic Errors

Correct all the errors in the passage below. Do not make any unnecessary changes. Watch for different kinds of errors, such as mistakes with run-ons, fragments, verbs, spelling, problem words, capitals, and common ESL errors.

Studys in foreign country are exciting but difficult. Is interesting to lives in another culture for a period of times. Students who does study abroad discovers another way of livings. At first, is difficult to adjusts to another languages. Everyday activities such as driving, shoppings, or doing the laundry became more difficult if a student don't speak the languages. However, by participating in daily activity and getting to know native speaker, one can makes the adjustment to a foreign cultures.



# MLA Documentation Guide

When you use other people's ideas, words, or facts in your writing, you must provide the source of the material you borrowed. Even when you paraphrase, or put someone else's ideas into your own words, you must acknowledge your source. The Modern Language Association (MLA) has created guidelines for documenting sources for the liberal arts (history, English, humanities).

## Citations within a Paper

Each time you use borrowed material in your paper, you must provide the author's name and the page on which the material appeared. This information may be incorporated in your sentence or given in parentheses following the sentence.

### Guidelines for In-text Citations

- Use only the author's last name in parenthetical citations.
- If no author is given for one of your sources, give a shortened version of the title of the source in the in-text citation.
- If you use more than one work by the same author, include a shortened version of the title of each work (enough for the reader to recognize it).
- Use no punctuation within the parentheses; place a period after the parentheses.

Examples:

George Swank points out that “wealth is a way of life in Hollywood” (17).

The town is described as a “dilapidated patchwork of houses,” as “clinging to the side of the hill,” and as “careworn” (Jones 5).

During the first half of the twentieth century, Frank Lloyd Wright dominated American architecture (*Architecture* 65).

Notice that if the author's name is given in your sentence, you need not repeat it in the in-text citation. Notice also that no punctuation and no abbreviation of "p" for "page" are used between the author's name and the page number.

If your list of works cited includes two works by the same author, you should include a shortened version of the title in your in-text citation.

Examples:

(Smith, *Arts* 144–45).

(Smith, "Movies" 16).

## Citations at the End of the Paper (Works Cited Page)

At the end of your paper, you should include a Works Cited page, an alphabetical list of all the sources you used in your paper. Do not include works that you read but did not use.

### Guidelines for Works Cited Page

- Alphabetize by author's last name but do not number entries. If no author is given, alphabetize by title.
- Double space between and within entries.
- Indent the second line of each entry five spaces.
- Underline or italicize titles of books, journals, magazines, and newspapers.

### Sample MLA Works Cited Entries

#### BOOK BY ONE AUTHOR

Repairs, Maureen. *Nautical Crack-Ups*. New York: Two Engine Press, 1980.

**BOOK BY TWO AUTHORS**

Cool, Augustus, and Sally Sweet. *Six Ways to Get Better Grades*.  
Wishville, Ark.: High Hopes Press, 2005.

**ARTICLE OR CHAPTER IN A BOOK WITH AN EDITOR**

Brainsworth, I. Q. "A Taste of Evil." *Great American Short Stories*.  
Ed. B. A. Singer. New York: Random House, 1983. 90–105.

**BOOK WITH AN EDITOR**

Bird, Jay L. *The Prison Beat*. Ed. Warden Jones. New York: Random  
House, 2002.

**MAGAZINE ARTICLE**

Schift, Manuel. "The Trouble with Foreign Cars." *Auto World* 17 Mar.  
1983: 58–65.

**NEWSPAPER ARTICLE**

Dillon, Matt. "My Days as a Gunfighter." *Jackson Hole Chronicle* 15  
Mar. 2003: B-2.

**JOURNAL ARTICLE**

Fail, Iwana. "How to Lose Without Trying." *American Deadbeat* 43  
(2004): 348–352.

**TELEVISION OR RADIO PROGRAM**

"Jen's New Friend." *Friends*. ABC. WJCT, Miami. 11 Apr. 2003.

**FILM**

*National Treasure*. Dir. Jon Turteltaub. Perf. Nicolas Cage, Diane  
Kruger, and Jon Voight. Buena Vista, 2004.

## Online Sources

Because Web sources are so varied, use the following guidelines to prepare your citation for a source obtained on the Internet. Give the following information in the order listed. Place periods after each piece of information.

