The RoughWriter's Guide

The RoughWriter's Guide

A Handbook for Writing Well

DR. KAREN PALMER AND DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

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Introduction

The *Rough Writer's Handbook* serves as a student's guide for navigating the world of academic writing. Whether you feel confident in your writing and just need a refresher on a few points or whether you are really struggling and need help with the entire writing process, this *Handbook* is here to help you succeed.

This book is laid out in the order a student should follow when writing an academic essay for college. One of the most common reasons students have trouble writing for college is that they simply don't follow the correct process. Not only will this guide help you to master the art of writing for academic life, but it will also familiarize you with the steps you need to take to become a good academic writer.

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Writing
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Discourse
text
Porter
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statement
made
facts
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uses
author
Radio
conversation
Conventions
work
Misconceptions
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essay
opinion
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interlextuality
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fantasy-themed
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Independence
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Establishing
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come out, pre-writing helps to prepare you to write well. Choosing an appropriate topic can seem daunting, but we will teach you some strategies for overcoming that challenge. You'll notice we've included research in this part of the writing process. That's because good writers will not start writing about a topic until they have a solid grasp of the information first. Unless you are writing a narrative essay about your own life experiences, research is important.

Next, it's time to start planning and drafting your essay. Good essays begin with a solid outline. Just as you need a map to help you find your way to a new place, you need a map of your essay to create a solid piece of writing.

Once you have your draft in place, it's time to spruce it up for your instructor. Just as you might clean up your apartment before your significant other visits for the first time, this is your chance to make a good impression. Revision and editing are critical parts of the writing process, and in fact, this is often where the writing shines.

What we'd like you to remember is that writing is a recursive process. It's not something you just sit down and do. It's something that takes time. However, if you follow the steps we outline here, you'll become skilled at crafting solid academic essays.

Learning how to write well is not just a skill for college—it's a skill for life, too. That's why we've included a helpful section in this handbook for writing outside of college. We've included how to write a resume, helpful tips for e-mails, etc.

So, let's get started!

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PART I

STUDYING IN COLLEGE

1. Developing Study Skills

DR. KAREN PALMER

Balancing College, Work, and Life

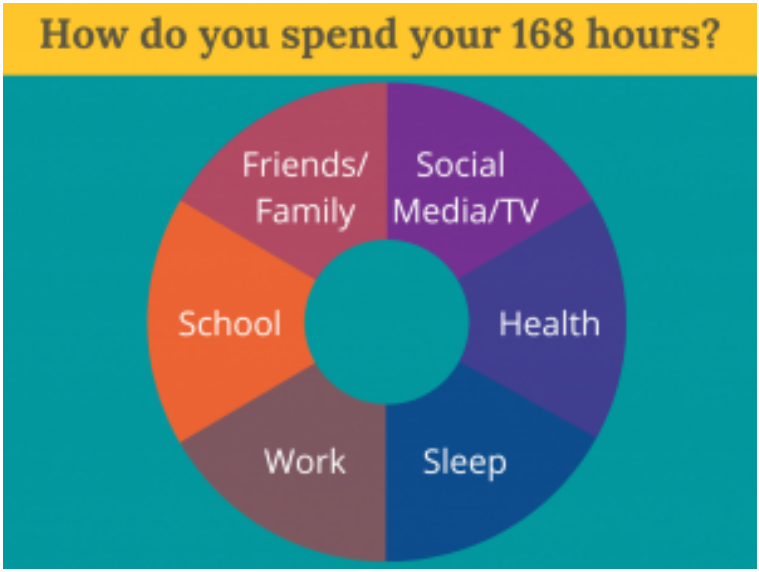
Attending classes, studying, working, and finding time for family, friends, and yourself can be a challenging schedule for college students to balance. How a student organizes their class load can affect their overall success when starting college. We cannot go back in time. If I used my time poorly last Wednesday, I can't get it back.

> *"If you had a bank that credited your account each morning with $86,400, but carried no balance from day to day and allowed you to keep no cash in your account, and every evening cancelled whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day, what would you do? Draw out every cent, of course! Well, you have such a bank, and its name is time. Every morning it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off as lost whatever of these you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries no balance; it allows no overdrafts. Each day it opens a new account with you. Each night it burns the record of the day. If you fail to use the day's deposit, the loss is yours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against the morrow. You must live in the*

present – on today's deposit. Invest it so as to get the utmost in health and happiness and success."

– Anonymous

Most of us spend our time doing a combination of what interests us, what's important to us, and what we feel we "have" to do, without really planning out our day. As a college student, it's important to find better ways to spend your time, allowing you to accomplish your most important tasks and spend time with the people most important to you.



Think about how you divide your time between work, school, friends/family, social media/TV, health, and sleep.

Knowing how many hours are in a week helps when we start to look at how much time we have, how we want to spend our time, and how we actually spend our time. The following list includes many activities that might fill your time:

- Child Care
- Class
- Community Service / Volunteer
- Commuting / Transportation
- Eating / Food Preparation
- Exercise
- Family
- Friends
- Household / Child Care Duties
- Internet / Social Media / Phone / Texting
- Party
- Recreation / Leisure
- Relationship
- Sleeping
- Spirituality / Prayer / Meditation
- Study
- Video Games
- Watching TV or Movies, Netflix, Youtube
- Work / Career

It can be helpful to keep track of the time you spend doing different activities for a week or two. You might be surprised how much time is wasted on social media, TV, and other activities that are not helping you achieve your goals.

Transition from a High School to a College Schedule

One challenge for many students is the transition from the structure of high school to the structure of college. In high school, students spend a large portion of their time in class (approximately 30 hours per week), while full-time college students may spend only one-third of that time in class (approximately 12 hours per week).

Further, college students are assigned much more homework than high school students. Think about how many times one of your high school teachers gave you something to read during class. In college, students are given more material to read with the expectation that it's done outside of class. In fact, college students should plan to spend about 2-3 hours studying each week for every 1 credit hour. So, if you are taking 12 credit hours, plan on a total of 48 hours a week spent on reading, studying, homework, and attending class.

You might need to spend more time than what is recommended if you are taking a subject you find challenging, have fallen behind in a class, or if you are taking short-term classes. This would certainly be true if I were to take a physics class. Since I find learning physics difficult, I might have to spend three or four hours of study time for each hour of class instruction. You also might need to study more than what is recommended if you are looking to achieve better grades. Conversely, you might need to spend less time if the subject comes easy to you (such as sociology does for me) or if there is not a lot of assigned homework.

Keep in mind that 20 hours of work per week is the maximum recommended for full-time students taking 12 semester units in a term. For students working full-time (40 hours a week), no more than six units is recommended. The total of both combined is an important consideration. Students often start to see difficulty when their total number of hours between work and school exceeds 60

per week. The amount of sleep decreases, stress increases, grades suffer, job performance decreases, and students are often unhappy.

> "*Lack of direction, not lack of time is the problem. We all have 24 hour days.*"
>
> – Zig Ziglar

Creating SMART Goals

The universal challenge of time is that there are more things that we want to do and not enough time to do them. Most students have aspirations, dreams, and goals, and they are in college to help them achieve those goals. However, many students get discouraged by the length of time it takes them to complete a goal (completing their education, reaching their career goal, buying a home, getting married, etc.). And every semester there are students who drop classes because they have taken on too much or they are unable to keep up with their class work because they have other commitments and interests.

There is nothing wrong with other commitments or interests. On the contrary, they may bring joy and fulfillment, but it's important to think about whether those other interests are helping you achieve your goals…or keeping you from them. For instance, if you were to drop a class because you required surgery, needed to take care of a sick family member or your boss increased your work hours, those may be important and valid reasons to do so. On the other hand, if you were to drop a class because you wanted to binge watch *Grey's Anatomy*, play more Minecraft, or spend more time on Facebook,

Twitter, or Instagram, you may have more difficulty justifying that decision. Regardless, this is still your decision to make. Whether or not you achieve your goals is ultimately up to you.

Without goals, we aren't sure what we are trying to accomplish, and there is little way of knowing if we are accomplishing anything. If you already have a goal-setting plan that works well for you, keep it. If you don't have goals, or have difficulty working towards them, I encourage you to try this.

Make a list of all the things you want to accomplish for the next day. Here is a sample to do list:

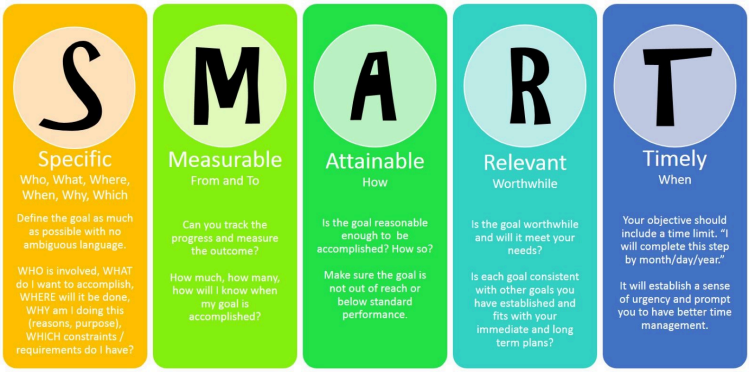
- Go to grocery store
- Go to class
- Pay bills
- Exercise
- Social media
- Study
- Eat lunch with friend
- Work
- Watch TV
- Text friends

Your list may be similar to this one or it may be completely different. It is yours, so you can make it however you want. Do not be concerned about the length of your list or the number of items on it. You now have the framework for what you want to accomplish the next day. Hang on to that list. We will use it again.

Now take a look at the upcoming week, the next month and the next year. Make a list of what you would like to accomplish in each of those time frames. If you want to go jet skiing, travel to Europe, or get a bachelor's degree: Write it down. Pay attention to detail. The more detail within your goals the better. Ask yourself: what is necessary to complete your goals?

With those lists completed, take into consideration how the best goals are created. Commonly called "SMART" goals, it is often

helpful to apply criteria to your goals. SMART is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time Based.



Smart goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely. (*Image in the Public Domain*)

Revise your lists for the things you want to accomplish in the next week, month, and year by applying the SMART goal techniques. The best goals are usually created over time and through the process of more than one attempt, so spend some time completing this. Do not expect to have "perfect" goals on your first attempt. Also, keep in mind that your goals do not have to be set in stone. They can change. And since over time things will change around you, your goals should also change.

> *"Obstacles are things a person sees when he takes his eyes off his goal."*
>
> – E. Joseph Cossman

Exercise 1

If you decided today that our goal was to run a marathon and then went out tomorrow and tried to run one, what would happen? Unless a person is already a trained marathon runner, we might respond with: (jokingly) "I would die," or "I couldn't do it." How come? Because we likely need training, running shoes, support, knowledge, experience, and confidence—all things that cannot be attained overnight. Instead of giving up and thinking it's impossible because the task is too big for which to prepare, we could develop smaller steps or tasks that can be started and worked on immediately. Once all of the small steps are completed, we would be on our way to accomplishing this big goal.

What steps would you need to complete the following big goals?

- Buying a house
- Getting married
- Attaining a bachelor's degree
- Destroying the Death Star
- Losing weight

Time Blocking

Once you've thought through what goals you want to accomplish

and how much time you have to accomplish them, it's time to make a plan. Many professionals use a concept called Time Blocking to help them manage their time in a way that will help them achieve their goals. Time blocking is a way to create a schedule by assigning chunks of time in the day/week/month/year to work on different tasks.

Sometimes it helps to take a look at your time and divide it into two areas: fixed time and free time. Fixed time is time that you have committed to a certain area. It might be school, work, religion, recreation, or family. There is no right or wrong to fixed time, and everyone is different. Some people will naturally have more fixed time than others. Free time is just that—it is free. It can be used however you want to use it; it's time you have available for activities you enjoy. Someone might work 9am-2pm, then have class 3pm-4:30pm, then have dinner with family 5pm-6pm, study 6pm-7pm, and then have free time from 7pm-9pm. Looking at how we spend our time often shows us that we have more time than we think we do...or reveals how much time we spend on activities that do not help us to achieve our goals!

Once you have a solid idea of how much time you have in your day, it's easier to make time for activities that aren't fixed, like studying. It's a really good idea to set up a fixed time each day when you plan to study for your classes.

Exercise 2

Take a look at a typical week for yourself. Use the table below to fill in the your fixed time activities. Set the times in the left column to correspond to the hours between when you wake up and when you go to sleep. How much

fixed time do you have? How much free time? How much fixed and free time would you like to have?

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Using Time Wisely

Once you have a basic idea of how you want to use your time, it's easier to use your time wisely. However, there are times when you might have more on your "to do" list than normal, and it may feel like you just can't accomplish everything. In times like these, you might stress out, you might procrastinate even more, you might even simply want to give up. None of these options will help you to achieve your goals. So, having a strategy to deal with that situation before it arises can help you to make better choices in the moment.

Creating a list is a good way to get started. Having everything you have to do in front of you gives you the opportunity to prioritize and make wise decisions instead of simply doing the easiest or quickest tasks. For example, checking Facebook or texting might only take a few minutes, but doing it prior to studying for a test means that you might end up having less time than you need to study.

People like to check things off that they have done. It feels good. But don't confuse productivity with accomplishment of tasks that aren't important. You could have a long list of things that you completed, but if they aren't important to you, it probably wasn't the best use of your time.

A Time Management Matrix can help you categorize your tasks. Thinking through whether each task is urgent and important will help you to prioritize what should be done first. Start with tasks that are both urgent and important, then move on to those that are important, but not urgent. Deal with tasks that are not important, but urgent quickly. Leave unimportant, non-urgent tasks for last.

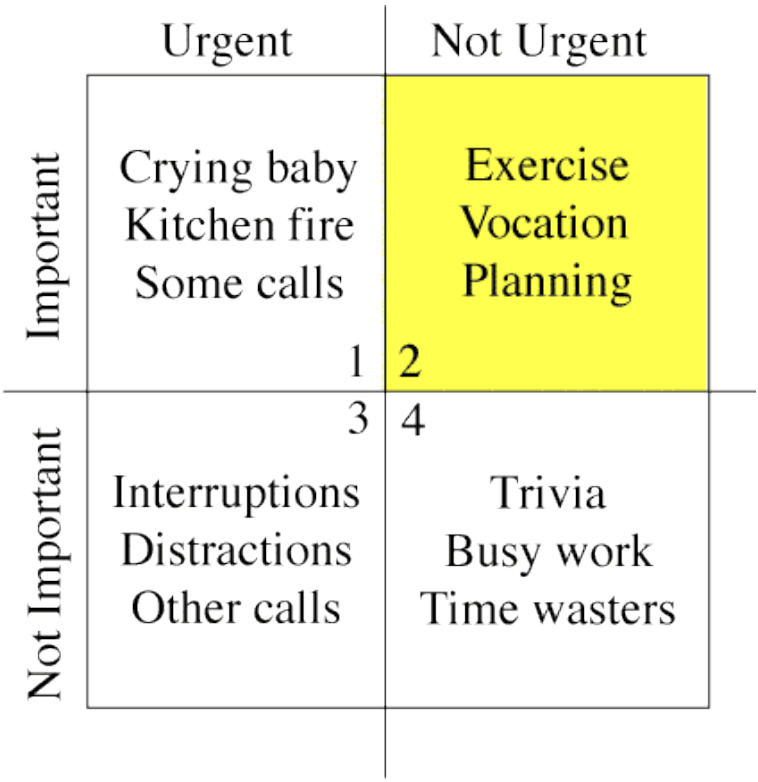


Image by Rorybowman – Public Domain

Exercise 3

Here is one student's "to do" list on Sunday evening:

ENG-Revise paper–due Friday

Call Mom

Do laundry

MAT-finish homework, due Monday

Psych-Read Chapter 3 before class on Tuesday

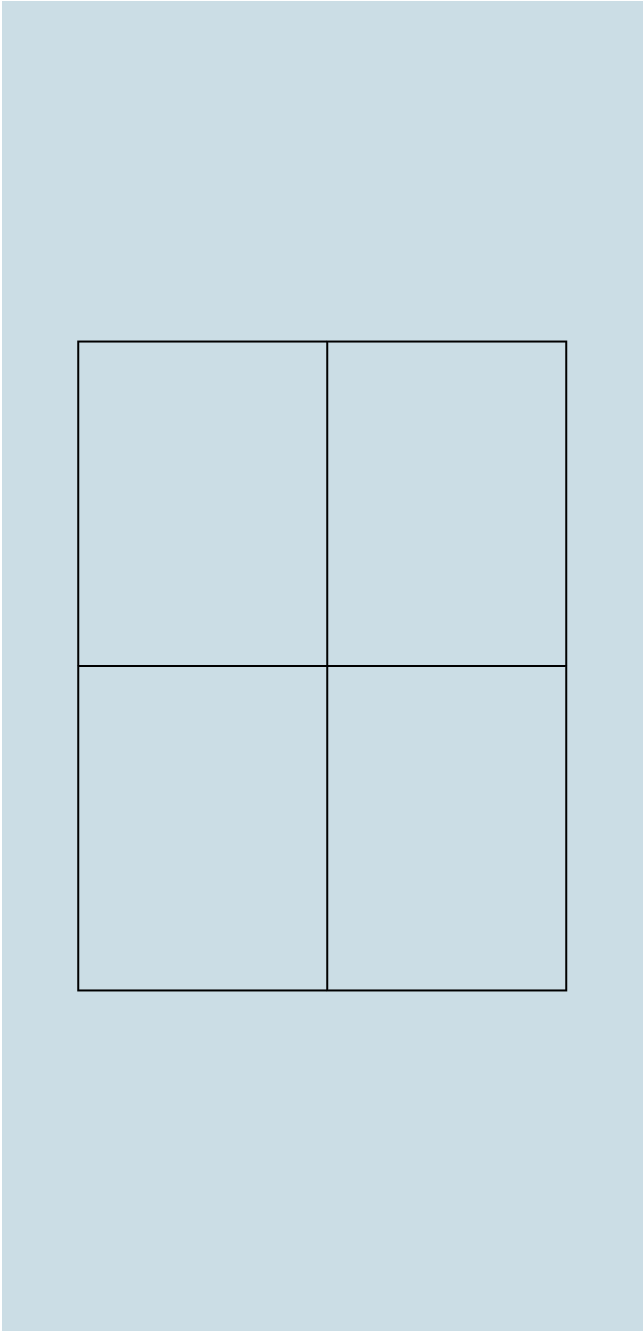
SPA-Extra Credit assignment due by the end of the semester

Buy groceries

Apply for scholarship–due in two weeks

Pay phone bill–due Wednesday

Categorize the tasks into the four quadrants using the table below:



Taking Notes

If for no other reason, you should take notes during class so that you do not forget valuable and important information. Despite living with incredible search engines on computers and smart phones that give us a plethora of information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, students do not have the ability to access those during exams. Instructors want to know what you know, not what Google knows. We've become accustomed to searching for information on demand to find what we need when we need it. The consequence is that we don't often commit information to memory because we know it will be there tomorrow if we wish to search for it again. This causes challenges with preparation for exams as what we're tested on is in our brain rather than information we can search for.

Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve

How much of something do we forget every day? Image by Educ320 and licensed under CC SA.

The curve shows that after six days, only about 25% percent of information is retained after initial memorization. Without review, 42 percent of learned information is lost after only 20 minutes. After one day, 66 percent of learned information is lost without review.

In order to try to retain information long term, we must move it from our short-term memory to our long-term memory. One of the best ways to do that is through repetition. The more we review information, and the sooner we review once we initially learn it, the more reinforced that information is in our long-term memory.

The first step in being able to review is to take notes when you are originally learning the information. Students who do not take notes in class in the first place will not be able to recall all of the information covered in order to best review.

Taking notes during lectures is a skill, just like riding a bike. If you have never taken notes while someone else is speaking before, it's important to know that you will not be an expert at it right away. It's challenging to listen to someone speak and then make a note about

what they said, while at the same time continuing to listen to their next thought.

When learning to ride a bike, everyone is going to fall. With practice and concentration, we gain confidence and improve our skill. The more we practice, the better we get. Some instructors will give you cues to let you know something is important. If you hear or see one of these cues, it's something you should write down. This might include an instructor saying, "this is important," or "this will be covered on the exam." If you notice an instructor giving multiple examples, repeating information or spending a lot of time with one idea, these may be cues. Writing on the board or presenting a handout or visual information may also be a cue.

"If you notice an instructor giving multiple examples, repeating information or spending a lot of time with one idea, these may be cues. Writing on the board or presenting a handout or visual information may also be a cue."

Keep in mind that students who know what their instructor is going to lecture on before the lecture are at an advantage. Why? Because the more they understand about what the instructor will be talking about, the easier it is to take notes. How can you possibly know what the instructor's lecture will be on? Take a look at the syllabus before the lecture. It won't take much time, but it can make a world of difference. You will also be more prepared and be able to see important connections if you read your assigned reading before the lecture. It's not easy to do, but students who do it will be rewarded.

Tips for Taking Notes During the Lecture

1. Arrive early and find a good seat. Seats in the front and center are best for being able to see and hear information. A seat at the 50-yard line for the Super Bowl is more expensive for a reason: it gives the spectator the greatest experience.
2. Do not try to write down everything the instructor talks about. It's impossible and inefficient. Instead, try to distinguish between the most important topics and ideas and write those down. This is also a skill that students can improve upon. You may wish to ask your instructor during office hours if you have identified the main topics in your notes, or compare your notes to one of your classmates.
3. Use shorthand and/or abbreviations. So long as you will be able to decipher what you are writing, the least amount of pen or pencil strokes, the better. It will free you up so you can pay more attention to the lecture and help you be able to determine what is most important.
4. Write down what your instructor writes. Anything on a dry erase board, chalkboard, overhead projector, and in some cases in presentations; these are cues for important information.
5. Leave space to add information to your notes. You can use this space during or after lectures to elaborate on ideas.
6. Do not write in complete sentences. Do not worry about spelling or punctuation. Getting the important information, concepts, and main ideas is much more important. You can always revise your notes later and correct spelling.
7. Often, the most important information is delivered at the beginning and/or the end of a lecture. Many students arrive late or pack up their belongings and mentally check out a few minutes before the lecture ends. They are missing out on the opportunity to write down valuable information. Keep taking notes until the lecture is complete.

Tips for after the lecture

1. Consolidate notes as soon as possible after the lecture has ended. Identify the main ideas and underline or highlight them.
2. Test yourself by creating questions about the information covered in your notes. If you can provide most of the information in your notes without looking at it, you're in good shape. If you cannot, keep studying until you improve your retention. Review periodically as needed to keep the information fresh in your mind.
3. Practice summarizing information — it's a great study skill. It allows you to determine how information fits together. It should be written in your own words (don't use the chapter summary in the textbook to write your summary, but check the chapter summary after you write yours for accuracy).
4. Try to share the information you learned with someone else. Teaching is one of the best ways to retain information!

Pre-Test Strategies

Q: When should you start preparing for the first test? Circle…

1. The night before.
2. The week prior.
3. The first day of classes.

"Anxiety" Image by HAMZA BUTT is licensed under CC BY 2.0

If you answered "3. The first day of classes," you are correct. If you circled all three, you are also correct. Preparing to pass tests is something that begins when learning begins and continues all the way through to the final exam.

Many students, however, don't start thinking about test taking, whether weekly exams, mid-terms, or finals, until the day before when they engage in an all-nighter, or cramming. From the previous unit on memory, you might recall that the brain can only process an average of 5-7 new pieces of information at a time. Additionally, unless memory devices are used to aid memory and to cement information into long term memory (or at least until the test is over tomorrow!) chances are slim that students who cram will effectively learn and remember the information.

Additionally, a lot of students are unaware of the many strategies available to help with the test-taking experience before, during, and after. For starters, take a look at what has helped you so far.

Exercise 4

Pre-Test Taking Strategies

PART A:

Put a check mark next to the pre-test strategies you already employ.

____ Organize your notebook and other class materials the first week of classes.

____ Maintain your organized materials throughout the term.

____ Take notes on key points from lectures and other materials.

____ Make sure you understand the information as you go along.

____ Access your instructor's help and the help of a study group, as needed.

____ Organize a study group, if desired.

____ Create study tools such as flashcards, graphic organizers, etc. as study aids.

____ Complete all homework assignments on time.

____ Review likely test items several times beforehand.

____ Ask your instructor what items are likely to be covered on the test.

____ Ask your instructor if she or he can provide a study guide or practice test.

____ Ask your instructor if he/she gives partial credit for test items such as essays.

____ Maintain an active learner attitude.

____ Schedule extra study time in the days just prior to the test.

____ Gather all notes, handouts, and other materials needed before studying.

____ Review all notes, handouts, and other materials.

____ Organize your study area for maximum concentration and efficiency.

____ Create and use mnemonic devices to aid memory.

____ Put key terms, formulas, etc., on a single study sheet that can be quickly reviewed.

____ Schedule study times short enough (1-2 hours) so you do not get burned out.

____ Get plenty of sleep the night before.

____ Set a back-up alarm in case the first alarm doesn't sound or you sleep through it.

____ Have a good breakfast with complex carbs and protein to see you through.

____ Show up 5-10 minutes early to get completely settled before the test begins.

____ Use the restroom beforehand to minimize distractions.

PART B

By reviewing the pre-test strategies, above, you have likely discovered new ideas to add to what you already use. Make a list of them.

Test-Taking Strategies

- Scan the test, first, to get the big picture of how many test items there are, what types there are (multiple choice, matching, essay, etc.), and the point values of each item or group of items.
- Determine which way you want to approach the test: Some students start with the easy questions first, that is, the ones they immediately know the answers to, saving the difficult ones for later, knowing they can spend the remaining time on them. Some students begin with the biggest-point items first, to make sure they get the most points.
- Keep your eye on the clock.
- If you can mark on the test, put a check mark next to items you are not sure of just yet. It is easy to go back and find them to answer later on. You might just find help in other test

questions covering similar information.

- Sit where you are most comfortable. That said, sitting near the front has a couple of advantages: You may be less distracted by other students. If a classmate comes up with a question for the instructor and there is an important clarification given, you will be better able to hear it and apply it, if needed.
- Wear ear plugs, if noise distracts you.
- You do NOT have to start with #1! It you are unsure of it, mark it to come back to later on.
- Bring water…this helps calm the nerves, for one, and water is also needed for optimum brain function.
- If permitted, get up and stretch (or stretch in your chair) from time to time to relieve tension and assist the blood to the brain!

Post-Test Strategies

In addition to sighing that big sigh of relief, here are a few suggestions to help with future tests.

1. If you don't understand why you did not get an item right, ask the instructor. This is especially useful for quizzes that contain information that may be incorporated into more inclusive exams such as mid-terms and finals.
2. Analyze your results to help you in the future. For example, see if most of your incorrect answers were small things such as failing to include the last step in a math item, or neglecting to double-check for simple errors in a short-answer or essay item. See where in the test you made the most errors: beginning, middle, or end. Also analyze which type of questions, true/false, multiple choice, essay, etc. And which topics were missed. This will help you pay closer attention to those sections in the future.

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2. Reading in College

DR. KAREN PALMER

Why is Reading Important?

Here is a great short video on the importance of reading by Improvement Pill:

> *One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=23#oembed-1*

Reading Critically

Critical thinkers consider multiple sides of an issue before choosing sides. They tend to ask questions instead of accepting everything they hear or read, and they know that answers often only open up more lines of inquiry. Critical thinkers read between the lines instead of reading only at face value. Critical thinkers recognize that much of the information they read and hear is a combination of fact and opinion. To be successful in college, you will have to learn to differentiate between fact and opinion through logic, questioning, and verification.

Facts are pieces of information that you can verify as true. **Opinions**

are personal views or beliefs that may have very little grounding in fact. Since opinions are often put forth as if they were facts, they can be challenging to recognize as opinions. That's where critical thinkers tend to keep questioning. It is not enough to question only the obviously opinionated material in a text. Critical thinkers develop a habit of subjecting all textual statements to a whole constellation of questions about the **speaker** (or writer), the intended audience, the **statement** itself, and the **relevance** of it.

Considering the speaker:

- Who is making this the statement?
- What are the speaker's affiliations?
- How does the speaker know the truth of this statement?

Considering the audience:

- Who is being addressed with this statement?
- What could connect the speaker of the statement with the intended audience?
- Would all people consider this statement to be true?

Considering the statement:

- Can this statement be proven?
- Will this statement also be true tomorrow or next year?
- If this statement is true, what else might be true?
- Are there other possible interpretations of the facts behind this statement?

Considering relevance:

- What difference does this statement make?
- Who cares (and who should care)?
- So what? What now? What's next?

Writers naturally write with some basic assumptions. Without a starting point, a writer would have no way to begin writing. As a reader, you have to be able to identify the assumptions a writer makes and then judge whether or not those assumptions need to be challenged or questioned. As an active reader, you must acknowledge that both writers and readers make assumptions as they negotiate the meaning of any text. A good process for uncovering assumptions is to try to think backward from the text. Get into the habit of asking yourself, "In order to make this given statement, what else must this writer also believe?"

Whether you recognize it or not, you also have biases and preconceptions on which you base many decisions. These biases and preconceptions form a screen or a lens through which you see

your world. Biases and preconceptions are developed out of your life's experiences and influences. As a critical thinker who considers all sides of an issue, you have to identify your personal positions and subject them to scrutiny.

Exercise 1

1. Use the set of questions at the end of this section to answer questions about the **speaker**, **audience**, **statement**, and **relevance** for a text of your choice. Here are some promising avenues to pursue:

- A public service announcement (PSA) campaign
- A radio program or a podcast
- A television ad from a political campaign

2. Use the questions for a reading from one of your other classes (even a chapter from a textbook) or a reading in your composition class assigned by your instructor.

Reading a Text Carefully and Closely

In this section, we'll use an excerpt from one of the most famous inaugural addresses in American history, from John F. Kennedy in 1961, to demonstrate how to do a close reading by separating fact and opinion; uncovering assumptions, biases, and preconceptions; and pursuing the implications of textual statements.

You can find the transcript of JFK's inaugural address here.

Here is a video of JFK's inaugural address:

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Twenty Questions about Self, Text, and Context

Self-Text Questions

- What do I think about Kennedy's Inaugural Address?
- What do I feel about Kennedy's Inaugural Address?
- What do I understand or what puzzles me in or about Kennedy's Inaugural Address?
- What turns me off or amuses me in or about Kennedy's Inaugural Address?
- What is predictable or surprises me in or about Kennedy's Inaugural Address?

Text-Context Questions

- How is Kennedy's Inaugural Address a product of its culture and historical moment?
- What might be important to know about the creator of Kennedy's Inaugural Address?
- How is Kennedy's Inaugural Address affected by the genre and medium to which it belongs?
- What other texts in its genre and medium does Kennedy's Inaugural Address resemble?
- How does Kennedy's Inaugural Address distinguish itself from other texts in its genre and medium?

Self-Context Questions

- How have I developed my aesthetic sensibility (my tastes, my likes, and my dislikes)?
- How do I typically respond to absolutes or ambiguities in life or in art? Do I respond favorably to gray areas or do I like things more clear-cut?
- With what groups (ethnic, racial, religious, social, gendered, economic, nationalist, regional, etc.) do I identify?
- How have my social, political, and ethical opinions been formed?
- How do my attitudes toward the "great questions" (choice vs. necessity, nature vs. nurture, tradition vs. change, etc.) affect the way I look at the world?

