

# Grammar and Usage

## 1 GETTING THE IDEA

When you write, you communicate your feelings or ideas about a topic. If you want readers to understand what you have to say, you need to make sure your message is clearly expressed. Forming your sentences correctly will help achieve this goal. **Grammar** is the system of language you use when you write.

### Pronouns

The **subject** of a sentence tells who or what a sentence is about. Subjects may be nouns or pronouns. A **pronoun** is a word that takes the place of a noun. An **antecedent** is the noun the pronoun refers to. A pronoun and its antecedent must agree in gender and number.

Read the following sentence. Write the correct pronoun in the blank.

The campers were quiet as \_\_\_\_\_ walked through the woods.

Type of Noun	Pronoun
singular, female noun such as <i>Carol</i> or <i>Miss Greene</i>	<i>she, her, hers, or herself</i>
singular, male noun such as <i>Daryl</i> or <i>Glenn</i>	<i>he, him, his, or himself</i>
plural noun such as <i>cousins</i> or <i>Tyreese and Sasha</i>	<i>they, them, their, theirs, or themselves</i>
neutral noun such as <i>rain</i> or <i>hospital</i>	<i>it, its, or itself</i>

## Verbs

A **verb** tells about an action or a state of being. An action verb tells about something that happens. A state of being verb connects, or links, the subject to information about the subject. Read the following sentences. Circle the action verb, and underline the state of being verb.

Nerissa is home now.

Leto marched in yesterday's parade.

## Subject-Verb Agreement

A verb must agree with its subject. This means that a singular subject needs a singular verb, and a plural subject needs a plural verb.

- For most singular and plural subjects, use the base form of the verb: I *measure*, you *measure*, we *measure*, they *measure*.
- For singular subjects such as *he*, *she*, and *it*, add an -s to the end of the base form the verb: he *eats*, Janice *eats*.
- For subjects connected by *either/or* or *neither/or*, the verb must agree with the noun or pronoun closest to it.

Neither Angela nor the twins *play* the tuba. Either the twins or Angela *plays* the tuba.

- For two or more singular or plural subjects connected by the word *and*, use a plural verb.

When will Sam and his uncles *start* the game? When will the uncles and Sam *start* the game?

## Conjunctions

A **conjunction** is a word that connects parts of a sentence.

**Correlative conjunctions** work in pairs to connect words, phrases, and clauses that are similar in length and grammatical form. This means that if a noun follows the first conjunction, a noun must follow the second conjunction. Correlative conjunctions include *both/and*, *either/or*, *neither/nor*, *whether/or*, and *not only/but also*.

Read the following sentences. The correlative conjunctions are underlined. Which sentence correctly uses correlative conjunctions? How could you correct the other sentence?

To get to the museum, not only did Rita have to take the bus but she also had to walk three blocks.

The movie was both boring and lasted too long.

A **coordinating conjunction** is often used to join two related independent clauses in a compound sentence. An **independent clause** has a subject and a verb and tells a complete thought. There are seven coordinating conjunctions: *and*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, *for*, *nor*, *so*. When using a coordinating conjunction to connect independent clauses, place a comma before the conjunction.

Read the following sentence. The underlined word is a conjunction. What two ideas does it connect?

The wind howled, and the rain pummeled the windows.

A complex sentence is made up of an independent, or main, clause and one or more dependent clauses. A **dependent**, or **subordinate**, **clause** does not tell a complete thought and cannot stand on its own.

A **subordinating conjunction** is the first word in a subordinate clause. Subordinating conjunctions include *because, as, since, although, if, after, until, as soon as,* and *unless*. If the subordinate clause comes before the independent clause, place a comma at the end of the clause. No comma is needed if the subordinate clause comes after the independent clause.

Read the following sentences. What are the conjunctions? Which sentence needs a comma? Where should you place the comma?

After three days of rain we finally had a sunny day.

They decided to ride their bikes since it was a warm and sunny day.