### ONLINE ARTICLE

Generic example:

Author(s). "Title of Page." Title of Database/Name of Web Site. Date of posting/update. Name of Institution/Organization affiliated with the site. Date of access <electronic address>.

Example:

"Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Format." *Purdue Online Writing Lab*. 2003. Purdue University. 6 Feb. 2003 <[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r\\_mla.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html)>.

### ONLINE SOURCE IN REFERENCE DATABASE

If you are citing a source that you accessed through an online database but that was originally published in print form, you should provide enough information so that the reader can locate the article either in its print form or retrieve it from the online database.

Generic example:

Author. "Title of Article." *Publication Name* Volume number (if any)  
Publication date: page number–page number. *Database Name*.  
Service Name. Library Name, City, State. Date of access <electronic address of the database>.

Example:

Young, Andrea. "Three Lessons in Happiness." *Journal of Health*  
Feb. 2002: 6–11. *Expanded Academic ASAP*. Gale Group Databases. University of Virginia Libraries, Charlottesville, VA. 15 March 2005 <<http://www.infotrac.galegroup.com>>.

## Format for Research Papers

### Title Pages

The MLA no longer requires a separate title page. Instead, the information generally found on the title page is typed in the upper left-hand corner of the first page and includes the student's name, the instructor's name, the course number, and the date. The title is typed two lines below the date and centered in the middle of the page.

If your instructor requires a title page, use one-inch (1") margins on the top, bottom, and sides. Center the title of your paper about one-third down from the top of the page. Center your name two lines below the title. About one-third up from the bottom of the page, center the course number. Center the instructor's name two lines below the course number. Center the date two lines below the instructor's number. The information on the page should appear balanced.

### Text of Research Papers

- Use one-inch (1") margins on the top, bottom, and sides.
- Double-space the text.
- Indent five spaces (one tab mark) for each new paragraph.
- Use transitions (conjunctive adverbs).
- Introduce quotations in the text.
- Always quote the source exactly. Don't change words or punctuation within the quotation marks.

## Example MLA Research Paper Format

This is a fictitious example of a short (but incomplete) literature paper that required very little library research. This example illustrates the recommendations of the Modern Language Association (MLA).

1. The MLA recommends one-inch margins at the top and bottom and on both sides of the text. Pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the paper; page numbers are placed one-half inch from the upper right hand corner of the page. No punctuation or abbreviation (p.) should be used with the page number.
2. No title page is required (unless required by your instructor). Instead, the information generally found on the title page (your name, your instructor's name, the course number, and the date) is typed on the first page, one inch from the top of the page. Double space between the items in the heading.
3. Page headers include the author's last name and page number. Headers appear in the top right corner of the page.
4. Center the title of your paper. Capitalize only the initial letter of the first, last, and principal words in your title. Do not underline your title or place it in quotation marks.
5. Double-space everything in the paper, including the heading, title, indented quotes, and Works Cited page.
6. The first line of a literature paper generally gives the title of the work and the author's name.
7. Quotations are introduced in the text.
8. References are given in parentheses in the text of the paper. No punctuation is used between the author's name and the page number. Final sentence punctuation is placed outside the parenthesis.
9. The thesis states the main idea of the essay.

①

Jasmine Santos

Santos 14 ③

②

Professor Bright

ENC 1102

April 12, 2006

⑤

④ Arlo's Heart of Gold

⑥

"A Taste of Evil" by I. Q. Brainsworth presents a sinister world in which the evil Dr. Strange-glove manipulates the fate of innocent characters. Angie Buttercup is not the only victim of Dr. Strange-glove's control, for Arlo Runamuck, Strange-glove's faithful servant, is also a victim of forces beyond his control. Because of his association with Strange-glove, however, Arlo is often misunderstood. One critic maintains that "Arlo is an

⑦

extension of the evil inherent in Strange-glove" (Tower 9). But this critic misses the tone of Arlo's characterization. Rather than being evil, Arlo is a good-hearted and generous individual. His essential goodness is revealed through his appearance, his motivations, and his actions.

⑧

⑨

Although Arlo is physically unattractive, his appearance reveals the essential goodness of his character. He is described as a "short, stooped man . . . so bent beneath an enormous hunch-back that as he stumbled through the narrow alleys of town, he appeared to be carrying the weight of immense sorrows on his shoulders" (Brainsworth 15). The author's tone here is clearly one of sympathy, not condemnation. Arlo's eyes further reveal his essential goodness. They are a "clear, cornflower blue, and sparkle with the unfocused kindness of a child" (18).