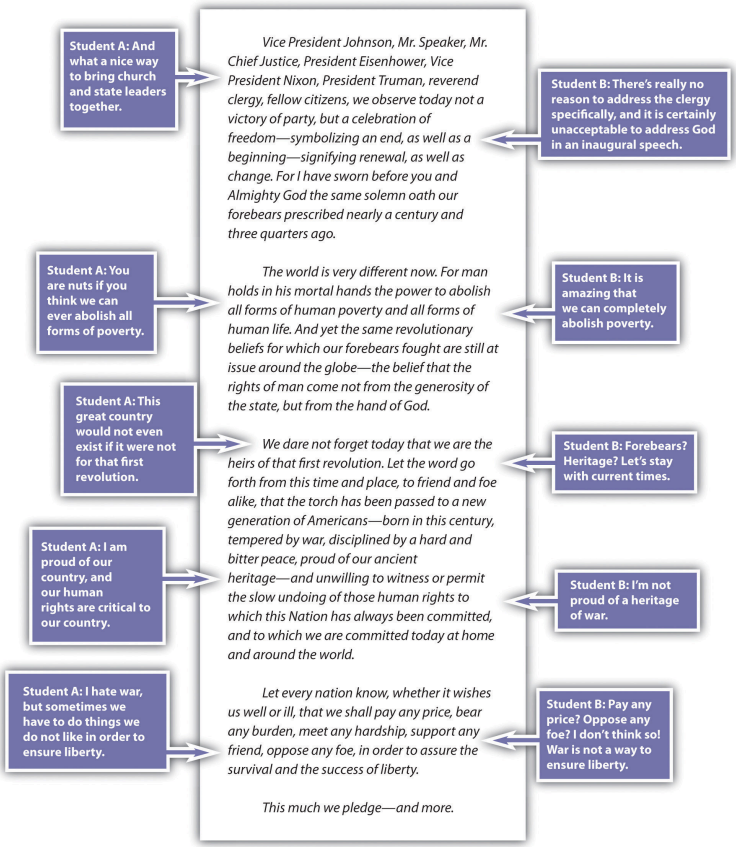
Self-Text-Context Questions

- How does my personal, cultural, and social background affect my understanding of Kennedy's Inaugural Address?
- What else might I need to learn about the culture, the historical moment, or the creator that produced Kennedy's Inaugural Address in order to more fully understand it?
- What else about the genre or medium of Kennedy's Inaugural Address might I need to learn in order to understand it better?
- How might Kennedy's Inaugural Address look or sound different if it were produced in a different time or place?
- How might Kennedy's Inaugural Address look or sound different if I were viewing it from a different perspective or identification?

Note that most of these questions can't be answered until you've made a first pass through the text, while others almost certainly require some research to be answered fully. It's almost a given that

multiple readings will be required to fully understand a text, its context, and your orientation toward it.

In the first annotation, let's consider Roger (Student A) and Rhonda (Student B), both of whom read the speech without any advance preparation and without examining their biases and preconceptions. Take a look at the comment boxes attached to the excerpt of the first five paragraphs of Kennedy's Inaugural Address.



Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, President Truman, reverend clergy, fellow citizens, we observe today not a victory of party, but a celebration of freedom—symbolizing an end, as well as a beginning—signifying renewal, as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe—the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God.

We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage—and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this Nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

This much we pledge—and more.

Roger does not have any problem with a lack of separation between church and state. Rhonda is unwilling to accept any reference to God in any government setting. Should Roger at least recognize the rationale for separating church and state? Should Rhonda recognize

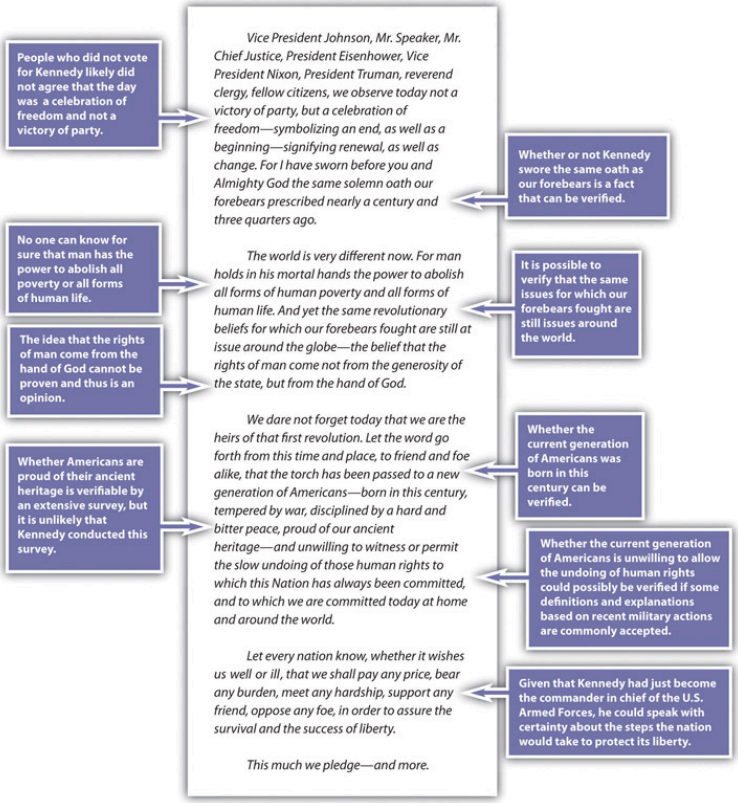
that while the founders of this country called for such a separation, they also made repeated reference to God in their writings?

Perhaps both Roger and Rhonda should consider that Kennedy's lofty goal of eliminating poverty was perhaps an intentional rhetorical overreach, typical of inaugural addresses, meant to inspire the general process of poverty elimination and not to lay out specific policy.

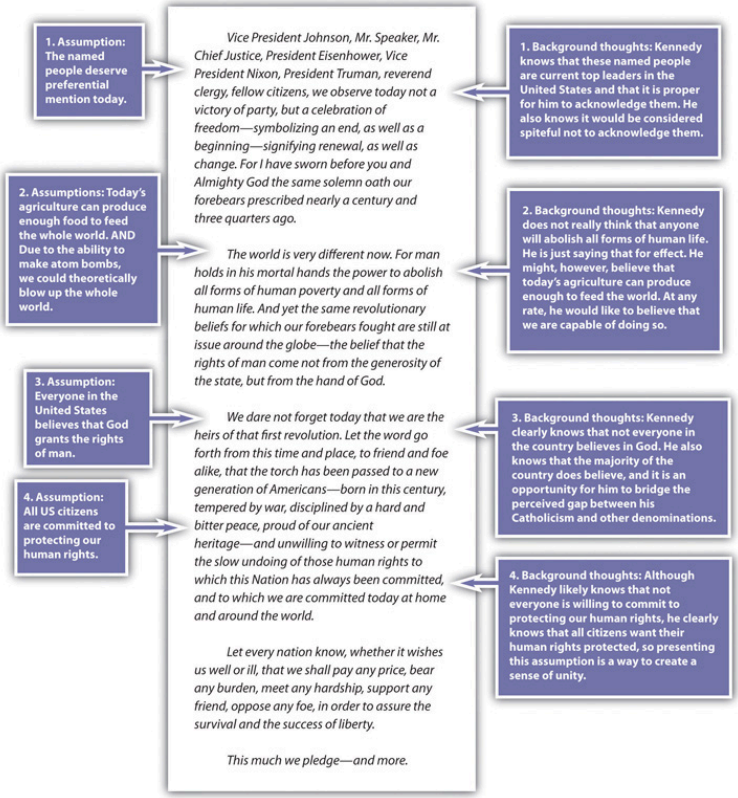
Roger sees war as a necessary evil in the search for peace. Rhonda sees war as an unacceptable evil that should never be used as a means to an end. To hear what Kennedy is saying, Roger probably needs to consider options other than war and Rhonda probably needs to recognize that history has shown some positive results from "necessary" wars.

If Roger and Rhonda want to be critical thinkers or even if they want have a meaningful conversation about the text, they must think through and past their own personal biases and preconceptions. They must prepare themselves to be critical readers.

In the next set of annotations, let's look at what you could do with the text by making several close readings of it, while also subjecting it to the preceding **Twenty Questions**. Perhaps your first annotation could simply be designed to separate statements of verifiable fact from those of subjective opinion.



A careful reader who looks for assumptions and implications of statements will find plenty of them. For example, the beginning of Kennedy's Inaugural Address includes many assumptions. In your second annotation, you might go on to target some of these assumptions and offer background thoughts that help you identify and understand these assumptions.



Just as you must try to trace a statement back to its underlying assumptions, you must also try to understand what a statement implies. Even when different readers are looking at the same text, they can sometimes disagree about the implications of a statement. Their disagreements often form the basis for their divergent opinions as readers.

Take Kennedy's assumption that the named people at the beginning of his speech deserve preferential attention. Here are some possible implications of the statement you could come up with that result from that single assumption:

- People who voted for Nixon are reminded that their candidate

did not get elected, which makes these people angry all over again.

- People who voted for Nixon feel somewhat comforted knowing that Nixon and Eisenhower are being recognized at the inauguration, and they are pleased that Kennedy is acknowledging them.
- Supporters of Kennedy hear his recognition of Nixon and Eisenhower as an acceptance of them, and thus they look more favorably on members of the opposing party.
- Supporters of Johnson appreciate that Kennedy mentions him first and believe that he is giving the most respect of all to Johnson.
- Those concerned about the relative youth of this new president appreciate the deference he shows to tradition by making this rhetorical gesture of salutation.
- Those suspicious of the power of the executive branch might wonder why Kennedy addresses the former presidents and vice president by name but gives only the title of the Supreme Court chief justice and the Speaker of the House.

You could add more to this list of possible implications, but notice how much you've done with the first paragraph of the speech already, simply by slowing down your critical reading process.

Exercise 2

1. Apply some of the critical thinking methods outlined in this section to **another** presidential inaugural address.

2. Presidential inaugural addresses, having developed over more than two centuries, follow a certain set of

unspoken rules of a highly traditional genre. After looking at three to five other examples of the genre besides Kennedy's, list at least five things most inaugural addresses are expected to accomplish. Give examples and excerpts of those generic conventions from the three to five other texts you choose. Or try this exercise with other regularly scheduled, ceremonial addresses like the State of the Union.

3. Watch at least one hour apiece of prime-time cable news on the Fox News Channel and MSNBC (preferably the same hour or at least the same night of coverage). Catalog the biases, preconceptions, assumptions, and implications of the news coverage and commentary on the same topic during those two hours. If guest "experts" are interviewed, discuss their political ideologies as well.

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3. Taking Notes and Annotating

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

As you read materials in college, you'll want to be sure to take notes, write down thoughts, highlight, and so forth… You can print the readings out and write on the paper or in your textbooks; or if you are doing digital readings, you can take notes in a notebook or even in a blank document in your phone or on your computer.

Annotating is a way to "interact" with the text—it causes you to engage with what you are reading, rather than reading passively. There are various ways to annotate, such as:

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- Underlining important items
- Circling key words
- Highlighting critical information
- Writing notes in the margins
- Writing questions you have about what you are reading
- Using sticky notes for thoughts, questions, etc… as your mind is thinking through the text

Watch the following videos on taking notes and active reading:

One or more interactive elements has been excluded

from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=26#oembed-1

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=26#oembed-2

Exercise 1

1. Take a passage from a textbook or lecture that you are currently supposed to be reading in one of your college courses. Use each of the following methods at least once as you take notes:

- Underline important items
- Circle key words
- Highlight critical information
- Write notes in the margins
- Write questions you have about what you are reading

- Using sticky notes for thoughts, questions, etc… as your mind thinks through the text

2. Which methods do you like the best and why?

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PART II

WRITING IN COLLEGE

4. Academic Writing

DR. KAREN PALMER

Part of your transition into higher education involves being aware that each discipline is a distinct discourse community with specific vocabularies, styles, and modes of communication that are used by professionals in the field. The following formal aspects of articles vary according to the discipline they are written for:

- Title format
- Introduction
- Overall organization
- Tone (especially level of formality)
- Person (first, second, or third person)
- Voice (active or passive)
- Sections and subheads
- Use of images (photos, tables, graphics, graphs, etc.)
- Discipline-specific vocabulary
- Types of sources cited
- Use of source information
- Conclusion
- Documentation style
- Intended audience
- Published format (print or online)

Different disciplines also tend to recommend collecting different types of evidence from research sources. For example, biologists are typically required to do laboratory research; art historians often use details from a mix of primary and secondary sources (works of art and art criticism, respectively); social scientists are likely to gather data from a variety of research study reports and direct ethnographic observation, interviews, and fieldwork; and a political scientist uses demographic data from government surveys and

opinion polls along with direct quotations from political candidates and party platforms.

What's required to complete a basic, introductory essay might essentially be the same across all disciplines, but some types of assignments require discipline-specific organizational features. For example, in business disciplines, documents such as résumés, memos, and product descriptions require a specialized organization. Science and engineering students follow specific conventions as they write lab reports and keep notebooks that include their drawings and results of their experiments. Students in the social sciences and the humanities often use specialized formatting to develop research papers, literature reviews, and book reviews.

Scholars also tend to ask discipline-related kinds of questions. For example, the question of "renewable energy" might be a research topic within different disciplines. The following list shows the types of questions that would accommodate the different disciplines:

- Business (economics): Which renewable resources offer economically feasible solutions to energy issues?
- Humanities (history): At what point did humans switch from the use of renewable resources to nonrenewable resources?
- Natural and applied sciences (engineering): How can algae be developed at a pace and in the quantities needed to be a viable main renewable resource?
- Social sciences (geography): Which US states are best suited to being key providers of renewable natural resources?

Exercise 1

1. Based on the example at the end of this section, pick a topic that multiple disciplines study. Formulate four questions about the topic, one from each of any four different disciplines. Ideally choose a topic that might come up in four courses you are currently taking or have recently taken, or choose a topic of particular interest to you. Here are just a few examples to get you started:

- Alcoholism
- Child abuse
- Poverty in developing nations
- Fast food
- Women in the workforce

Even though you will eventually enter a discipline as an academic specialization (major) and as a career path (profession), the first couple of years of college may well be the best opportunity you will ever have to discover how disciplines are connected.

In truth, all disciplines are strikingly similar. As humans, we have designed disciplines, over time, to help us understand our world better. We use academic and professional disciplines to conduct persistent, often unresolved conversations with one another.

Most colleges insist on a "core curriculum" to make sure you have the chance to be exposed to each major discipline at least once before you specialize and concentrate on one in particular. The signature "Aha!" moments of your intellectual journey in college will come every time you grasp a concept or a process in one course that reminds you of something you learned in another course entirely. Ironically the more of those "Aha!" moments you have in the first two years of college, the better you'll be at your specialization because you'll have that much more perspective about how the world around you fits together.

How can you learn to make those "Aha!" moments happen on purpose? In each course you take, instead of focusing merely on memorizing content for the purposes of passing an exam or writing an essay that regurgitates your professor's lecture notes, learn to look for the key questions and controversies that animate the discipline and energize the professions in it. If you organize your understanding of a discipline around such questions and controversies, the details will make more sense to you, and you will find them easier to master.

Exercise 2

1. Arrange at least one interview with at least one of your instructors, a graduate student, or a working professional in a discipline in which you are interested in studying or pursuing as a career. Ask your interviewee(s) to list and describe three of the most persistent controversies, questions, and debates in the field. After absorbing the response(s), write up a report in your own words about the discipline's great questions.

Articulating Multiple Sides of an Issue

Regardless of the discipline you choose to pursue, you will be arriving on the scene in the middle of an ongoing conversation. Disciplines have complicated histories you can't be expected to master overnight. But learning to recognize the key terms and topics in individual disciplines can help you make sense of the specific issues, themes, topics, and controversies you will encounter as a student and as a professional.

Learning to think, write, and function in interdisciplinary ways requires practice that begins at the level of close reading and gradually expands into the way you interact with your surroundings as a college student and working professional.

For a model of how to read and think through the disciplines, let's draw on a short but very famous piece of writing, Abraham Lincoln's "Address at the Dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery," composed and delivered in November of 1863, several months after one of the bloodiest battles in the American Civil War.

Let's imagine how a **military historian**, a **social psychologist**, and a **political scientist** would read this text. Follow the color-coding below to find which words and phrases a practitioner in each discipline might emphasize:

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us--that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion--that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

- A **military historian** (red passages) might focus on Lincoln's rhetorical technique of using the field of a previous battle in an ongoing war (in this case a victory that nonetheless cost a great deal of casualties on both sides) as inspiration for a renewed, redoubled effort.
- A **social psychologist** (blue passages) might focus on how Lincoln uses this historical moment of unprecedented national trauma as an occasion for shared grief and shared sacrifice, largely through using the rhetorical technique of an extended metaphor of "conceiving and dedicating" a nation/child whose survival is at stake.
- A **political scientist** (green passages) might focus on how Lincoln uses the occasion as a rhetorical opportunity to emphasize that the purpose of this grisly and grim war is to preserve the ideals of the founders of the American republic (and perhaps even move them forward through the new language of the final sentence: "of the people, by the people,

for the people”).