### **Sentence Structure**

As you write, remember that a complete sentence has at least one independent clause. A **fragment** is an incomplete sentence. It is missing the subject or verb. Sometimes the problem is that part of a sentence has been disconnected from the main clause. Combining the fragment with the main clause using proper punctuation corrects this problem.

Read the following examples. How can you correct the fragment in each example?

**Example 1:** Amy sat with her suitcase. Waiting for her friend to arrive.

**Example 2:** As she stepped onto the ship. She thought about the exciting adventure ahead.

Pay attention when combining two independent clauses. A **run-on sentence** is missing a coordinating conjunction and/or punctuation. Remember, you need to place a comma before a coordinating conjunction. Another way to correct a run-on sentence is by splitting it into two simple sentences. Read the following example. In what two ways can you correct the run-on?

Tom was nervous about leaving home for the first time he decided to go anyway.

### **Language Spotlight • Interjections**

An **interjection** is a word or phrase that expresses emotion, such as excitement, anger, doubt, confusion, or disbelief. When expressing strong emotion, it is set as its own sentence with an exclamation point.

Read the following sentences. The underlined words are interjections. What emotions do they express?

Really? You thought that was the best way to do that?

Wow! That was a great performance.

## 2 COACHED EXAMPLE

Answer the following questions.

- 1 Which underlined verb or verb phrase is **not** used correctly?
- A. They will have argued in the past about who should be captain.
  - B. Mindy asked me to meet her by the fountain after school.
  - C. By evening, the snow had reached the car's windows.
  - D. So far, Jonah has relied on his sister to drive him home.

**Hint** Look for clues in the sentences that tell about time, such as the phrases in the past, after school, by evening, and so far. Do these clues tell about something that happens in the past, present, or future?

- 2 Read the sentence.

**After Luke arrived at school, he remembered he has promised to let Kelly borrow his spare goggles.**

Which part of the sentence has an error in verb tense?

- A. After Luke arrived at school
- B. he remembered
- C. he has promised
- D. to let Kelly borrow his spare goggles

**Hint** Identify the verb in each phrase. Is it in a different tense from the other verbs? Does that tense make sense in the sentence?

- 3 Read the sentence.

**Juno wanted to learn to play the trombone because she already knew how to play the French horn.**

Which underlined word or phrase functions as the conjunction in this sentence?

- A. to play
- B. because
- C. already
- D. how

**Hint** This sentence has a subordinating conjunction, which is part of a subordinate clause. A subordinate clause is a group of words that does *not* tell a complete thought. Find the subordinate clause, then find the conjunction in that clause.

- 4 Read the sentence.

**They're too tired to except the dinner invitation.**

What change needs to be made to correct the error?

- A. Change They're to Their.
- B. Change too to to.
- C. Change to to two.
- D. Change except to accept.

**Hint** Look at each underlined word individually and think about the word's meaning. Which meaning does *not* make sense in the sentence?

### 3 LESSON PRACTICE

Answer the following questions.

1 Read the sentence.

Neither Mika but also Ralph can make it to practice today.

Which of these words should replace the underlined words?

- A. and
- B. but
- C. or
- D. nor

2 Read the paragraph.

(1) Marie's palms were sweaty as she boarded the plane.

(2) Marie had never traveled on an airplane by herself. (3) Marie was nervous but also excited because she was going to visit her cousins.

(4) Marie had not seen her cousins since theirs visit two years ago.

Which sentence has a pronoun-antecedent agreement error?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 4



**3** Read the sentence.

**Amir was hungry before the movie he bought a pretzel.**

Which of these corrects the run-on sentence above?

- A. Amir was hungry before the movie so he bought a pretzel.
- B. Amir was hungry before the movie, so he bought a pretzel.
- C. Amir was hungry before the movie so, he bought a pretzel.
- D. Amir was hungry before the movie, so, he bought a pretzel.

**4** Read the sentence.

**By the end of next year, Mrs. Cohen \_\_\_\_\_ volunteered at the school ten years.**

Which verb or verb phrase correctly completes the sentence?

- A. had
- B. has
- C. have
- D. will have

- 5 Read the paragraph.