## Guidelines for MLA Works Cited

1. Type your name and the page number one-half inch from the top of the page and one inch from the right margin.
2. Center the heading one inch from the top of the page; capitalize the initial letters of the heading.
3. Double-space below the heading.
4. List entries alphabetically; do not number the entries.
5. Do not indent the first line of an entry; indent subsequent lines of each entry five spaces.
6. Double-space within and between the entries.
7. Punctuation is very important; copy the samples exactly.

### SAMPLE ENTRIES

Entry 1—An article or a chapter from a book with an editor

Entry 2—A book with two authors

Entry 3—An article from a newspaper

Entry 4—An article from a journal

Entry 5—An article from a magazine

Entry 6—A book by one author

① Santos 11

② Works Cited

③

④ Brainsworth, I. Q. "A Taste of Evil." *Great American Short*

⑤ *Stories*. Ed. B. A. Singer. New York: Random House,  
1983. 90-105.

⑥

⑦ Cool, Augustus, and Sally Sweet. *Six Ways to Get Better*  
*Grades*. Wishville, Ark.: High Hopes Press, 2005.

Dillon, Matt. "My Days as a Gunfighter." *Jackson Hole*  
*Chronicle* 15 Mar. 2003: B-2.

Fail, Iwana. "How to Lose Without Trying." *American Deadbeat*  
43 (2004): 348-352.

Hanger, Cliff. "Suspense in the Movies." *Movie News* 9 Apr.  
2003: 6.

Tower, John. *Brainsworth's Blunders*. New York: City Press,  
1988.

# Rules and Tools

Rules and Tools is designed to give you a quick reference guide to information you can use while writing. We encourage you to make note in the margins of additional information that you want at your fingertips. Add rules, examples, examples of misuses of rules, or any other notes to yourself that will help you avoid writing errors.

Additionally, we provide paragraph and essay prompts and checklists that will help you use the writing process. You may write on these pages and make copies of maps and outlines to use with all of your writing assignments.

## Skill Rules

### Capitalization (Chapter 22, page 225)

#### Capitalize

- The first word of a sentence.
- Proper nouns (names of specific people, places, and things): *Jorge, Topeka, Chevrolet.*
- Proper titles (when used in place of a proper name): *Sir, Doctor, Mom.*
- Professional titles used with a name: *Mr., Mrs., Ms.*
- The personal pronoun *I.*
- Specific geographic features and proper place names: *Atlantic Ocean, Rocky Mountains.*
- Names of cities, counties, states, regions, countries, continents, and planets: *Miami, Dade County, Florida, the South, America, North America, Mars.*
- Proper names of institutions, businesses, and federal agencies: *Central College, Morton's Supermarket, Social Security Administration.*
- Proper names of buildings and historical monuments: *Aspen Building, Turlington Hall, Lincoln Memorial.*
- Names of holidays: *Mother's Day, Thanksgiving, New Year's Day.*
- Names of specific school courses: *Math 101, Introduction to Psychology.*
- Days and months: *Tuesday, June.*
- The first word, last word, and all important words in the titles of books, poems, articles, chapters, academic papers, songs, journals, and magazines: *For Whom the Bell Tolls.*

- Names of eras or periods in history: **Roaring Twenties, Renaissance.**
- Nationalities and languages: **American, Spanish.**
- Abbreviations for agencies, organizations, trade names, and radio and television stations: **FBI, NAFTA, CPA, WKAT.**
- The first word of a quoted sentence.

### Do not capitalize

- Places that are not proper names: **river, university, mountains.**
- Directional words ending in *-ern*: **northern, southern, eastern, western.**
- Subject names that are not part of a course title (unless the names of languages): **math, psychology, English.**
- Names of seasons: **fall, summer.**
- Centuries or decades: **nineteenth century.**
- Animal and plant names (unless they refer to a specific place or person): **golden retriever, summer rose, German shepherd, Lennox rose.**

## Subject–Verb Agreement (Chapter 25, page 257)

### Present Tense

	Singular	Plural
<b>First person</b>	I work	We work
<b>Second person</b>	You work	You work
<b>Third person</b>	He works	They work
	She works	Students work
	It works	Bill and Mary work.
	A student works	
	Everyone works	
	Mathematics is easy.	
	My family is home.	
	A lot of money is missing.	A lot of people are missing.
		Either my father or my friends drive me.
		Either my friends or my father drives me.