Notice that each reader has been trained to use a specific disciplinary lens that causes certain passages to rise to prominence and certain insights to emerge. But the real power of disciplines comes when these readers and their readings interact with each other. Imagine how a military historian could use social psychology to enrich an understanding of how a civilian population was motivated to support a war effort. Imagine how a political scientist could use military history to show how a peacetime, postwar governmental policy can trade on the outcome of a battle. Imagine how a social psychologist could use political science to uncover how a traumatized social structure can begin to heal itself through an embrace of shared governance.

As Lincoln would say, “It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.”

Exercise 3

1. Find an example in one of your courses where the main discipline appears to be borrowing theories, concepts, or binary oppositions from other disciplines in order to produce new insights and discoveries. (Use your textbook, lecture notes, etc)

2. Briefly describe how an insight or discovery applied past disciplinary knowledge to a new situation or challenge. How might you begin to think about addressing one of the contemporary problems in your chosen discipline?

Writing as a College Student

If you're like most first-year college students, you're probably anxious about your first few writing assignments. Transitioning from being a successful high school writer to being a quality college writer can be difficult. You have to adjust to different learning cultures. You have to accept that college writing is different from high school writing and come to understand how it is different.

These students relay a typical range of first-year college experiences:

Emma: I always got As on my high school papers, so I thought I was a good writer until I came to college and had to completely rewrite my first paper to get a C–.

Javier: I received an F on my first college paper because I "did not include one original thought in the whole paper." I thought I was reporting on information I had researched. I didn't know that I was supposed to add my own thoughts. Luckily, the professor had a policy to throw out each student's lowest grade of the semester.

Danyell: The professor in my Comp 101 class said that he didn't want us turning in anything meaningless or trite. He said that we were to show him that we had critical thought running through our heads and knew how to apply it to the readings we found in our research. I had no idea what he was talking about.

Pat: I dreaded my first college English class since I had never done well in English classes in high school. Writing without grammatical and mechanical errors is a challenge for me, and my high school teachers always gave me low grades on my papers due to all my mistakes. So I was surprised when I got a B+ on my first college paper, and the professor had written, "Great paper! You make a solid argument. Clean up your grammar and mechanics next time and you will get an A!" Suddenly it seemed that there was something more important than grammar and punctuation!

Whatever your feelings about your writing experience, writing in college is sure to be different from what you experienced in high school. The difference between high school and college culture is like the difference between childhood and adulthood. Childhood is a step-by-step learning process. Adulthood is an independent time when you use the information you learned in childhood. In high school culture, you were encouraged to gather knowledge from teachers, counselors, parents, and textbooks. As college students, you will rely on personal assistance from authorities less and less as you learn to analyze texts and information independently. You will be encouraged to collaborate with others, but more to discuss ideas and concepts critically than to secure guidance.

It's important to understand that no universal description of either high school or college writing exists. High school teachers might concentrate on skills they want their students to have before heading to college: knowing how to analyze (often literary) texts, to develop the details of an idea, and to organize a piece of writing, all with solid mechanics. A college teacher might be more concerned with developing students' ability to think, discuss, and write on a more abstract, interdisciplinary level. But there are exceptions, and

debates rage on about where high school writing ends and college writing begins.

Regardless, thinking with flexibility, depth, awareness, and understanding, as well as focusing on how you think, are some of the core building blocks that make higher education "higher." These thinking methods coupled with perseverance, independence, originality, and a personal sense of mission are core values of higher education.

Exercise 4

1. Write a brief essay or a journal or blog entry about your personal experience with higher education so far. Consider, especially, what sort of misconceptions you have discovered as you compare your expectations with reality.

Avoiding Sexist and Offensive Language

The rights of women have changed dramatically over the past few decades. Slowly, written English has started to reflect those changes. No longer is it considered appropriate to refer to a "female

engineer" or a "male nurse." It is also unacceptable to refer generically to a doctor as "him," a teacher as "her," or a politician as "him." Such usage is considered to be sexist language. You can use acceptable nonsexist language by using passive voice, using plural formats, eliminating pronouns, switching to direct address, and choosing nonsexist terms whenever possible. An option of last resort is to use "his or her," "his/her," "her or his," or "her/his" or even to alternate "his" and "her" throughout a text, though this path is stylistically awkward and usually unnecessary given the other options available to you.

Using Plural Format

By using plural nouns instead of singular nouns, you can switch from sex-specific singular pronouns to gender-neutral pronouns.

Example 1

Example of sexist language using singular pronoun: A *family member* who misses a holiday dinner will find *he* has missed more than the food.

Example of nonsexist language using plural pronoun:

Family members who miss holiday dinners will find *they* have missed more than the food.

Revising to Eliminate Pronouns

Since English includes many singular gender-specific pronouns, another way to eliminate sexist language is to eliminate the use of pronouns.

Example 2

Example of sexist language using singular pronoun: A *family member* who misses a holiday dinner will find *he* has missed more than the food.

Example of nonsexist language due to elimination of pronoun: A *family member* who misses a holiday dinner misses more than the food.

Using Direct Address

Sometimes you can simply switch from third-person singular to second-person singular or plural and in the process make your tone more engaging.

Example 3

Example of sexist language using third-person pronoun: A student who forgets to bring his book to class will be assessed a ten-point penalty for his daily work.

Example of nonsexist language using second-person pronoun: If you forget to bring your book to class, you will be assessed a ten-point penalty for your daily work.

Choosing Nonsexist Terms

One of the best methods of solving the sexist language problem is to choose nonsexist terms. With a little practice, you can learn to naturally use the currently preferred nonsexist language rather than

terms that are no longer acceptable. Study the following table for some examples.

Formerly Acceptable	**Currently Acceptable**
businessman, businesswoman	businessperson, business executive
chairman, chairwoman	chairperson, chair, head, leader
congressman, congresswoman	congressperson, legislator, member of Congress
fireman	firefighter
mailman	mail carrier, mail delivery person, letter carrier, postal worker
man, mankind	humankind, humans, people, *Homo sapiens*, humanity, the human race
policeman, policewoman	police officer, officer of the law, trooper
salesman	sales associate, salesperson, seller, vendor

Avoiding Other Offensive Language

Whether language is offensive depends entirely on the audience. If the audience or part of the audience views the wording as offensive, then the wording is offensive. To avoid inadvertent offensive text, adhere to the following general guidelines.

- Use currently accepted terminology when referencing groups of people. If you are writing about a group of people and you are unsure of the proper terminology, research the most recent usage patterns before you write.
- Be sensitive when referencing people with disabilities by using a "people-first" approach. For example, say "a person who uses a wheelchair" instead of "a wheelchair-bound person."
- Do not use profanity or vulgar words of any kind. When in doubt, don't use the term, or if you must use it as part of a quotation, make clear that you're quoting it.
- Avoid stereotyping (ascribing positive or negative attributes to people based on groups to which they belong).

Exercise 5

1. Rewrite each of the following sentences three times to

eliminate the sexist language using the techniques discussed in this section

- When the customer uses abusive language, he can be thrown out of the restaurant.
- A student who habitually arrives late for class is endangering his chances for success.
- There's nothing more important to elementary education than a teacher who is committed to her students.

2. Over the course of a week, record any instances of stereotypes or any shorthand characterizations of groups of people. Share your list with other members of your group or the class as a whole.

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- *Content adapted from "Articulating Multiple Sides of an Issue" licensed under CC BY NC SA 3.0.*
- *Content adapted from "Avoiding Sexist and Offending Language" licensed under CC BY NC SA 3.0.*

5. Basics of Rhetoric

DR. KAREN PALMER

The Rhetorical Situation

Having a clear understanding of the purpose, audience, and authorial stance when writing is vital for effective communication. The art of effective communication is an ancient one. In fact, people have been studying how to communicate effectively since the time of the ancient Greeks! The study of the art of communication is called Rhetoric.

Aristotle writing decorative
Aristotle Image in the Public Domain

Aristotle, a Greek scholar, teacher, and philosopher, taught his students how to practice the art of speaking well. He believed that, in order to be effective, a speaker must carefully consider the situation–the audience and the purpose, as well as the presentation of the speaker!

When we talk about writing or communicating well in terms of rhetoric, what we mean is thinking carefully about not just what we are saying, but how we say it. Most people use rhetoric instinctively to communicate with different audiences. For example, imagine that you're telling a story about something that happened over Spring Break. Without even thinking about it, you will likely tell the story differently to your mom and to your best friend. You might emphasize different people or events or leave out the things that you know might interest one party but not the other (or that might get you in trouble). Remembering that rhetoric is something that you already use all the time helps to alleviate any stress about how to use it.

image

"Communication Types" by zeeshan93 licensed CC-SA 4.0

Purpose is what an argument hopes to achieve. Most communication occurs because something needs to happen. Writers must think about what they want their readers to do once they've read the message. If a person purchases a t-shirt with a logo or slogan, the purpose might be to show support for that brand. It's telling your audience—the people who look at your shirt—to think about you a certain way. If someone wears a Yavapai College T-shirt, they are telling their audience that they go to YC and are proud of it! So, whenever you write, think about the purpose. What is the end result you are hoping to achieve? What do you want the reader to do with what you're telling them? The best writing will always have a clear purpose.

A writer's purpose is very often related to the **audience**. The audience consists of the specific person or group or groups of people for whom the message is intended. Knowing and understanding the audience is vital for successful communication and accomplishing the purpose. In an academic setting, many students think of their instructor as their audience. However, while your instructor is grading your papers, the message or the purpose should not be related to your instructor. Your instructor is grading how effective you are at getting your message across to your intended audience–NOT necessarily to them. If you are not given a specific audience, or you aren't sure, a good solution is to write for an audience of your peers. This allows you to define your audience, which will help you to craft papers that are more interesting, not only for you to write and your audience to read, but also for your secondary audience–your instructor!

The final element of our rhetorical situation is the **author**. The

position and the persona of the author may seem unimportant. However, the writer is always in the text, and how an author portrays him/herself can be very important in getting the message across. How you portray yourself in a text is important! After all, most writers want to be taken seriously. When you're writing an academic paper, you want to present yourself as a credible source of information. What does that mean? In part, it means using proper grammar and formatting and making sure your words are spelled correctly. Doing these things show the audience that you are serious about the topic and professional. Using good sources and citing them correctly, giving examples, and showing that you understand all sides of an issue tells readers that you are knowledgeable and that you can be trusted. If you don't portray yourself well in your writing, your message may not be taken seriously–even worse, it may turn your audience against you.

When writing, it's important to think about not just what you have to say, but how you say it. And how you say it should be determined by a careful examination of your purpose, audience, and the persona you want to project as a writer.

The Rhetorical Appeals

The rhetorical appeals of logos, pathos, and ethos go hand in hand with the Rhetorical Situation and make up what is called the Rhetorical Triangle. The ancient Greek scholar Aristotle believed that an argument would not be successful without the skillful use of all three rhetorical appeals.

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The rhetorical appeals connect the purpose to the audience and are necessary in some fashion for a good argument. An argument that only appeals to logic but lacks emotion, for example, will not move readers to action. An argument that has great logic and emotion, but presents the author as a shady character is not going to be persuasive, either. It's only when the three appeals work in harmony that the most effective arguments are created.

Appeal to Logic (logos)

Logos is the rhetorical appeal based on facts and reason. Evidence and statistics strengthen logical arguments, which can be based on hard evidence or on reason and common sense.
image

"*Genomic Fun Facts*" *by Genomics Education Program licensed CC BY 2.0.*

Every reason in the paper should be supported by at least one piece of hard evidence. If a reason listed in the paper cannot be supported by evidence, it is considered *personal opinion.* Personal opinion is valuable in many writing situations, but it is not helpful in argument, where the readers expect the author to offer proof, rather than assumption. Evidence includes facts, statistics, surveys, polls, studies, testimonies, narratives, and interviews.

Appeals to Emotion (Pathos)

While logos appeals may convince an audience, it is the **pathos** appeals that move the audience to action through emotions–anger, sadness, fear, joy, etc. A writer might appeal to a reader's emotions by telling a story, painting a picture, or using loaded language. Pathos is powerful, but can be difficult to use.
image

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Emotions can be used to establish a bond between writer and reader. Arguments expressed in emotional terms that readers can relate to can create strong reactions. Using personal experience to communicate hardship, pain, joy, faith, or any other emotion often allows the reader to empathize more fully with the goals of an argument. Some emotions, however, may work in the opposite way. Emotions such as rage, pity, or aggression may turn readers away. Some tactics for incorporating pathos in your writing include telling a story, using vivid description, and choosing words carefully.

Appeal to Character (Ethos)

An appeal to **ethos** (the author's character) establishes a speaker's credibility. Ethical appeals convey honesty and authority. Appeals to character answer the questions, "What does this person know about the subject?" and "Why should I pay attention?" To seem credible sometimes means to admit limitations. Honesty and likeability are important characteristics used to persuade. Your character is established through your use of good support, through documenting your sources, through your tone, and through your background.
image

Credibility image by Nick Youngson CC BY-SA 3.0 Alpha Stock Images

It will be almost impossible to convince all readers in all contexts. However, by paying careful attention to the ways you use the rhetorical appeals, you will be more likely to succeed in your goals.

image

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Thinking Rhetorically

The habit of thinking rhetorically starts with being comfortable enough with the rhetorical triangle to see it in practically every form of communication you produce and consume—not only those you encounter in academic settings but also those you encounter in everyday life.

Exercise 1

1. Choose any piece of communication–a textbook, a newscast, an advertisement, an e-mail, a social media post. How do the rhetorical choices made in the communication increase/decrease its effectiveness?

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6. Summary vs. Analysis

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

In your classes, you may be asked to analyze text. Analysis is not simply summary—summary gives the reader a shortened overview of the topic.

Summary

A summary would be telling the reader what happened in the story. Take for example, summaries about the short story "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson:

Example 1 Summary:

"The Lottery" is about a town that comes together every year for a tradition. The town's people draw a name, and the person's whose name is drawn is killed by everyone else.

Example 2 Summary:

The black box in "The Lottery" is used to hold slips of paper with the names of the townspeople. It is old and splintered, and every year the townspeople talk about replacing the box, but no one wants to break tradition.

The examples above tell us what the story is about. They present facts, but they are not arguments.

Analysis

In your courses, you'll be asked do *higher-level thinking*. Summary, which gives a brief overview of the main points, is a lower level of thinking. Using **analysis** and **evaluation** are higher levels of thinking. Analysis is when you break down something (in this case, breaking down the story) into parts in order to see how they relate.

Evaluation is to make a judgment about something based on evidence. Analysis and evaluation go above and beyond summary to explain, examine, and tell us what you think or what you believe about the text or topic. They give *arguments*. Take, for example, the same above summaries about "The Lottery," but revised to show analytical thinking:

Example 1

"The Lottery," a fiction story by Shirley Jackson, was

written to portray the point that tradition often overtakes reason, and humans sometimes stick to traditions that are outdated or irrelevant simply because they don't want to make changes.

Example 2

The black box in "The Lottery" is symbolic of death and of tradition. It is the color black, which is the color to represent death, it is old and splintery, and it holds the names of the townspeople, one of whom will be chosen to die. In addition, the text says, "Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box" (Jackson, par. 5). The black box is symbolic not just about death, but it also represents tradition and how some people want to change it but can't overpower the majority who insist tradition remain.

The above examples don't just give facts; they make arguments about the text. The second example breaks down the symbol of the black box and makes arguments about what it represents.

Using Analysis for Arguments and Support

Each body paragraph of an essay should include analysis. When you're revising your essay, look at each individual body paragraph and ask yourself: Am I simply re-telling the story/text and giving facts, or am I making an **argument** about the story?

In addition to having analysis in each body paragraph, you should also include support. You can tell me that "The Lottery" is an argument for breaking traditions, but I need to "see" that—you have to prove it to me. This is where using the text and outside sources as quotes, paraphrases, and summaries will come in.

Exercise 1

Find a passage of something you have read for a college course—an article, a story, a textbook pages, etc. Then do the following:

1. Read the passage. Then without looking at it, write a summary of it.

2. Now, make an argument in the form of analysis or evaluation of the passage.

Additional Resources:

- http://www.csun.edu/~hbeng112/098/howtowriteshortstoryanalysis.pdf

    - A professor's explanation and examples of an analysis essay.