(1) Saul's favorite basketball player had always been Timothy Dugan of the New York Commandos. (2) Yesterday, Dugan had visited Saul's school. (3) Saul has waited in line for more than an hour. (4) But getting his basketball signed by Dugan had been worth the wait!

Which sentence in the paragraph has an error?

- A. sentence 1
  - B. sentence 2
  - C. sentence 3
  - D. sentence 4
- 6 Read the sentence.

**Leslie keeps all of her running trophies \_\_\_\_\_ the shelf.**

Which preposition completes the sentence to tell where Leslie keeps her trophies?

- A. about
- B. on
- C. through
- D. to

# Mechanics

## 1 GETTING THE IDEA

Using appropriate grammar is one way to make sure your writing is clear. Another is to make sure your use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling is correct.

### Commas

Look closely at any writing and you will see dozens of commas throughout the text. A **comma** (,) is a punctuation mark used to separate words or groups of words. It is one of the most frequently used punctuation marks. The chart below explains when and how to use commas in your writing.

Rule	Example
Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence.	After I woke up, I brushed my teeth.
Use a comma to set off the words <i>yes</i> and <i>no</i> .	No, Pablo is not going to the party.
Use a comma to set off a <b>tag question</b> , or a statement that is turned into a question.	It was Yenna reading the poem, wasn't it?
Use a comma or commas to indicate direct address, which is when the writer or a character speaks directly to someone.	Jo, I had no choice. I had no choice, Jo. You see, Jo, I had no choice.

## Items in a Series

When you list three or more items, you have a series. Every item in a series should be separated by punctuation. Most often, you use commas to separate items in a series.

My colored pencils, eraser, and pencil sharpener are in my art box.

If the items include commas, use **semicolons (;)** to separate the items.

My best friends are Jocelyn, who is also my cousin; Marcus, who is smart and kind; and Desiree, who always makes me laugh.

Read the following sentence. Where should you add commas and semicolons?

On vacation, Randi visited Miami Tampa and Orlando in Florida Savannah Macon and Atlanta in Georgia and Chattanooga Nashville and Clarksville in Tennessee.

## Titles of Works

Sometimes when writing, you may need to refer to the title of a book, movie, or song. Read the chart below. It explains how to show the titles of different works. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write your own example for each type of work.

Work	Style	Example
book, play, movie, magazine, journal, newspaper	typed: italics hand written: underline	<i>Hatchet</i> , <i>The Sound of Music</i> , <i>The New York Times</i>
short story, article, poem, song, chapter, essay	quotation marks	"What is Pink?" "Over the Rainbow," "The Road Not Taken"

## Spelling

Using correct spelling makes your message clear and keeps your readers from becoming confused. Some helpful spelling rules are:

- Use *i* before *e*, except after *c*, or if the sound made by the letters is long *a*. Examples: *believe, receive, sleigh*.
- To make the plural form of a noun that ends in a consonant followed by a *y*, change the *y* to an *i* and add *-es*. Examples: *baby/babies, puppy/puppies, spy/spies*.
- To make the plural form of a noun that ends in *sh, ch, ss, s,* or *x*, add *-es* to the end of the word. Examples: *ashes, beach/beaches, boss/bosses, bus/buses, fox/foxes*.
- In most cases, to make the plural form of a noun that ends in *f* or *fe*, change the *f* or *fe* to *ves*. Examples: *half/halves, leaf/leaves*.
- In most cases, to make the plural form of a noun that ends in a vowel and an *o*, add *-s* to the end of the word. Examples: *radio/radios, zoo/zoo*s.

## Language Spotlight • Homographs

**Homographs** are words that are spelled alike but have different meanings. Some homographs have different pronunciations.

Read the following sentences aloud. The underlined words are homographs. How are their meanings different? Which homographs have different pronunciations?

I can open a can of soup.

We record our observations so we have a record of what happened.

## 2 COACHED EXAMPLE

Answer the following questions.