- *Singular subject* (one person, place, thing) agrees with a verb with an *-s* ending.
- *Plural subject* agrees with a verb with no *-s* ending.
- *I* and *you* take a verb with no ending.
- The subject is never found in a prepositional phrase.
- Most indefinite pronouns (*everyone, nothing*) are singular.
- Collective nouns (*family, class*) are usually singular and take a verb with an *-s* ending.

- Fields of study (*mathematics*) are singular subjects and take a verb with an *-s* ending.
- Some subjects can be either singular or plural (*a lot, most*) depending on the meaning of the sentence.
- Compound subjects (*Bill and Mary*) are plural and take a verb with no ending.
- When subjects are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb agrees with the closest subject.
- A gerund (an *-ing* word used as a subject) is singular and takes a verb with an *-s* ending.
- Both verbs in a compound verb should agree with the subject.
- The subject usually comes after the verb when a sentence begins with *There* or *Here*.

### Sentence Fragments (Chapter 28, page 285)

A **sentence fragment** is a group of words that

- Lacks a subject: *Walks home today.*
- Lacks a verb: *The woman in line at the store.*
- Lacks both a subject and a verb: *Such as cakes, pies, and cookies.*
- Includes a subject and a verb but does not express a complete thought: *While I was working.*

#### Ways to Correct Fragments

- Add words such as subjects or verbs to make the fragment complete.
- Delete words such as subordinating conjunctions to make the fragment complete.
- Attach the fragment to a complete sentence.

### Run-Ons (Chapter 29, page 293)

- A **fused sentence** incorrectly joins or fuses two independent clauses together without any punctuation: *The review is on Monday the test is on Tuesday.*
- A **comma splice** incorrectly joins or splices together two independent clauses with only a comma: *The review is on Monday, the test is on Tuesday.*
- To identify a run-on, first identify the subjects and the verbs in a word group that ends with a period. In a run-on, a second subject and verb can be separated from the first subject and verb to make two complete sentences. No run-on occurs if the word group cannot be divided into two complete thoughts.

#### Ways to Correct Run-Ons

- Separate the independent clauses with a **period** into two complete sentences: *The review is on Monday. The test is on Tuesday.*

- Join the two independent clauses with a **coordinating conjunction** and a **comma**: The review is on Monday, and the test is on Tuesday.
- Join the two independent clauses with a **semicolon** and a **transition** and a comma: The review is on Monday; moreover, the test is on Tuesday.
- Join the two independent clauses (sentences) with a **semicolon**: The review is on Monday; the test is on Tuesday.
- Join the two clauses with a **subordinating conjunction**: While the review is on Monday, the test is on Tuesday.

## Sentence Combining (Chapter 30, page 299)

### Three-Step Sentence Combining Process

1. Generate two or more ideas expressed in simple sentences (independent clauses):

Emil's Café offers soft lighting and romantic music. This restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

2. Combine the ideas into one sentence that expresses the relationship between the ideas:

Emil's Café offers soft lighting and romantic music, so this restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

3. Use **coordination** and **subordination** to combine ideas into a variety of sentence structures:

Emil's café offers soft lighting and romantic music; therefore, this restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

Because Emil's café offers soft lighting and romantic music, this restaurant is a favorite place to take a date.

### USING COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION

	Addition	Contrast	Consequence
<b>Coordinating conjunctions</b>	and yet	but for	so
<b>Subordinating conjunctions</b>	along with in addition to	even though although while though	because since
<b>Conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions</b>	moreover furthermore in addition also	however in contrast nevertheless	therefore as a result consequently
<b>Relative pronouns</b>	that which who		

## Commas (Chapter 32, page 325)

- Use commas between items in **dates** and **addresses**: July 6, 1978; Hollywood, California.
- Use commas to set off items in a **series**: apples, oranges, and pears.
- In a **compound sentence**, use a comma between two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (*fanboys*: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so): I love jogging, but I hate sweating.
- Use a comma after an **introductory element**: Because I studied, I did well on the test.
- Use a comma after **certain small words** (yes, no, oh, well, hey, hi) at the beginning of a sentence: No, I don't want to go to the dance.
- Use commas to set off people's names or titles from the rest of the sentence when **directly addressing** them in writing: Stop talking, Franco.
- Use commas to set off **transitions** that interrupt the flow of the sentence: Also, the rent on the apartment is reasonable.
- Use commas to set off an **appositive**, a word or group of words that defines or explains the word or phrase that comes before it: Mrs. Jones, my first grade teacher, was very nice.
- Use commas to separate information that is **nonrestrictive or non-essential** to the meaning of the sentence: My first grade teacher, who lived down the street, gave me a ride to school.