- http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/697/1/
    - OWL's basic information on what is a literary analysis, with a presentation.

- http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/618/01/
    - OWL's information on writing a thesis for a literary analysis.

- http://www.irsc.edu/uploadedFiles/Students/AcademicSupportCenter/WritingLab/L1-Analyzing-a-Short-Story.pdf
    - A college handout that breaks down writing an analysis essay in an easy format.

- http://www.csun.edu/~hbeng112/098/howtowriteshortstoryanalysis.pdf
    - This is a professor's assignment and helps break the analysis down.

- http://www.gmc.edu/students/arc/documents/Literary%20analysis.pdf
    - A college document with great advice about how to write an analysis (and specific examples of such).

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PART III

CONDUCTING RESEARCH

7. Doing Research

Conducting Research

Research at the university level requires expertise on a topic while drawing from a wide variety of sources. The YC Library is a wonderful source of information, with articles and even whole books accessible completely online. In addition, there are many reputable websites from which credible information can be gleaned.

As you research, remember that your goal is to find out more about your topic. Many students begin research simply by looking for quotes that will support their own opinions. This method does not create good arguments! Before you begin researching, write down some questions you have about your topic. Do your best to find the answers to those questions in your research.

image

Image in the public domain.

Determining Your Timeline

Begin with the amount of time you have to complete your project. Create a research and writing schedule that can realistically fit into your life and allow you to generate a quality product. Then stick with your plan. As with many time consuming tasks, if you fall off your schedule, you are likely to find yourself having to work long hours or having to make concessions in order to finish in time. Since such actions will probably result in an end product of lesser quality, making and keeping a schedule is an excellent idea.

As a rule, when you make a schedule, it's best to plan to spend a little time each day as opposed to long blocks of time on a few days. Although, on a long project, you might find it beneficial to have some lengthy days, as a rule, long hours on a single project do not fit into one's daily life very well.

As you schedule your time, plan for at least one spare day before the project is due as sort of an insurance policy. In other words, don't set your schedule to include working through the last available minute. A spare day or two gives you some flexibility in case the process doesn't flow along perfectly according to your plan.

If you plan to have others proofread your work, respectfully consider their schedules. You can't make a plan that requires others to drop what they are doing to read your draft on your schedule.

Defining Your Research Question

When you are researching for an essay, your attitude and stamina are key to your success. If you let either of these issues get out of hand, you can seriously weaken your project. Before you begin what is essentially a month-long relationship with a topic, you should

choose something that interests you, something about which you have an opinion. Even when it is on a topic you care deeply about, researching is often tedious and demands stamina. Assume from the beginning that the project will be time consuming and sometimes exhausting, so make sure to allot the needed time and energy to complete it.

If you feel strongly about a topic, you might find it a challenge to keep your attitude in check and to read your sources with an open mind. It's critical not to let your personal opinions drive the information you choose to include. Try to create a well-rounded paper. If all the sources you find appear to agree with your viewpoints, actively search out a different viewpoint to strengthen your paper. Or consider changing your path entirely because if there really isn't a range of sources out there, you're probably not working with an arguable topic.

Along with keeping an open mind (attitude) and keeping to a schedule (stamina), you should, of course, read critically. In other words, you should evaluate the arguments and assumptions authors make and, when appropriate, present your evaluations within your paper. You can include biased information if you choose, but be certain to note the bias. This move might be appropriate in a persuasive essay if you are taking issue with a source with which you disagree.

Be careful not to settle for too easy a target in such an essay. Don't pick on a fringe voice in the opposing camp when there's a more reasonable argument that needs to be dealt with fairly. If a source is simply too biased to be useful even as an opposing argument, then you may choose not to include it as part of your essay. Your basic principle of selection for a source, regardless of whether you agree with it as a matter of opinion, should be based on whether you think the information includes sound assumptions, meaningful evidence, and logical conclusions.

You also need to pose productive questions throughout the process. If you are writing on a topic about which you already have a very clear stance, consider whether there is common ground

you share with your ideological opponents that might lead to a more productive use of your time and theirs. In general, persuasive essays are more effective if they also solve problems instead of just staking out an inflexible position based on a core set of inflexible assumptions. It's not that you shouldn't write about abortion or capital punishment if these issues mean something to you, it's just that you don't want to go down the same path that's been followed by millions of students who have come before you. So how do you ask fresh questions about classic topics? Often by rewinding to the causes of the effects people typically argue about or simply by pledging to report the facts of the matter in depth.

Old Question about Classic Topic	New Questions about Classic Topic
Is abortion acceptable under any circumstances?	• What forms of sexual education have been shown to be effective with teens most at risk of unplanned pregnancies? • What are some of the social and cultural causes of unplanned teen pregnancies?
Is capital punishment acceptable under any circumstances?	• What are states doing to ensure fair and thorough trials for capital crimes? • What are the results in the capital crime rate in states that have imposed moratoriums on capital punishment? • What is the relative average cost to conduct a capital prosecution and execution versus life imprisonment without parole?
Is censorship acceptable under any circumstances?	• What is the recent history of legislative and judicial rulings on First Amendment issues? • What are the commercial motivations of advertisers, music, television, and film producers to push the boundaries of decency?

Exercise 1

1. Using the table above as an example, choose four "high school" topics. Write down the classic question, and then write one or two new questions about the topic that might lead to a more interesting and unique research project.

Different Types of Sources

Your status as a student grants you access to your college library, and it is in your best interest to use it. Whether you are using your library online or in person, you will most likely need some guidance so that you know the research options available and how to access them.

If you are attending a traditional brick-and-mortar college, the quickest way to learn about your library options is to physically go to the library and meet with a librarian. If you are attending school mostly or completely online, look for online tutorials offered by your college library.

Within the array of online options available to you, the academic databases to which your library subscribes are generally more authoritative because they have been edited and in many cases peer reviewed before being approved for publication. These sources often appeared in print before being collected in the database.

However, databases can take you only so far in your research. If you have questions that need quick answers, especially involving facts or statistics, there's nothing wrong with using popular search

engines like Google or even online encyclopedias like Wikipedia, provided you use them critically. Confirm the truth of the information you find by finding corroboration from at least two other sources, and follow up on the sources listed in the sites to which you are directed.

The Internet also offers a variety of additional tools and services that are very useful to you as a researcher. Some of these options include citation builders and writing guides, dictionaries, thesauruses, encyclopedias, collections of famous quotations, government data, stock photo collections, collaboratively produced wikis and websites, and much more. An effective research project will likely combine source material from both academic databases and more popularly available online sites.

In addition to print and online sources, you might also wish to find some primary sources, such as interviewing an expert, sorting through relevant documents, making observations, or attending an event that relates to your topic. For example, if you are researching the effects of inclusion on third grade students with special needs, you could add meaningful information to your paper by speaking with a local educator who has reviewed achievement scores before and after they have received inclusion services.

Exercise 2

1. Provide contact information, including personal name(s), for school library staff you could turn to for help when you start a research project.

2. Once you've gotten to know more about your library's online databases, use what you already know about popular search engines to decide which would be an easier method

of finding reliable, trustworthy sources for the following information:

- an academic database or a popular search engine?
- rates of military service in the United States since World War II
- arguments in favor of and against the existence of climate change
- studies on the effects of television viewing on infants
- average age of first marriage among men and women every year since 1960
- proposed solutions to unemployment
- the highest grossing films of the last twenty years

3. Indicate three research topics of interest to you. Then describe a field source for each topic that you could use as a resource.

Using Databases

The YC Databases will prove to be your most important research tool over the course of your academic career. With the databases, you can find credible, academic sources online right from your computer. The databases even include a citation shortcut!

See this YC Library Tutorial for using databases: https://yc.libwizard.com/proquest-basics

Choosing Search Terms

Whether you are searching research databases or conducting general online searches, the search terms and phrases you use will determine what information you find. Following some basic search term guidelines can make the process go smoothly.

When searching for articles within a database, start by using keywords that relate to your topic.

Example: alternative energy

To expand your search, use synonyms or components of the initial search terms.

Synonym Example: renewable energy

Components Example: algae energy, wind energy, biofuel

Another technique you can use is to refine the presentation of your search terms using suggestions in the following table:

Strategy	Explanation	Example
Use multiple words.	Use multiple words to more narrowly define your search.	renewable energy instead of energy
Use quotation marks.	Place quotation marks around two or more words that you want to search for only in combination, never individually.	“renewable energy”
Use “AND” to connect words.	Use “AND” between words when you want to retrieve only articles that include **both** words.	algae AND energy
Use “OR” to choose one or the other.	Use “OR” to find information relating to one of two options but not both. This option works well when you have two terms that mean the same thing and you want to find articles regardless of which term has been chosen for use.	ethanol OR ethyl alcohol
Use “NOT” to eliminate likely options.	Use “NOT” to eliminate one category of ideas you know a search term will likely generate.	algae NOT food
Use “*” or “?” to include alternate word endings.	Use “*” or “?” to include a variety of word endings. This process is often called using a “wildcard.”	alternate* energy
		alternate? energy

Strategy	Explanation	Example
Use parentheses to combine multiple searches.	Use parentheses to combine multiple related terms into one single search using the different options presented in this table.	(renewable OR algae OR biofuel OR solar) AND energy

When you find a helpful article or Internet site, look for additional search terms and sources that you can follow up on. If you don't have time to follow up on them all when you find them, include them in your research log for later follow-up. When possible, copy and paste terms and links into your log. When you have to retype, take great care with spelling, spacing, and most of all, attributing direct quotations to their original source.

The aforementioned tips are general ideas for keyword searching. When you are searching within a database or a search engine, pay attention to any search tips or help screens that present methods that work well with the specific database or search engine. For example, you may have the option to narrow your search to "full text" entries only or to refine it to texts published within a certain time frame.

Making Ethical and Effective Choices

Three keys to referencing others' ideas ethically are to know the difference between common knowledge and proprietary ideas, to be aware of how to properly summarize and paraphrase, and to understand the correct methods for citing sources. In addition, you need to make sure that material is available for use at any level.

Differentiating between Common Knowledge and Proprietary Ideas

Common knowledge is that bank of information that most people know. This information does not require a citation. One way to identify common knowledge is to note that it is presented in multiple sources without documentation. Another identification method is to realize that you, along with most people you know, are aware of the information. For example, you can write that "Cheyenne is the capital of Wyoming" without needing a reference. On the other hand, if you were to note that there is a high rate of divorce in Cheyenne, you would need to cite that detail.

Making Sure Material Is Available for Use

As you are searching for sources, be sure to determine that you can ethically use the material. As a rule, you can reference most text as long as you properly cite it. Images are another issue. When you search online for images, you will find many private and for-profit sources. You should not use these images without contacting the

source and requesting permission. For example, you might find a picture of a darling little boy from someone's personal unprotected photo page or a good picture of an orderly closet from a company's web page. Using such photos just because you can access them is not ethical. And citing the source is not adequate in these situations. You should either obtain written permission or forgo the use of such images.

Important Research Reminders:

- ALWAYS, ALWAYS keep track of your sources!
- You can keep a file on your computer where you save PDF articles.
- You can open up a Word document that will be your essay or a blank Word document where you can copy/paste the links and notes you've found.
- Be careful, though, if you are logged into your college account and on the library page searching databases. You will have to log in again to use the link.
- You can have your own method; just be sure you do indeed have one.
- You must know where a source came from so that you can go back and get the MLA information for your citations.

Exercise 3

1. Write a search term you could use if you wanted to search for sites about the Eisenhower family, but not about Dwight Eisenhower.

2. Write a search term that would work to find sites about athlete graduation rates but not about non-athlete graduation rates or other information about athletes.

3. Brainstorm a list of search terms to use when researching the topic "television violence." Include all the techniques from this section at least once.

Additional Resources:

For a wonderful overview of the research process, watch this video: https://www.yc.edu/v5content/library/improve-research.htm

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8. Keeping a Research Journal

DR. KAREN PALMER

As you research, it's important to keep a record of the information you find. It might not seem difficult to remember a handful of sources, but, as you continue on in your academic career, you may have a source list of 10, 20, or even more sources for a single paper. Getting in the habit of keeping track of your sources by using a research journal will help you to keep your information organized and make writing your paper much less work.

Keeping a research journal is simple.

1. First, create a new Word document.
2. As you do your research, take note of the correct citation of each source.
3. Write a short summary of the source, including any important notes (ie this source contains a lot of data).
4. Finally, write any quotes that stand out. Make sure to put the quotes in quotation marks and add the in-text citation at the end of the quote.

Notes and Quotes

Since, at the note taking stage, you do not know for sure how you will use the information you find, you will not know for sure which kind of notes to take for which sources. Use the following general guidelines to decide:

- Summarize lengthy information that will add to your paper without including the smaller details.

- Paraphrase information and details that will serve as significant support for your core points but that isn't so eloquently stated that you want to use the exact words. Also, paraphrase texts with vital details that are simply too lengthy to quote.
- Use quotations to emphasize important information that will be very impressive or poignant and that will serve its purpose best if the original words are used. Keep in mind that no more than about 20 percent of your paper should be quoted text. Your paper should be in your words with a few quotations as opposed to a collection of quotations connected with your words.

Think critically about why you are using the information you've chosen from your sources. Image created by Dr. Karen Palmer and licensed under CC BY NC SA.

You will use most of the information you find in either a summarized or paraphrased format. So use those formats as you write. Make your best guess about how you will want to use the information. Do not ever copy and paste from a source directly into your working files unless you intend to use the information as an exact quotation. If you do intend to use an exact quotation, use the quotations when you take the initial note.

For all notes you take, record the page(s) where you found the information. Doing so will assure you have the information at hand if you need it for your reference. In addition, having the page numbers readily available will allow you to easily revisit sources. So that you do not inadvertently leave a page number where you do not want it, add bolding and color to your page numbers to make them stand out.

Tip: You might find it helpful to use a table to keep track of your sources. Simply put each source in a different row of the table. Another option is to add a dividing line after each source. This helps keep sources visually separated on the page.

Exercise 1

1. Using the guidelines above, create a research journal on your computer. Follow your instructor's directions on what to begin putting into the research journal.

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9. Annotated Bibliography

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

During your research in your college classes, you may be asked to write an annotated bibliography.

What is an Annotated Bibliography?

An annotated bibliography is a full citation (in either MLA or APA format) of a source, followed by a brief description and evaluation of the book or article. See the following example:

Example:

Darling, Nancy. "Peer Pressure is Not Peer Influence." *Principal.* Sept./Oct. 2002: 67-69.

MLA citation

Darling, a professor of education at Bard College, writes that adolescents are most often influenced not by what their friends do or say, but how they think their friends will react to a situation. Schools can use this information to redirect peer influence toward a more positive course. By providing positive information, involving all students, and grouping students differently, schools can provide opportunities to reinforce positive values. This idea of adolescent positive peer influence is a timely theory and strongly supports the theme of my paper.

Annotation

What to put in the annotation:

- Information: A summary of your findings
- Evaluation: What did you think of it, how will it help your topic
- Comparison: How it compares to other books/articles
- Authority: The background of the author

Annotated bibliographies are not difficult; just remember it's an organized list of the sources you've used, each of which is followed by a brief note—the annotation.

Examples

Here are a couple of entries Antonio makes in his annotated bibliography for an essay he is writing on head injuries in football. Using the same search terms ("helmets," "NFL," and "head injuries"), a search of Academic Search Complete in his college library nets him entries 1, 2, and 4, and a search on Google nets him entry 3. Drawing from the color-coding suggestion, Antonio distinguishes between direct quotation (red), paraphrase (blue) and summary (purple), by using different font colors for each.

Gregory, Sean. "The Problem with Football." *Time* 175.5 (2010): 36-43. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Nov. 2010.

Gregory suggests four main areas of potential reform in this proposal to solve the crisis of head injuries in the NFL: changes to the game's rules, to the equipment, to instruction in the youth leagues, and to the culture of football at large. All four are really necessary in concert with each other in what Gregory calls a "game plan to lessen the pain" (par. 18). Gregory closes with some devastating statistics about the different rates of diagnosis of dementia, Alzheimer's, or memory disease for 30-49 year-old men who are NFL veterans compared to the general population: 1 in 1000 (general population) vs. 1 in 53 (NFL retirees).