- 1 Which title should be set in italics?
- A. The villain is not introduced until the chapter *Dancing Sharks*.
  - B. Did you enjoy the poem *The Tyger*?
  - C. *You Are My Sunshine* is the first song I learned to play on the guitar.
  - D. Our seats for *Wicked* are in the tenth row.

**Hint** Identify each work. Which is a longer work? Remember that longer works are set in italics.

- 2 Read the sentence below.

We took a brief break to eat our lunches, sitting among the moving boxes, which were stacked to the cieling.

Which underlined word in the sentence is spelled incorrectly?

- A. brief
- B. lunches
- C. boxes
- D. cieling

**Hint** In words with i and e, which letter comes first? When is there an exception? How do you make the plural form of words that end in ch or x?

3 Read the sentence below.

**Don't forget to weigh the peaches and berries before setting them on the shelves.**

Which underlined word in the sentence is spelled incorrectly?

- A. weigh
  - B. peaches
  - C. berries
  - D. shelves
- 4 Which title should have quotation marks?
- A. The best book I read last year was *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle.
  - B. I learned about megalodon in the article *The Biggest Shark that Ever Lived*.
  - C. Our class searched *The Washington Post* for articles about the upcoming election.
  - D. They filmed scenes for the movie *Return of the Martians IV* in my town.

- 5 Read the sentence.

**My teachers this year are Mr. Simmons, who taught my brother last year; Ms. Nguyen, who is also my coach and Mrs. Rodriguez, who is my favorite teacher.**

After which word should a semicolon be added?

- A. after teachers
  - B. after are
  - C. after coach
  - D. after and
- 6 Read the sentence.

**After studying for weeks Bertie earned a perfect score on the test.**

Where should a comma be added to correct the error?

- A. after After
- B. after weeks
- C. after Bertie
- D. after score



# Style, Tone, and Effect

## 1 GETTING THE IDEA

If you want your writing to be effective, your writing needs to be clear and interesting to the reader. Often, this means revising your work by expanding, combining, or reducing sentences. Careful word choice and use of punctuation also makes your writing more effective.

### Revising Sentences

When you **expand** a sentence, you add details to it in order to more fully describe or explain something. Details can tell more about who, what, where, when, why, or how. Read the following sentences to see how adding descriptive language makes for a more interesting sentence.

**Original:** The house is located on that street.

**Revised:** Mr. Fleming's house, with its peeling paint and rickety-looking porch, is located at the end of Chestnut Street.

If you use too many simple sentences, your writing will sound choppy. Combining sentences can make your writing flow more smoothly. One way to **combine sentences** is to use conjunctions and appropriate punctuation to join two sentences.

**Original:** Fossil fuels will eventually run out. Renewable resources will not.

**Revised:** Unlike fossil fuels, renewable resources will not run out.

Sometimes, a sentence contains so much detail or information that it becomes confusing. When this happens, you need to **reduce** the sentence by removing any repetitive or unnecessary information.

**Original:** The sidewalk, now icy after the rain and freezing temperatures, was so slippery it caused Malcolm to slip and fall.

**Revised:** Malcolm slipped and fell on the icy sidewalk.

Read the following sentences. Which is more effective? Why do you think so?

A hurricane is a big storm with strong winds.

A hurricane can be as large as 600 miles across and have winds of 75 to 200 miles per hour.

### **Using Precise Language**

A good writer uses precise language in order to clearly communicate his or her ideas. **Precise language** uses words or phrases that are clear and specific. Read the following sentences to see how using precise language improves the sentence.

**Original:** Frogs are animals with small bodies and long back legs.

**Revised:** Frogs are amphibians with squat bodies and long hind legs.

Read the following sentence. How could you use precise language to make the sentence more effective?

The student stood by the door.

### Choosing Words and Punctuation for Effect

When you share an idea or opinion, it's not just *what* you say, but *how* you say it. The words and phrases you choose affect the meaning and tone of your writing. Read the following sentences. Only one word is changed in each, but that word has a dramatic impact on the sentence's meaning and tone.

She walked into the room.

She stomped into the room.