## Apostrophes (Chapter 33, page 341)

### Apostrophes are used

- To make contractions: don't, there's, it's.
- To show possession: Maria's car, the players' coach, the people's choice.
- To form plurals with some letters and numbers: A's, 10's.

### Rules for Showing Possession

- To make a singular word possessive, add 's: one kid's bike.
- If the owner is singular and ends in s, add an 's: Chris's keys.
- To make a plural word that ends in s possessive, add an apostrophe after the final s: two kids' bikes.
- Some plural words do not end with an s. With irregular plural owners, add 's. (The most common irregular plurals are *children*, *women*, *men*, and *people*.) Many children's bikes.

## Pronoun Agreement (Chapter 34, page 349)

- A pronoun must **agree in number** with its antecedent (the noun to which the pronoun refers): One student forgot her or his book. Two students forgot their books.
- Pronoun agreement errors occur when the wrong pronoun is used. The most common error is the use of a plural pronoun with a singular antecedent. Incorrect: One student forgot ~~their~~ book.

- With antecedents joined by *either . . . or* or *neither . . . nor*, the pronoun should agree with the nearest antecedent: Neither my friends nor my sister can find her ticket to the play. Neither my sister nor my friends can find their tickets to the play.
- Most indefinite pronoun antecedents (*everyone, something*) are singular and must take a singular pronoun: Everyone should open his or her book.
- Some indefinite pronouns are plural (*many, few*) and take a plural pronoun: Many people lose their keys.
- A few indefinite pronouns may be either singular or plural (*most, none*) depending on the noun or pronoun they refer to: Most of the teachers love their jobs. Most of the water has found its way onto the floor.
- Collective noun antecedents (*class, family, business*) are singular and must take a singular pronoun: The class will have its test tomorrow.
- Do not shift from singular subjects to plural subjects or vice versa within a paragraph.
- Do not shift from one person (*I, you, he, she, it*) to another person within a paragraph.
- Avoid using the second-person pronoun, *you*, in most academic writing because it is considered vague.
- When correcting pronoun errors, correct related errors like verb errors.

## Pronoun Reference and Case (Chapter 35, page 357)

A pronoun should clearly refer to one noun, called its **antecedent**.

### Ambiguous Pronoun Reference

- Avoid ambiguous pronoun **reference** by using a pronoun that is close to and clearly refers to only one of the nouns:
  - ✗ *Jose told Keith that he should drive.*
  - ✓ Jose told Keith that Keith (or Jose) should drive.

### Vague Reference

- The pronouns *it, this, that, and which* should refer to a single noun, not an entire idea:
  - ✗ *My aunt fell down the stairs and broke her leg, which was unfortunate.*
  - ✓ My aunt fell down the stairs and broke her leg, and the accident was unfortunate.

### Implied Reference

- Avoid using a pronoun for which no antecedent exists. The noun must be mentioned first before a pronoun can refer back to it:
  - ✗ *When I entered the airport, they made me go through security.*
  - ✓ When I entered the airport, the airline representative made me go through security.



### Pronoun Case

Subjective case pronouns (used before verbs): **I, he, she, they.**

Objective case pronouns (used after verbs and with prepositions): **me, him, her, them.**

- When a pronoun is used as a subject, use the **subjective case**: **I ate dinner.**
- When a pronoun is used as an object, use the **objective case**: **The teacher asked me to answer the question.**
- A pronoun may also serve as the object after a preposition. Use the objective case when a pronoun follows a preposition: **The man sat with him and me.**
- In **comparisons** using *than* or *as*, complete the clause to find the correct pronoun:

My mother helps my sister more than I (help my sister).

My mother helps my sister more than (she helps) me.

- A pronoun in an **appositive** should use the same case as the noun it renames:

All of us, my friends and I, are going to the beach.

My father will drive all of us, my friends and me.

### Who and Whom

- If the pronoun functions as a subject, use *who* or *whose*. If the pronoun functions as an object, use *whom* or *whomever*:

Mr. Jamison, who is an engineer, helped us fix the plumbing.