McDonell, Terry. "Staggered by The Impact." *Sports Illustrated* 113.16 (2010): 14-15. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Nov. 2010.

McDonell is realistic about the history of violence in the game at all levels, but he also makes the point that casual viewers and fans may give up on football if they believe it is becoming so violent that players are sustaining dangerous, permanent head injuries. He closes on an optimistic note, suggesting that newly instituted regulations, penalties and fines for helmet hits in the NFL are already leading to a reduction in the number of concussions. He suggests in closing "that the game can correct itself and that the players can adjust" (par.9).

Jackson, Nate. "The N.F.L.'s Head Cases." *New York Times*. 23 Oct. 2010: New York ed.: WK11. Web. 11 Nov. 2010.

This editorial, written by a six-year veteran of the NFL who played for the Denver Broncos from 2003-08, provides a rebuttal to the arguments being made in favor of stiff penalties for helmet hits. Jackson questions what will happen to the spirit of the game if referees and players are required to make split-second decisions about what constitutes an excessively violent hit. Here, Jackson gives a valuable perspective from his point of view as a former defensive back: "But when a receiver is trying to catch a ball or avoid being tackled, the height of his head is constantly changing, often making it impossible for a defensive player to judge the point of impact" (par. 10).

Aikman, Troy. "The NFL should proceed with caution on head injuries." *Sporting News* 233.28 (2009): 71. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Nov. 2010.

Like Jackson, Aikman provides some field-level commentary from the point of view of a player. He too believes that excessive regulation will damage the spirit of the game. On the other hand, he admits that if football is deemed by parents to be too violent, they will begin to pull their kids out of youth leagues, shrinking the pool of talent coming up from the next generation. Aikman closes by suggesting that perhaps the game should just do away with helmets entirely, because defenders would be less likely to make these kinds of hits "if their noggins weren't protected" (par. 11).

See below for another example of how your annotated bibliography can look:

Carlos Smith

Prof. Fitzmaurice

ENG102

Annotated Bibliography

Annotated Bibliography

Baym, Nina. *The Scarlet Letter: A Reading*. Twayne Publishers: Boston, 1986.

Baym discusses the impact of Hawthorne's famous work, its approach toward tragedy, structure, dynamics, psychology, symbolism, allegory and a number of other themes and ideas. The author also offers a review of previous critical responses to the book. The chapter on characters contains vital information on Hester and the themes chapter has a section on women and society. The book also discusses Hester as a heroine and what makes her a heroine.

Bercovitch, Sacvan. *The Office of The Scarlet Letter*. Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1991.

This book is an in-depth analysis and interpretation of *The Scarlet Letter*. While the book tends to focus on ideology, interpretation, and criticism, the author does offer some insight into Hester and her individualism. A contributing book to the subject, but not something I will use much of for my paper.

Brackett, Virginia. *Classic Love and Romance Literature: An Encyclopedia of Works, Characters, Authors, and Themes*. ABC-CLIO, Inc.: Santa Barbara, CA, 1999.

This encyclopedia contains a number of topics including people, places, names, and things dealing with

the Romantic time period. The amount of information, however, for each one is limited; perhaps because there is only one volume. Topics related to this paper found in the encyclopedia include Byronic Hero, Jane Eyre, Rhett Butler, *Don Juan*, Bronte, Heathcliff, and Gothic tradition.

McFarland Pennell, Melissa. *Student Companion to Nathaniel Hawthorne*. Greenwood Press: Westport, CT, 1999.

McFaland's book explains on an elementary level the life of Nathaniel Hawthorne and his works. Her chapter on *The Scarlet Letter* discusses the Custom-House, setting, plot, structure, characters, themes, symbols, historical context, and feminist criticism. The most important information for my paper will be the section on characters and on feminist criticism. She talks a lot about Hester and about Hester as a heroine. She also discusses the book in light of feminist criticism, which is key because I would like to look at the idea of Hester as a Byronic Hero in terms of various criticisms and interpretations.

Exercise 1

1. Choose a research topic of interest to you. Find a related website and find the following pieces of

information: name of author, editor, or sponsoring organization; title of article; title of journal or site that has published the article; version or issue number; date of publication or access date.

2. Choose a research topic of interest to you. Find a related online blog.

3. Choose a research topic of interest to you and set up a related RSS feed.

4. Choose a research topic of interest to you. Find a related government site.

5. Choose a research topic of interest to you. Online, find a related photo, video, and table.

6. With your writing group sharing a couple of computers, amass several sources of an essay and write up an annotated bibliography.

7. Using Antonio's essay idea on helmet hits in the NFL, draw up two statements of purpose that differ from each other in at least three of the six concerns (voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, or reception).

Attributions

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10. Evaluating Sources

Evaluating Sources

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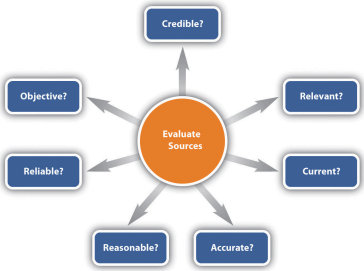
As mentioned previously, the quality of your sources is an important factor in establishing your credibility with your audience. When you evaluate a source, you need to consider the seven core points shown below:



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1. *Credible.*

A **credible** source is one that has solid backing by a reputable person or organization with the authority and expertise to present the information. The credibility of a source can be determined in many ways. Always think and read critically so you aren't fooled.

- When you haven't heard of an author, you can often judge whether an author is credible by reading his or her biography. If no biography is available, you can research the author

yourself.
- Check for spelling and grammatical errors.
- Look for logical fallacies and author bias. Does the author make reasonable claims, support them with reliable evidence, and appear to treat any opposing voices with respect?
- Judge the credibility of an online source by looking at the site's domain name. A .gov site, for example, is a site published by the government, which we can assume is credible. A .com site generally indicates a commercial or for profit site. A .edu site might be credible, but many institutions give students webspace, as well, so don't assume that an .edu site is created by a university or a professor.

Domain Names and Website Types

Domain	Website Type
.edu	Educational
.com	Commercial, for-profit, business
.gov	Government
.mil	Military
.net	Network
.org	Not-for-profit organization

2. *Relevant.*

Is the source relevant to your topic? A source is **relevant** if it can contribute to your paper in a meaningful way, which might include any of the following:

- Supplies support for core argument(s)
- Adds a sense of authority to your argument(s)
- Contributes background information
- Provides other viewpoints
- Offers definitions and explanations that your audience will need for clarification

For example, if I were to write an essay about creating a community garden on a college campus, a source relating the history of community gardens might be relevant, but one discussing the creation of a campus garden might be even more relevant to my topic.

3. *Current/Timely.*

When determining if a source is **current** enough to use, a general rule of thumb is that a source must be no more than ten years old. In some situations, very few sources exist that were published within the last ten years, so older sources can be used as long as you explain why the use of the older sources is acceptable and meaningful. Or perhaps you may be using older sources to establish a historical record of thoughts and statements on your issue in question. Check the date the source was published. If the topic is very current, older sources may not add useful information. If the topic is historical, older sources may help put the issue in perspective. For example, a 1997 report on elderly drivers may or

may not be helpful in an argument about elderly drivers 23 years later in 2020.

4. *Accurate.*

Before you use a source, you need to satisfy yourself that the information is **accurate**. In print sources, you can use the author (if known) and the publisher to help you decide. If you think the author and publisher are legitimate sources, then you are probably safe in assuming that their work is accurate. In the case of online information, in addition to considering the author and publisher, you can look at how long ago the site was updated, if evidence is provided to back up statements, and if the information appears to be thorough. For either print or online sources, you can check accuracy by finding other sources that support the facts in question.

5. *Reasonable.*

You can deem a source to be **reasonable** if it makes overall sense as you read through it. In other words, use your personal judgment to determine if you think the information the source provides sounds plausible.

6. *Reliable.*

Reliable sources do not show bias or conflict of interest. They do present verifiable information. Sources that do not give citations or references are not reliable because the information given cannot be verified. In written sources, documentation is usually provided

within the text and in a references page, as well. Internet sources may have documentation incorporated, or they may simply include hyperlinks to the source itself. If you are unsure about the reliability of a source, check to see if it includes a list of references, and then track down a sampling of those references. Also, check the publisher. Reliable publishers rarely involve themselves with unreliable information.

7. Objective.

A source is **objective**if it provides both sides of an argument or more than one viewpoint. Although you can use sources that do not provide more than one viewpoint, you need to balance them with sources that provide other viewpoints.In addition: *Diverse*. Does the author utilize sources that all come from the same website, for example, or sources all written by the same author, or does the author's work contain references from a wide variety of perspectives?

Exercise 1

1. Choose a research topic of interest to you. Find one source that is both related to the overall topic and relevant to your specific topic. Describe the relevant role the source could make (support, authority, background, viewpoints, or knowledge). Find a second source that is related to the overall topic but not as relevant to your specific topic.

2. Find a source that you think is not acceptable due to

not being accurate, reasonable, reliable, or objective. Share the source with your classmates and explain why you have deemed the source as unacceptable.

3. Choose a research topic of interest to you. Find two sources with information that relate to your topic—one that is credible and one that is not credible. Explain what makes one credible and the other not credible.

Practice Evaluating a Text Source

Exercise 2

1. Use the following questions to evaluate a text source:

- Who is the author?
- What type—or genre—of source is it?
- What kind of audience does the author anticipate?
- What is the author's primary purpose?
- What are the author's sources of information?

2. Decide on the overall credibility of the source:

Excellent Good Fair Poor

3. Provide a Reason for your Evaluation:

- Credible

    - trustworthiness of the source, author's credentials
    - publisher or sponsoring organization reputable
    - author a specialist in field
- Relevant
    - information relevant to research topic
- Current
    - if currency of information relevant to topic: up-to-date publication with recent copyright date
    - updates provided if new information should be considered to increase knowledge base
- Accurate
    - claims supported
    - facts and statistics backed by verifiable research or studies
    - presence of bibliography indicating what research was done
- Reasonable
- Reliable
    - no obvious conflicts of interest
    - fallacies absent; lack of bias
- Objective
    - information presented in fair, balanced, objective

    - both sides of issue presented or clearly stated point of view
- Diverse

Practice Evaluating an Online Source

Exercise 3

1. Use the following questions to evaluate an online source:

- Who is the author?
- What type—or genre—of source is it?
- What kind of audience does the author anticipate?
- What is the author's primary purpose?
- What are the author's sources of information?

2. Decide on the overall credibility of the source:

Excellent Good Fair Poor

3. Provide a Reason for your Evaluation:

- Credible
    - author clearly identified,
    - author's credentials listed

    - affiliation of the author with a reputable organization
    - if organization is involved, there is a way provided to contact organization
    - possible to verify credibility of author and/or organization
    - site does not require passwords or memberships
    - lack of typos or other signs of sloppiness
    - presence of editor or someone who verifies the information
- Relevant
    - information relevant to research topic
- Current
    - clear when information was published and last updated
    - version studied is most current
    - current links to other Web pages
    - site maintained and updated frequently
- Accurate
    - information mirrors or matches other information sources, including print
    - if page contains advertising, can clearly distinguish between ads and content
    - claims supported
    - hyperlinks to additional information included
    - presence of bibliography indicating what research was done

- Reasonable
  - information seems reasonable and/or verifiable
  - content presented in organized, functional way
- Reliable
  - fallacies absent; lack of bias
  - no obvious conflicts of interest
  - easy way to search the site or help feature
- Objective
  - both sides of issue presented or clearly stated point of view
  - facts and statistics backed by verifiable research or studies
- Diverse

Attributions

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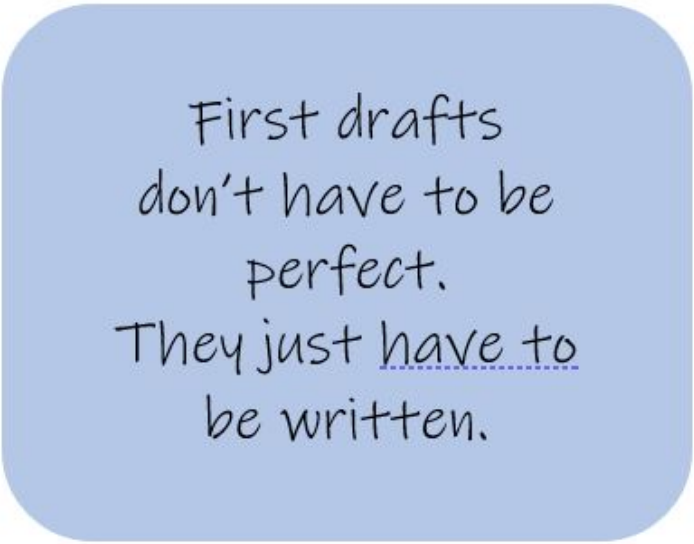
PART IV

PRE-WRITING

11. Overview of the Writing Process

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

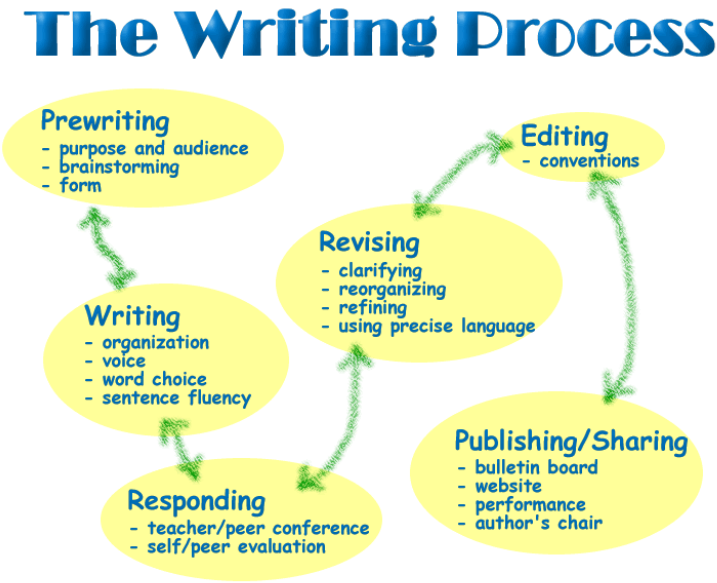


Stages of the Writing Process

There are several stages to the Writing Process. Each stage is essential.

1. Pre-writing
2. Writing (Drafting)
3. Revising

4. Editing



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1. Pre-writing

During the pre-writing stage, choose and narrow your topic. You should be able to answer "yes" to these three questions about your topic:

1. Does it interest me?
2. Do I have something to say about it?
3. Is it specific?

During the pre-writing stage, determine your *audience*. Ask yourself:

- Who are my readers?
- What do my readers know about my topic?
- What do my readers need to know about my topic?
- How do my readers feel about my topic?

During the pre-writing stage, determine your *purpose*. Your purpose is the reason you are writing. Whenever you write, you always have a purpose. Most writing fits into one of these three categories:

- To express
- To inform
- To persuade

More than one of these may be used, but one will be primary. During the pre-writing stage, determine your *tone* and *point-of-view*. Tone is the mood or attitude you adopt as you write. It can be be:

- Serious or frivolous/humorous
- Intimate or detached
- Academic/formal

Point-of-view is the perspective from which you write an essay. There are 3 points-of-view:

- First person—"I, we"
- Second person—"you"
- Third person—"he, she, they"

Note: Most instructors prefer that students only use third person, academic voice in their essays. Follow your instructor's directions and ask if you aren't sure.
Pre-writing techniques can be used to explore your topic. There are several choices of pre-writing techniques, including:

- Brainstorming/Listing
- Freewriting
- Clustering/Mapping
- Questioning
- Discussing
- Outlining

2. Writing (Drafting)

During drafting, you should compose a FULL rough draft. A draft is the first whole version of all your ideas put together. The basics of a good draft:

- Has a fully developed introduction and conclusion
- Has fully developed body paragraphs, each containing a topic sentence, and examples and details from the text(s) as support

3. Revising

Revising is finding and correcting problems with content; changing the ideas in your writing to make them clearer, stronger, and more convincing.

- Revising looks at important areas such as essay structure, organization, and sentence structure.
- You should read through your essay numerous times during this stage.