She wandered into the room.

Read the following sentence. Replace the underlined word with one that has a stronger impact.

After hearing he qualified for the National Geographic Bee, Deonte was happy.

You can also use punctuation for effect.

- A dash can be used to add emphasis.

I was going to invite him to the game—until I heard him say he hated basketball.

- Quotation marks can be used to show irony, or contradiction. Irony often carries a meaning that is the opposite of what the words literally mean. It is usually meant to show humor.

The last time I saw my blue blazer was two years ago when my brother “borrowed” it.

Read the following sentences. Add a dash or quotation marks where needed.

Asking the former thief to put away your jewelry was an excellent idea.

I didn't just want to go to the library today I needed to.

### **Language Spotlight • Rearranging Sentences**

You may need to **rearrange**, or reorganize, your sentences so they flow logically from one idea to the next. Read the following paragraph. Where should you move the underlined sentence?

Belle decided to ask Olivia to run some passing drills with her.  
Belle was having trouble passing while under pressure. She wanted to improve her game. Olivia agreed. After a few hours of practice, Belle began to feel more confident.

## 2 COACHED EXAMPLE

Answer the following questions.

1 Read the sentences.

**Jenna wasn't very artistic.  
She wanted to take an art class.**

Choose the **best** way to combine the sentences.

- A. Jenna wanted to take an art class, even though she wasn't very artistic.
- B. Even though Jenna wasn't very artistic, she wanted to take an art class.
- C. Jenna, even though she wasn't very artistic, still wanted to take an art class.
- D. Even though Jenna, who wasn't very artistic, wanted to take an art class.

**Hint** Using subordinating conjunctions, such as *even though*, is one way to combine sentences. Remember that if the subordinating clause comes first, place a comma at the end of the clause.

2 Which sentence **best** creates a feeling of excitement?

- A. The boy crept across the yard.
- B. The boy bolted across the yard.
- C. The boy crossed the yard.
- D. The boy walked across the yard.

**Hint** Look at the verb in each sentence. Which action creates an image that something exciting happened?

- 3 Which sentence uses quotation marks to show irony?
- A. "I love waking up early on Saturdays," said Shellie.
  - B. He recently read the article "Who Loves to Wake up Early on a Saturday?"
  - C. I just "love" walking up early on Saturdays.
  - D. We were told she "loved waking up early" on Saturdays.

**Hint** Irony uses words that mean the opposite of what you think. Usually this is done to show humor. Which sentence uses quotation marks to show a contradiction?

- 4 Read the sentence.

**Maddie didn't want to wake her grandmother, so she \_\_\_\_\_.**

Choose the **most** specific words to complete the sentence.

- A. was silent as she passed her grandmother
- B. was quiet as she walked
- C. moved carefully to get over there
- D. tiptoed down the hallway on the way to the kitchen

**Hint** Look for the option that creates the clearest image in your mind.

### 3 LESSON PRACTICE

Answer the following questions.

- 1 Which sentence correctly uses punctuation to show emphasis?
- A. It was the perfect plan—until Jasper betrayed us.
  - B. It was—the perfect plan—until Jasper betrayed us.
  - C. It was the perfect plan until Jasper—betrayed us.
  - D. It was—the perfect plan until Jasper betrayed us.

- 2 Read the sentence.

**Tasha missed the bus.**

Choose the **best** way to expand the sentence.

- A. Tasha, who normally remembered everything, had forgotten her homework, which meant she had to run back and get it, making her miss the bus.
- B. Tasha had to run back home to get her homework and ended up missing the bus.
- C. Tasha, an excellent student who was on the school's running team, had to run back home to get her homework, missing the bus.
- D. Tasha had to run back home to get her homework, missing the bus, since she had forgotten it at home.

- 3 Read the sentence.

**The construction of the Erie Canal \_\_\_\_\_.**

Choose the **most** specific words to complete the sentence.