My parents told me to ask whomever I wanted to come to dinner.

- Use the objective case, *whom* or *whomever*; after a preposition since objects follow prepositions: **I would return the book to whomever lost it.**
- In questions, if the pronoun functions as a subject, use *who* or *whoever*; if the pronoun functions as an object, use *whom* or *whomever*:

Who is coming to dinner?

Whom did you meet at the party?

## Semicolons and Colons (Chapter 36, page 369)

### Semicolons

- Connect two independent clauses that are closely related: **I want to make money; I don't want to die poor.**
- Join two sentences with a conjunctive adverb or a transitional expression: **I am on a diet; however, I haven't lost any weight yet.**
- Separate items in a series when the series has internal punctuation: **I have received support from my wife, Nina; my brother, Bill; and his wife, Greta.**

## Colons

- Are used after an independent clause that introduces a list: *The coach looks for three things in her athletes: desire, discipline, and selflessness.*
- Come after the words *as follows* and *the following* at the end of an independent clause: *My goals are as follows: graduate, find a job, and get married.*

## Modifiers (Chapter 37, page 377)

### Misplaced Modifiers

- Modifiers that modify the wrong word or words because of their placement are called **misplaced modifiers**. To avoid confusion, place the modifier as close as possible to the word it describes:
  - ✗ *The woman walked down the stairs in a beautiful gown.*
  - ✓ *The woman in a beautiful gown walked down the stairs.*

### Limiting Modifiers

- **Limiting modifiers** usually come before the word or words they modify. Don't place limiting modifiers in front of a verb unless they are intended to modify the verb:
  - ✗ *I almost cooked all the potatoes.*
  - ✓ *I cooked almost all the potatoes.*
- If a modifier is placed between two words that it could describe, the sentence becomes unclear and is sometimes called a **squinting modifier**:
  - ✗ *Her father told her every day to study.*
  - ✓ *Her father told her to study every day.*
- In general, do not **split** parts of an **infinitive** (*to* plus the base form of the verb: *to be*, *to go*, *to dance*, *to think*) with a modifier.
  - ✗ *I like to frequently exercise.*
  - ✓ *I like to exercise frequently.*

### Dangling Modifiers

- If a modifier has no word to describe, it is called a **dangling modifier**.
  - ✗ *To do well on the test, lots of work is required.*
  - ✓ *To do well on the test, students must do lots of work.*

## Parallelism (Chapter 38, page 385)

- Use the same part of speech to express items in pairs, series, and comparisons:
  - ✗ *She likes stylish clothes and shoes that are expensive.*
  - ✓ *She likes stylish clothes and expensive shoes.*

- ✘ *I like sleeping late in the morning, going to the beach in the afternoon, and I love partying at night.*
- ✔ I like sleeping late in the morning, going to the beach in the afternoon, and partying at night.
  
- ✘ *I prefer to make presents rather than buying them.*
- ✔ I prefer to make presents rather than to buy them.

## Writing Process Prompts and Checklists for Paragraphs

### Paragraph Writing Process Prompts

The following prompts will guide you in writing paragraphs. You may wish to consult this list each time you write a paragraph until the process becomes second nature.

#### 1. Understanding the assignment

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Length: \_\_\_\_\_

Due date: \_\_\_\_\_

If necessary, use a narrowing tree or brainstorming to narrow your topic to a subject that interests you and that you can develop in a paragraph. You may find it helpful to use scratch paper.

Narrowed topic: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Determining the writing context

Decide on your purpose, audience, and tone. Then choose a tentative main idea.

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: \_\_\_\_\_

Tone: \_\_\_\_\_

Tentative main idea: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Generating ideas

Generate ideas for your paragraph by brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, or dividing. You may find it helpful to use scratch paper. Come up with as many ideas as possible. Keep your purpose and audience in mind as you generate ideas to support your topic sentence.

#### 4. Organizing ideas

- Examine the ideas you have generated and revise your tentative topic sentence.
- Select your strongest support ideas and place them in the map or outline template in the order you would like to use them. Do more brainstorming if you do not have enough supports to develop your topic sentence.
- Generate specific details for each of your supports.
- You may wish to state how each support relates to or proves the topic sentence.