4. Editing

Editing is finding and correcting problems with grammar, style, word choice/usage, and punctuation. In addition:

- Editing focuses on smaller details and involves proofreading.
- Editing also involves making sure citations and the Works Cited are correct.

***You'll learn more about the writing process in detail over the next several chapters.**

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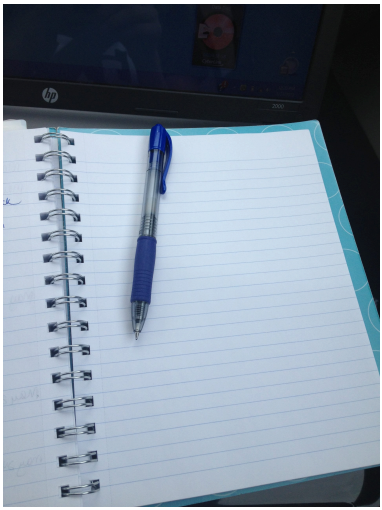
12. Deciding on a Topic

DR. KAREN PALMER

Read Assignments Closely and Critically

A close and careful reading of any given writing assignment will help you sort out the ideas you want to develop in your writing assignment and make sense of how any assigned readings fit with the required writing.

Use the following strategies to make the most of every writing assignment you receive:



- Look for key words, especially verbs such as *analyze*, *summarize*, *evaluate*, or *argue*, in the assignment itself that will give clues to the type of writing required.
- Do some pre-writing that establishes what you already know and believe about the subject if your instructor has given you a topic. Make a list of ideas you will need to learn more about in order to complete the assignment.
- Develop a list of possible ideas you could pursue if the topic is more open.

Use the following strategies to help you make the most of readings that support the writing assignment:

- Make a note if you question something in any assigned reading related to the writing assignment.
- Preview each reading assignment by jotting down your existing opinions about the topic before reading. As you read, monitor whether your preconceived opinions prevent you from giving the text a fair reading. After finishing the text, check for changes in your opinions as result of your reading.
- Mark the locations of different opinions in your readings, so you can easily revisit them.
- Note the points in your readings that you consider most interesting and most useful. Consider sharing your thoughts on the text in class discussions.
- Note any inconsistencies or details in your readings with

which you disagree. Plan to discuss these details with other students or your professor.

Above all, when questions or concerns arise as you apply these strategies, take them up with your professor directly, either in class or during office hours. Making contact with your professor helps you stand out from the crowd and demonstrates that you are an engaged student.

Strategies for Choosing Strong Topics

1. Connect Your Reading with Your Writing

College writing often requires the use of others' opinions and ideas to support, compare, and ground your opinions. You read to understand others' opinions; you write to express your opinions in the context of what you've read. Remember that your writing must be just that—yours. Take care to use others' opinions and ideas only as support. Make sure your ideas create the core of your writing assignments.

2. Share and Test Your Thinking with Others

Discussion and debate are mainstays of a college education. Sharing and debating ideas with instructors and other students allows all involved to learn from each other and grow. You often enter into a discussion with your opinions and exit with a widened viewpoint. Although you can read an assignment and generate your understandings and opinions without speaking to another person, you would be limiting yourself by those actions. Instead it is in your best interest to share your opinions and listen to or read others' opinions on a steady, ongoing basis.

In order to share your ideas and opinions in a scholarly way, you must properly prepare your knowledge bank.

Make sure to maintain fluidity in your thoughts and opinions. Be prepared to make adjustments as you learn new ideas through discussions with others or through additional readings. You can discuss and debate in person or online, in real time or asynchronously. One advantage to written online discussions and debates is that you have an archived copy for later reference, so you don't have to rely on memory. For this reason, some instructors choose to develop class sites for student collaboration, discussion, and debate.

3. Make rhetorical choices

about your topic

As a college student, you must take complete responsibility for your writing assignments. Your professors are assessing your ability to think for yourself, so they're less likely to give you ready-made templates on how to write a given essay. This lack of clarity will be unsettling, but it's part of an important growth process. By using strategies, you can systematically approach each assignment and gather the information you need for your writing requirements.

Once you know you have an upcoming writing project, you have some basic decisions to make. The following list of questions will lead you to make some preliminary choices for your writing project.

- **What am I trying to accomplish?** Writing can serve a variety of **purposes**, such as to explain, to persuade, to describe, to entertain, or to compare. Your assignment might specifically dictate the purpose of the writing project. Or the assignment might simply indicate, for example, that you are to show you understand a topic. In such a situation, you would then be free to choose a writing purpose through which you could demonstrate your understanding.
- **Who do I want my readers to be?** Traditionally the **audience** for a college student's paper has been the instructor, but technology is rapidly changing that. Many instructors actively make use of the web's collaborative opportunities. Your fellow students (or even people outside the class) may now be your audience, and this will change how you approach your assignment. Even if your instructor is the only person who will see your finished product, you have the responsibility to identify an ideal reader for your work. Whoever your audience is, take care to avoid writing too far above or too far beneath their knowledge or interest level.

- **What am I writing about?** Your topic might be set by your instructor. If so, make sure you know if you have the option of writing about different angles of the topic. If the topic is not preset, choose a topic in which you will be happy to immerse yourself.
- **What's my position on this topic?** Analyze your ideas and opinions before you start the writing project, especially if the assignment calls for you to take a position. Leave room for new ideas and changes in your opinion as you research and learn about the topic. Keep in mind that taking a stand is important in your efforts to write a paper that is truly yours rather than a compilation of others' ideas and opinions, but the stand you take should be one that is informed by research. If your purpose is to compare ideas and opinions on a given topic, clarifying your opinion may not be so critical, but remember that you are still using an interpretive point of view even when you are "merely" summarizing or analyzing data.
- **How long does this piece of writing need to be? How much depth should I go into?** Many assignments have a predetermined range of page numbers, which somewhat dictates the depth of the topic. If no guidance is provided regarding length, it will be up to you to determine the scope of the writing project. Discussions with other students or your instructor might be helpful in making this determination.
- **How should I format this piece of writing?** Every discipline has a specific documentation format that is preferred in that discipline. For example, most courses in the humanities, including English courses, require MLA format, while psychology and nursing require APA. Make sure you follow the guidelines given to you by your professor.
- **How or where will I publish this piece of writing?** You are "publishing" every time you submit an essay in Canvas. However, if your writing means something to you, you may want to share it with others beyond your instructor in some manner. For example, some students choose to share their

work online in some way or to distribute copies to those who helped with their research. Knowing how you will publish your work will affect some of the choices you make during the writing process.

Planning the basics for your essay ahead of time will help assure proper organization for both the process and the product. It is almost a certainty that an unorganized process will lead to an unorganized product.

Exercise 1

For every assignment you receive with an open topic, get into the habit of writing a journal or blog entry that answers the following four questions:

1. What are some topics that interest you?

2. What topics will fit within the time frame you have for the project?

3. Of the possible topics, which have enough depth for the required paper?

4. For which topics can you think of an angle about which you are passionate?

4. Choose a Topic that Interests You

Life is simply too short not to write about topics that interest you. Your readers will quickly pick up on your enthusiasm (or lack thereof) for a topic. Following up on personal interest can, at best, make a writing project fun, and at the very least, keep you (and your readers) from being miserable.

Most college writing instructors will not dictate too narrow a topic area, in part because they don't have any interest in being bored and in part because they believe that topic generation is an important piece of the student writer's job. But let's explore a worst-case scenario, just to show how you can make practically any topic your own.

Let's say you are given an assignment to explore the history of South Dakota within a ten-page essay. Clearly, you can't cover the whole state in ten pages. Rather, you would think about—and maybe research a little bit—aspects of South Dakota that might be interesting to you and your readers. Let's say that you are a motorcycle enthusiast, and you are interested in Sturgis, South Dakota. Or perhaps your great-great-grandmother was a Dakota Indian, and you are interested in the Dakota Indian tribe. Or maybe you are an artist and you are interested in the corn mosaics on the Corn Palace in Mitchell, South Dakota. The point is that, if you think about South Dakota enough, you can find some direction of personal interest. This is true with essentially any writing assignment you might be given. Find some element of it that interests you, and your writing will be more interesting and genuine!

Assigned Topic: The History of South Dakota

Personal Interest Direction: The Motorcycle Rallies in Sturgis, South Dakota

First Narrowing of Topic: The Acceptance by Locals of the Mass Influx of Motorcycles over the Years

Final Topic: The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally as Part of the Identity of Sturgis and the Surrounding Area

Once you choose a direction of interest, such as the motorcycle rallies in Sturgis, you still have to narrow this secondary topic into a topic that you can cover in ten pages and that has an interesting point. A method of moving from your general topic of interest to your final topic is to ask questions and let your answers guide you along.

Question #1: How do the Sturgis Rallies connect to the history of South Dakota?

Answer: The Sturgis Rallies have been going on for over seventy years, so they are part of the history of South Dakota.

Question #2: Over the years, how have the people of Sturgis felt about all those bikes invading their peaceful little city?

Answer: I bet there are people on both sides of the issue. On the other hand, a lot of people there make a great deal of money on the event.

Question #3: After over seventy years, has the event

become such a part of the city that the bikes aren't really seen as an invasion but rather more like a season that will naturally come?

Answer: It probably has become a natural part of the city and the whole surrounding area. That would be a good topic: The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally as Part of the Identity of Sturgis and the Surrounding Area.

As you can see, it is possible to narrow your general topic down to a more manageable and interesting set of questions.

Exercise 2

1. Record the thought processes you would go through to narrow the writing topic "Thomas Edison" to a topic of interest to you for a ten-page assignment. Include the transcript of your self-talk and self-questioning process.

2. Work with a partner. Together, talk through moving from the general topic "Television" to a specific topic that would work well for a five-page paper.

3. With a partner or by yourself, narrow the following general topic areas to specific topics that would work in essays of approximately one thousand words:

- Electoral Politics
- Environmental Protection
- The First Amendment

- Campus Security

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13. Refining Your Topic

DR. KAREN PALMER

After you have settled on a topic, you are ready to explore general ideas that you will include when you start writing. Doing so saves time and energy. There are many ways to identify the purpose and direction of your paper, and you can generate these ideas with whatever brainstorming method works best for you, such as browsing the Internet to do an interconnected search from topic to topic, talking or texting with others, creating related visuals, asking yourself questions, freewriting and mapping

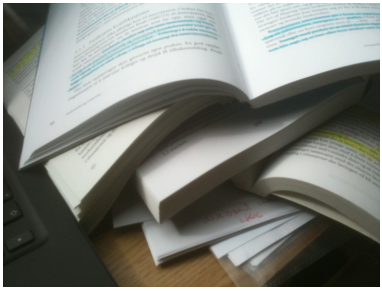

Image from Wikimedia.

Freewriting and Mapping

Freewriting

Freewriting requires finding a quiet place to write without distraction. Most versions involve starting with a word or phrase (usually your topic) and writing (or typing) about it *without stopping* for five minutes. It's helpful to set a timer for each round of freewriting. After the first five-minute period, you examine your text for any phrases or words that look interesting to you. Circle

them (or if you are typing, highlight, italicize, bold, or underline them).

In the second round, you freewrite for another five uninterrupted minutes on your choice of the most interesting word or phrase from your first freewrite. Sometimes even a third round can help you narrow the topic further.

For each round of freewriting, you should be unconcerned about your writing's grammar or mechanics, how it would look to an outside audience, or even whether it would make sense to anyone but you. Freewriting is all about idea generation and exploration.

Mapping

Mapping is a great visual means of gathering your ideas. Mapping lets you add as many ideas as you can think of and organize them as you go along. You have four general options for mapping.

1. Use concept-mapping websites such as MindMeister (http://www.mindmeister.com/).
2. Create your own circles and lines within a word processing program.
3. Draw your map by hand.

No one option is superior to another. You should choose the option that works best for you. Using whichever option you choose, the point is to start with your main topic and then think of related subtopics and, for each subtopic, to think of supporting details resulting in a visual that shows the relationships between the key points of your writing plan. Since mapping is actually a visual brainstorming process, you do not have to generate your ideas in an orderly fashion. When you think of an idea, you can add it wherever it fits across the map.

In the concept-mapping software, you will be able to choose the

level of the point you will add as well as the larger idea to which you want to attach each point. If you are creating your concept map structure yourself, make it clear to which level each addition belongs.

Study the image below for clarification on how the process works. This map was made in Microsoft Word by creating circles, squares, and lines and placing them by hand into position. You can use all circles or all squares or whatever shape(s) you would like. This map uses a combination of squares and circles to make the subtopics stand out clearly from the details. This map also uses color to differentiate between levels.

"Concept Map of Sturgis Motorcycle Rally" image icensed CC BY NC SA .The green circle in the middle includes the topic. The blue squares connected to the topic are subtopics, and the orange squares connected to the blue squares are examples.

When the ideas stop flowing, put your map away and return to it later for another brainstorming session.

Keep your freewrites and maps close at hand and feel free to add tidbits when they come to you. Get into the habit of keeping a writing pad and pen or pencil (or just your cell phone) next to your bed, so that you can jot down or text ideas as they come to you in the middle of the night. When you are comfortable that your map offers a good representation of the points you want to include in your paper, use it as a guide during the writing process.

Exercise 1

1. Choose a topic of interest to you and freewrite for at least two five-minute rounds.

2. Choose a topic of interest to you and create a map to show some ideas you might include if you were writing about the topic.

Developing Your Purposes for Writing

After you have settled on a specific writing topic and thought through your writing through pre-writing activities, it's time to return to some of the basic principles of rhetoric so that you can think through your real purposes for writing and explore the key details of your rhetorical situation.

PUrpose

You may think that purpose can be boiled down to one of these single verbs or phrases:

- To analyze
- To ask for support
- To call to action
- To clarify
- To convince
- To counter a previously stated opinion
- To describe
- To entertain
- To inform
- To make a request
- To make people think
- To persuade
- To share feelings
- To state an opinion
- To summarize

However, your real purposes for writing are really more complicated, interesting, and dynamic than this simple list. Not only do you want to make your audience feel or think a certain way about your message, but you also want to explore and refine your own thoughts and feelings about that message, and furthermore, you want to establish a certain kind of relationship with your audience through the act of conveying your message to them.

Audience

Sometimes your instructor will specify the audience for an essay assignment, but more often than not, this choice will be left up to you. If it's your call, ask yourself, "Who would benefit the most from receiving this message?" Not asking that simple question, not choosing a specific audience for your essay, will be a missed opportunity to sharpen your skills as a communicator.

By identifying your audience, you can conjecture how much your readers will know about your topic and thus gauge the level of information you should provide. You can determine what kind of tone is best for your audience (e.g., formal or informal, humorous or serious). Based on what you know about your audience, you can even decide the form you want your writing to take (e.g., whether to write a descriptive or more persuasive essay). Knowing your audience will guide many of the other choices you make along the way.

Message

Regardless of whether your topic is assigned to you or you come up with it on your own, you still have some room to develop your message. Be prepared to revise your message once you have fleshed

out your own thinking about it and sharpened your sense of audience and purpose thinking.

Voice

Regardless of whether you're writing in an academic or a nonacademic context, you draw from a range of voices to achieve a variety of purposes. If you are writing an essay to fulfill a class assignment, with your instructor as your primary if not exclusive audience, then your voice has pretty much been established for you. In such an instance, you are a student writing in a traditional academic context, subject to the evaluation of your instructor as an expert authorized to judge your work. But even in this most restrictive case, you should still try to develop a distinctive voice based on what you hope to accomplish through your writing.

Here are some questions that can help you as you make rhetorical decisions about your writing project.

"Your Rhetorical Situation" image licensed under CC BY NC SA.

Resource

Here is a link to a printable form that helps you think through the Rhetorical Situation for your writing projects. Once you've filled out the form, you have the option to download the form. CLICK HERE

Near the beginning of the writing project, you could write up a preliminary statement of purpose based on how you complete these sentences. Here is how a student might answer questions about voice, message, audience, attitude, reception, and tone based on the Sturgis motorcycle project:

Voice: I am writing as…

…a person unfamiliar with South Dakota culture who has been assigned the task of writing about it.

Message: I want to convey the message that…

…the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is an interesting phenomenon of popular culture.

Audience: I want to write to…

…my teacher and the other members of my writing group.