- A. connected two bodies of water
- B. used a deep ditch to join the lake and the river
- C. brought together distant places in New York
- D. linked Lake Erie to the Hudson River by water

- 4 Which sentence uses words and phrases to **best** show the character is bored?
- A. Emile slouched on the couch and flipped through the channels.
  - B. Emile sat on the couch and changed the channel.
  - C. Emile perched on the couch and flipped through the channels.
  - D. Emile rested on the couch and changed the channel.

- 5 Read the sentence.

**Erosion, which is a process, slowly breaks down soil and rock, little by little, until it is worn away.**

Choose the **best** way to reduce the sentence.

- A. Erosion wears away soil and rock.
- B. Erosion is a process that involves slowly breaking down and wearing away soil and rock.
- C. Erosion is a slow process that breaks down soil and rock.
- D. Erosion, the process, breaks down soil and rock, slowly.

- 6 Read the sentence.

**Ian was exhausted after \_\_\_\_\_.**

Choose the **most** specific words to complete the sentence.

- A. working hard in the yard
- B. taking care of the lawn and flower beds
- C. doing some things
- D. mowing the lawn and weeding the flower beds



## CHAPTER 3 REVIEW

Answer the following questions.

- 1 Which sentence is punctuated correctly?
- A. Today's practice is inside the gym, isn't it?
  - B. Today's practice is inside the gym isn't it?
  - C. Today's, practice is inside the gym isn't it?
  - D. Today's practice, is inside the gym isn't it?

- 2 Read the sentence.

**Katherine left her bicycle \_\_\_\_\_.**

Choose the **most** specific words to complete the sentence.

- A. near the porch
- B. in front of the screen door
- C. beside the screen door of the back porch
- D. by the back of the house

3 Read the sentences.

**Ivan wants to be a veterinarian.  
He is allergic to cats.**

Choose the **best** way to combine the sentences.

- A. Ivan wants to be a veterinarian, so he is allergic to cats.
- B. Ivan wants to be a veterinarian, yet he is allergic to cats.
- C. Since he is allergic to cats, Ivan wants to be a veterinarian.
- D. He is allergic to cats even though he wants to be a veterinarian.

4 Read the sentence.

**Hey! You didn't tell me we were meeting somewhere new.**

Which underlined word or phrase functions as the interjection?

- A. Hey
- B. didn't
- C. we were
- D. somewhere

5 Read the paragraph.

- (1) Rosa and Mike walked around the carnival with their parents.  
(2) The family stopped by the food tents where they bought snow cones.  
(3) Then Mike rode the bumper cars with her friends.  
(4) Meanwhile, Rosa decided to try her luck at the game booths.

Which sentence has a pronoun-antecedent agreement error?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 4

6 Which title should be set in italics?

- A. My favorite story in the book is *The Marble Champ*.
- B. Miriam won the contest with her essay *Visiting My Grandma*.
- C. For my birthday, Dad surprised me with a subscription to *Cricket* magazine.
- D. Brad returned *Chasing Vermeer* to the library once he was done reading it.

**7** Read the sentence.

**Since Patty stayed home yesterday, she finishes writing her report and studied for the test she will take next week.**

Which part of the sentence has an error in verb tense?

- A. Since Patty stayed home yesterday
- B. she finishes writing her report
- C. and studied for the test
- D. she will take next week

**8** Read the sentence.

**Have danced in the show before.**

Which of these corrects the sentence fragment above?

- A. Nancy have danced in the show before.
- B. Have danced and sung in the show before.
- C. Have not danced in the show before.
- D. Nancy and Peter have danced in the show before.

- 9 Which sentence **best** shows a feeling of surprise?
- A. Patel's jaw dropped and the box slipped from her hands.
  - B. Patel clenched her jaw and threw down the box.
  - C. Patel's smile froze and she clutched the box to her chest.
  - D. Patel smiled and held the box.
- 10 Which underlined verb or verb phrase is **not** used correctly?
- A. I has never visited my uncle in Oklahoma before last year.
  - B. Lucy owned the last painting made by her artist grandmother.
  - C. Matt will have finished the assignment by the time it is due.
  - D. Dad has tripped on that step many times this year.