### Map Template

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

	Supporting Ideas	Specific Details	Relation to Topic Sentence
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____

### Paragraph Outline Template

Topic sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Supporting idea #1 \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specific details \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation to topic sentence \_\_\_\_\_

II. Supporting idea #2 \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specifics \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation \_\_\_\_\_

III. Supporting idea #3 \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specifics \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Supporting idea #4 \_\_\_\_\_

A. Specifics \_\_\_\_\_

B. Relation \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Drafting


Write a draft of the paragraph by creating a sentence or sentences for each supporting idea on your map or outline. Incorporate your specific details and, where appropriate, the relation to the topic sentence.

## 6. Revising

If possible, get feedback on your paragraph from peers or your instructor. If not, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your paragraph using the Paragraph Revision Checklist below.

# Checklists for Paragraphs

## Paragraph Revision Checklist



### 1. Form

Title: Are the major words (including the first and last words) capitalized?

Does the title reveal the topic and slant of the paragraph?

Does it catch the reader's attention?

Is the first sentence indented?

Does the paragraph have the required number of sentences?

Does the paragraph have the required organizational pattern?

### 2. Topic Sentence

Does the topic sentence fit the assignment?

Is it appropriate for the intended audience and purpose?

Is the main idea clear?

### 3. Supporting Sentences

Are there enough supporting sentences (three to five, depending on the assignment) to explain or prove your topic sentence?

Does each supporting sentence clearly relate to or develop the topic sentence?

Are there enough specific details, facts, and examples to convince the reader?

Are any supporting ideas repeated?

Does anything in the paragraph not relate to the main idea?

Is the relationship between supporting sentences clear?

Are there clear transitions within and between sentences?

Is the order of supporting sentences clear and logical?

Are the sentences varied in length and structure?

Is appropriate vocabulary used?

Is the language clear and precise? (Are there strong verbs, specific nouns, colorful adjectives and adverbs?)

### 4. Conclusion

Does the conclusion tie together the paragraph?

Does it introduce any new ideas or arguments that might confuse the reader?



## Peer Review Questionnaire:

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the paragraph carefully and answer the following questions as specifically as possible. Remember, your goal is to help your peer improve his or her paper.

1. Is the topic sentence clear? Restate it in your own words.
2. Does the paragraph adequately explain or develop the topic sentence? List the supporting ideas used.
3. Does the order of supporting ideas seem logical?
4. Is there enough information or supporting ideas to develop the topic sentence? What additional information or supporting ideas could the writer have included?
5. What did you like most about the paragraph?
6. What seemed most unclear about the paragraph?
7. Did you notice mechanical errors in the paragraph?

## Writing Process Prompts and Checklists for Essays

### 1. Understanding the assignment

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Length: \_\_\_\_\_

Due date: \_\_\_\_\_

If necessary, use a narrowing tree or brainstorming to narrow your topic to a subject that interests you and that you can develop in the length of paper you have been assigned. You may find it helpful to use scratch paper.

Narrowed topic: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Determining the writing context

Decide on your purpose, audience, and tone. Then write a tentative thesis.

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: \_\_\_\_\_

Tone: \_\_\_\_\_

Tentative thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Generating ideas

Generate ideas for your essay by brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, or dividing. You may find it helpful to use scratch paper. Come up with as many ideas as possible. Keep your purpose and audience in mind as you generate ideas to support your topic sentence.

### 4. Organizing ideas

#### Body

- Examine the ideas you have generated and revise your tentative thesis to fit the ideas generated.
- Select the main ideas you will use to support your thesis. Remember that you will develop one main idea in each body paragraph of the essay.
- Generate additional ideas if you don't have enough main ideas to support your thesis.
- Using the Essay Outline Template below, write a tentative topic sentence for each body paragraph (next to each Roman numeral).
- Generate ideas to develop each body paragraph.
- Decide which support topics to use and the order in which to present them. Add them to your outline.
- Revise your thesis statement to fit the ideas you will develop in the essay.
- Generate ideas for the introduction and conclusion after you have written a draft of the body paragraphs.



### Essay Outline Template

(*Note:* Use as many main topics, support topics, and specific supports as necessary.)

#### I. Introduction

Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Main topic \_\_\_\_\_

A. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

B. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

C. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

#### III. Main topic \_\_\_\_\_

A. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

B. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

C. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. Main topic \_\_\_\_\_

A. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

B. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

C. Support topic \_\_\_\_\_

#### V. Conclusion \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Drafting

#### Body

Write a draft for each of your body paragraphs, incorporating the information from your outline into your sentences. Focus on communicating your main ideas as clearly as possible.

#### Introduction

Use a technique such as brainstorming, freewriting, listing, clustering, or dividing to generate ideas for your introduction. How can you get your reader's attention? Can you think of a story or anecdote to dramatize the point of your essay? What background information does the reader need to understand your thesis?

#### Conclusion

Generate ideas for your conclusion. Can you refer back to something in your introduction to conclude your paper? Can you emphasize or restate the main points of your essay?

6. If possible, get feedback on your essay from peers or your instructor. If you cannot get feedback from someone else, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your essay using the Essay Revision Checklist below.

## Essay Revision Checklist



### 1. Introduction

Is the background information interesting? Does it engage the reader?

Does it prepare the reader for the thesis?

Does the introduction provide a logical progression toward the thesis?

Does it focus on, provide background for, or lead into the thesis?

Is the introduction adequately developed?

#### **Thesis:**

Is the thesis a clear statement of the main idea of the essay?

Does it fit the assignment?

### 2. Body Paragraphs

#### **Organization:**

If there is a blueprinted thesis, do the body paragraphs develop points in the same order as they are listed in the thesis?

Even if the thesis is not a blueprint, do the body paragraphs follow a logical order?

Is the relationship between paragraphs clear?

Are appropriate transitions used between paragraphs?

#### **Topic Sentences:**

Is each topic sentence clear? Does it make one point that supports the thesis?

#### **Supporting Sentences:**

Are there enough supporting sentences (three to five supporting ideas, depending on the assignment) to explain or prove the topic sentences?

Does each supporting sentence clearly develop the topic sentence?

Do any supporting sentences wander away from the topic?

Are any supporting ideas repeated?

Is the relationship between supporting sentences clear?

Are there clear transitions between sentences?

Is there enough specific detail in each sentence to convince the reader?

Is the order of supporting sentences clear and logical?

Do the sentences vary in length and structure?

Is the vocabulary appropriate?

Is the language clear and precise? (Are there strong verbs, specific nouns, colorful adjectives and adverbs?)

### 3. Conclusion

Does the conclusion summarize or tie together the essay?

Does it relate back to the hook or story used in the introduction?

Does it introduce any new ideas or arguments that would confuse the reader?

### 4. Entire Essay

Does the essay make sense?

Does the essay develop in a logical order?

Does the essay adequately develop the thesis?

Does the essay deliver everything promised in the thesis?

Does the essay repeat itself?



## Peer Review Questionnaire: Essay

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the essay carefully and answer the following questions as specifically as possible. Remember, your goal is to help your peer improve his or her paper. Wherever possible, provide suggestions for improvement.

1. Is the introduction well developed?

Interesting?

2. Is the thesis clear?

Restate it in your own words.

3. For each body paragraph, indicate whether or not there is a clear topic sentence that supports the thesis. Restate the main idea in your own words.

#1

#2

#3

#4

4. Are body paragraphs well developed?
5. What additional information or supporting ideas could the writer have included?
6. Does the essay develop in a logical order?
7. Does the essay adequately develop the thesis?
8. What did you like most about the essay?
9. What seemed most unclear about the essay?
10. What mechanical errors did you notice in the essay?

## Editing Checklist

If you are not sure about an error, take the time to look it up in *Writer's Resources*.

1. Check for run-ons and fragments. Is there one complete sentence and no more than one complete sentence between every two periods? (Identify the subject and the verb and make sure the word group makes sense.)
2. Check every verb. Do subjects and verbs agree and is proper verb tense used? Be sure to check the problem phrases such as *there is/there are* and pay attention to singular subjects such as *everyone*.
3. Use the dictionary or spell checker to check for capitalization errors and misspellings. Remember the spell checker will not catch errors with problem words such as *there/their*.
4. Get out your personal list of errors. Check your writing for any of these errors.
5. Check for apostrophes in contractions and possessives.
6. Check commas.
7. Be sensitive to pronouns in the writing. Do they agree with their antecedents, and is the reference clear?
8. Look for any missing words or letters by reading the writing slowly from the last sentence to the first.
9. Once you have mastered these skills, check parallelism in pairs, series, and comparisons.
10. Check for dangling and misplaced modifiers.
11. Check semicolon and colon use.





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