Attitude: My attitude toward the subject is…

…pretty neutral right now, bordering on bored, until I find out more about the topic.

Reception: I want my audience to…

…know that I know how to research and write about any topic thrown at me.

Tone: My tone toward my readers is…

…semiformal, fairly objective, like a reporter, journalist, or anthropologist.

Remember, the writing process is a recursive one, so be open to the idea of returning to these questions several times over the course of your writing project.

Here's an example of how the student writer's responses to the rhetorical situation changed as he wrote the paper on the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally essay:

Voice: I am writing as…

…a kind of social historian and observer of a specific example of popular culture.

Message: I want to convey the message that…

…the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally has become an important part of the identity of Sturgis and the surrounding area.

Audience: I want to write to…

…my instructor and classmates—but also to the citizens of Sturgis, South Dakota.

Attitude: My attitude toward the subject is…

…neutral to positive. In general I think the rally has been good for Sturgis over the years.

Reception: I want my audience to…

…understand and appreciate Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, and maybe to think about how something like it could work well in our community.

Tone: My tone toward my readers is...

...informal but informative, and occasionally humorous, to fit the craziness of Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

Exercise 2

1. Describe five possible topics you could use as the basis for an opinion essay.

2. You are being asked to describe an important event in your childhood. What form of writing from the list in this section would be *most* appropriate?

3. You are writing a letter of application for a college scholarship sponsored by a local business. For what audiences would you write the letter?

4. You are writing an opinion essay and submitting it as a letter to the editor at your local newspaper. For what audiences would you write this letter?

Attributions

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PART V

PLANNING

14. Thesis Writing

Ah, the dreaded essay thesis statement.

Students often complain that thesis statements are difficult to write, but know that many professors also find they are difficult to write. We hope to help you through the process.

Importance of the Thesis

No matter what type of paper you write—evaluation, research, argumentation—the center of your paper will be your thesis statement. From now through the rest of your education, most instructors will want you to have a well-developed thesis statement in your essays. This is why it is important that you learn to do it correctly.

Most academic writing includes a thesis, which is the main stance you decide to take toward your topic. Your thesis tells readers what your paper will be about. It also serves as a target you must ultimately hit as you write, though that target may move around quite a bit as you go through the drafting process. You might have an idea about your thesis early on, or you might only decide upon it once you have worked with your topic and plan for a while. You might continually tweak your thesis as you learn more and develop your opinions about your topic.

While writing your paper, you will have a tentative, or working, thesis. This means that your thesis will most likely change as you find support and write your paper. You may write and re-write your thesis several times while writing an essay. The important thing is that in the end you have a specific and focused thesis and that everything else in your paper supports or works to prove this thesis to be true.

Topics and Personal Stances

This table shows how topics and personal stances relate:

Topic	Personal Stance
College students' schedules	College students' schedules should be set by the students, not by their parents.
Fallen logs in national parks	Fallen logs in national parks should be harvested rather than left to decay and increase the likelihood of forest fires.

Developing your personal stance is critical for several reasons. It narrows your topic to a final manageable level, and it makes the written work uniquely yours. Taking a personal stance gives you a point of view to develop, support, and defend. When you present your stance, it ultimately awakens emotions in your readers as they determine for themselves whether they agree or disagree with your stance.

If you have trouble deciding on a thesis, keep in mind that your thesis ties directly to the main purpose and audience of your writing project. It is the main point you want to make to your audience. Ask yourself how you personally relate to the topic. Take the college students' schedules topic, for example. Your response to how you are personally related to the topic could be one of the following:

1. I am a person with knowledge to share since my mother always set my college schedules for me resulting in me having little understanding about designing a schedule that works.
2. I am an angry student since my father insisted on setting up my schedule, and my classes are all spread out in a way that will make my year miserable.
3. I am an interested observer since my roommate's mother always set her schedules and almost always ruined our plans to have some common free blocks of time.
4. I have an opinion that I would like to share about "helicopter parents," and this is a particularly good example of the phenomenon.
5. This semester, after talking with an advisor, I sketched out the rest of the coursework in my major, and I see for the first time how everything's going to fit together.

Once you see how you personally relate to your topic, you can then more clearly see what stance you want to take. Once you take a stance, work on wording it effectively, and you will have a working thesis.

Characteristics of a Thesis Statement

A Thesis Statement Is:

- A one sentence statement that makes an ASSERTION as to the purpose or point of your paper.
- Located near the END of your introduction.
- Always the center of your paper—everything else in your paper must support, be related to, or point back to your thesis statement.
- What you want to prove in your essay.
- Direct and straightforward
- Some type of opinion that a reasonable person could disagree with or argue against.
- Answers the questions "how?" or "why?"
- NOT an announcement (I think…; This essay will talk about…)

A Thesis Statement is Not:

A fact or observation

- Wrong: There are many classes to take in college.
- Correct: College provides the opportunity for students to explore their gifts and talents and hopefully gain insight into what career they can focus on.

A generalization

- Wrong: Men are insensitive to women.
- Correct: In American businesses today, the salary for women is disproportionate to that of men; therefore, Congress should pass a bill that gives tax benefits to companies who equalize salaries of men and women.

An exaggeration

- Wrong: Eating healthy is so terrible.
- Correct: Eating only fruits and vegetables for long periods of time can be dangerous because there are other nutrients needed for a human body.

A question

- Wrong: Is this war justified?
- Correct: The current war with ISIS is justified because terrorism is being averted, the men in ISIS ruthlessly hurt and kill people, and their religion is not one of peace.

Too broad

- Wrong: All animals are cool.
- Correct: The Anteater is one of the most unique and interesting animals within the animal kingdom.

Too narrow

- Wrong: The song "Killing Friends" is offensive.
- Correct: Music with vulgar language and images can negatively influence young children and teenagers.

An announcement

- Wrong: This essay talks about how the current electoral college needs to be revised.
- Correct: The current presidential voting system and electoral college should be revised so that the popular vote wins the election.

Vague or general

- Wrong: Charles Dickens was a good author.
- Correct: Charles Dickens was one of the greatest authors of all time because of his unique use of characterization, his books that highlight significant social issues, and his use of description.

In first person

- Wrong: I believe that vape smoking is bad for people.
- Correct: Vape smoking should be avoided by people of all ages because it poses currently unknown health risks.

Student Thesis Examples:

Persuasive or Argumentative Essay:

- Though maintaining a six-foot distance from one another and testing are useful in ways, face masks appear to be the most effective tool in the fight against the spread of COVID-19.

Proposal Essay:

- Until a vaccine is available for all Americans, colleges in the state of Arizona should pass regulations that require the wearing of face masks while on college campuses and within their buildings.

Short Story Analysis Essay:

- The use of setting in "Hills Like White Elephants" reflects an emotional and physical barrenness felt by the characters, individually and within their relationship, and acts as a symbol that their relationship coming to an end is unavoidable.

Novel Analysis Essay:

- In, *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald uses the characters to represent the moral degradation in 1920s America—Jay Gatsby, Tom Buchanan, and Nick Carraway each depict a lack of ethics as part of achieving the American dream in the roaring twenties.

Checklist:

Check the following rules against your statement:

◊ My thesis statement is only one or two sentences.

◊ My thesis statement is an opinion and not a fact or observation.

◊ A reasonable person could disagree with my thesis statement.

◊ My thesis statement passes the So What? Test

◊ My thesis statement is not a generalization or exaggeration.

◊ My thesis statement is not too broad or too narrow.

◊ My thesis statement is not a question.

◊ My thesis statement is no an announcement and it avoids first person.

◊ My thesis statement is not too vague or general.

Exercise 1

1. Everything in an essay circles around the _____ statement.

2. A thesis is only how many sentences? _____ or _____.

3. A thesis is located near the _____ of the _____.

4. Every thing in your paper must _____, be _____ to, or _____ back to your thesis statement.

5. A thesis statement makes an _____.

6. A thesis statement answers the questions _____ and _____.

Exercise 2

1. Pick a general topic for your next Essay:_____

2. Ask a question about that topic:_____

3. What is YOUR answer to that question?_____

4. Put that answer in the form of an opinion:_____

5. Rewrite it again in the form of a thesis statement:_____

Here's an example for you:

A general topic for a Proposal Essay: Health Care

A question about that topic: Can the government provide

their own health care plan that is affordable for those who don't have health care?

My answer to that question?: Yes, if they find a way to pay for it and make it affordable for the lower and middles classes.

That answer in the form of an opinion: The government should offer a health care plan that is affordable for every American regardless of income.

Rewritten again in the form of a thesis statement: The government should put time and money into offering a health care plan that is affordable for every American regardless of income, because currently the plans are not affordable for many Americans.

Exercise 3

For each of the following topics, think of a personal stance that might work for a thesis:

1. Student housing
2. Healthy food in restaurants
3. Online classes (and/or partially online or hybrid classes)
4. The future of hard-copy newspapers
5. Minimum age for college students

Additional Resources:

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=58#oembed-1

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=58#oembed-2

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=58#oembed-3

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15. Creating a Title

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

Creating a Title

Your essay's title should:

- Be original
- Be a reasonable length
- Reflect your topic
- Be lively and attention-getting

Your title should NOT:

- Be generic/repeat the assignment
- Be in ALL CAPS
- Be in boldface, "quotation marks," underlined, or italicized
- Be followed by a period

Capitalization Rules for Titles:

- Always capitalize the first letter of the first word and the last word.
- Capitalize the first letter of each "important" word in between the first and last words.
- Do not capitalize articles (a, an, the), unless they are after a

colon

- Do not capitalize coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, etc.)
- Do not capitalize prepositions (on, at, in, off, etc.)

Example

Following are some of examples of real student titles:

1. "Hills Like White Elephants:" A Dance Between Two Lovers

2. Behind the Mask of Seduction in "The Cask of Amontillado"

3. Changes: An Existential Journey

4. Kinder is the War with "The Things They Carried"

5. What We Do Affects Us: An Argument for Masks during Covid-19

6. Healthcare Workers: Overworked and Underappreciated

Exercise 1

1. Using the above criteria, create three different possible titles for your essay.

2. Swap titles with a classmate and give advice about which one is the strongest.

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16. Creating an Outline

Now that you've narrowed down your topic, done your research, and created your thesis, it's time to start writing, right? Instead of jumping right in…pause for a few moments before beginning to amass your information into a first draft. Return to your statement(s) of purpose. Have any of the elements (voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, reception) changed as a result of your research? If so, write up an intermediate statement of purpose, and use it as a guide as you draft and as the basis for a writer's memo you may be asked to submit with your draft.

Once you think you have an ample supply of materials, read through your subtopic files and consider the order of the different pieces. Consider the points you want to make in relation to the information you have found and begin typing comments between your notes to assure you have a solid plan in place when you start to make your outline.

Create an outline that begins with your thesis (or message). Include the subtopics as key elements. Under each subtopic, list your supporting points you have researched as well as the ideas you plan to add.

Writing an Outline

Creating an outline might seem like an unnecessary step. However, outlines ensure that your argument is well-organized and stays on topic. In addition, a well-thought out outline can save hours of writing time. After all, it's much easier to re-organize an outline than to re-write an entire essay!

An outline can be either informal or formal. An informal outline outlines the parts of a paper without a specific structure. An author

might use bullet points, letters, numbers, or any combination of these things. On the other hand, a formal outline has a very specific structure. Main points are listed using Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc). Secondary points use capital letters (A, B, C, etc). The third level of points uses Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc), and the final level uses lowercase letters (a, b, c, etc).

Below is an example of both an informal and a formal outline side by side. In an actual essay outline, each item would include specific details about the essay instead of general headings. Instead of Point 1, for example, the outline would state the actual point.
image

Image created by Dr. Karen Palmer and licensed under CC BY NC SA.

When you are finished, evaluate your outline by asking questions such as the following:

- Do I want to tweak my planned thesis based on the information I have found?
- Do all of my planned subtopics still seem reasonable?
- Did I find an unexpected subtopic that I want to add?
- In what order do I want to present my subtopics?
- Are my supporting points in the best possible order?
- Do I have enough support for each of my main subtopics? Will the support I have convince readers of my points?
- Do I have ample materials for the required length of the paper? If not, what angle do I want to enhance?
- Have I gathered too much information for a paper of this length? And if so, what should I get rid of?
- Did I include information in my notes that really doesn't belong and needs to be eliminated? (If so, cut it out and place it in a discard file rather than deleting it. That way, it is still available if you change your mind once you start drafting.)
- Are my planned quotations still good choices?

Sentence Outlines

You may be asked by your instructor to create a sentence outline, which takes a regular outline to another step. In this type of outline, each and every single line should be a *complete* sentence. Instead of using a short phrase or word, you should have full sentences.

Key points about a sentence outline:

- An outline is a way of organizing *key ideas*
- An outline helps to set up an essay or a research paper
- An outline is a tool to help revise an essay or research paper.
- An outline can be a study tool to help you summarize *key ideas* in reading
- A formal outline shows, in logical order, what you will be writing about.
- A formal outline helps you separate main ideas and supporting ideas
- A formal outline gives you a foundation from which to build an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.
- A formal outline often changes after you write your first draft. It will show you where you need to add more research or make other changes.
- Each line of your outline should be a complete sentence.
- The more detailed your outline, the easier it will be to write your essay.

Example Sentence Outline:

Southern Local-Color in "Désirée's Baby" and "A Rose for Emily"

I. Intro for The Application of a Literary Critical Model to a Short Story

A. Local-color is a form of regionalism which exploits the speech, dress, mannerism, and habits of a specific region.

B. Southern local-color portrays life of the Old South.

1. "Southern writers were nostalgic for a sense of place distinctly and exclusively Southern" (Lecture 5).
2. "Southern Renaissance writers can also be said to transcend its specific regional settings and address universal themes of human suffering, isolation, prejudice, alienation, connection, and intimacy" (Lecture 5).

C. Kate Chopin wrote "Désirée's Baby" and William Faulkner wrote "A Rose for Emily."

1. Both stories focus on the role of women in Southern culture and the relationship between men and women.
2. The main female protagonist in each story is Désirée and Emily.

H. Thesis: Due to their old Southern culture, both Désirée and Emily experience gender inequality, their

stories utilize Southern dialect and garments, and they are examples of what happens to women and other minorities when they are not given social freedom.

II. Désirée and Emily experience gender inequality due to their Southern culture.

A. "Désirée's Baby" takes place in Louisiana before the American Civil War.

1. The culture was created around the existence of slaves.
2. Their plantations and economy relied on this racial caste system.
3. The expectations of females limited their roles in this society.

B. Armand falls instantly in love with the young and beautiful Désirée when he sees her standing outside her wealthy plantation.

C. Désirée's past is unknown, she was found as a baby and raised by the loving plantation owner.

1. Armand purchases her fine clothes and gifts from Paris and soon the two are married, he now sees her as his property, he bought her with his wealth.

B. Armand is racist and often cruel to his slaves and treats them as property.

1. When their baby is born showing African American genetic traits, Désirée is accused of being partially black and shunned by her husband.

2. Désirée is so heartbroken, that she takes herself and her baby to the bayou to die.

C. After their deaths, Armand burns her fancy possessions and he finds a letter from his deceased mother who confesses that she carries the African American genetic traits.

1. This confirms that Armand is the one who is partially black, not Désirée.

Exercise 1

Choose the best choice for each question:

1. Once you are finished taking notes, you should

1. start writing immediately.
2. read through your notes and put them in an order that will work.
3. make sure, when you write, to use all the information you have found.

2. Your outline should begin with

1. your thesis (or message).
2. your best quotation.
3. your most interesting subtopic.

3. If you have notes that are relevant, but do not fit within the planned subtopics

1. delete those notes.
2. you know that you did unneeded research.
3. consider adding a subtopic.

4. Once you begin to make your outline, you should

1. tweak your thesis based on information you have learned.
2. eliminate all information that does not directly support your thesis.
3. use only your original ideas.

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17. Proper Paper Formatting: Introduction to MLA and APA

DR. KAREN PALMER

As a rule, your writing assignments, especially those requiring research, will specify a documentation format. If you are free to use the style of your choice, you can choose any format you want as long as you are consistent, but you should know that certain disciplines tend to use specific documentation styles:

- business and social sciences: American Psychological Association (APA)
- natural and applied sciences: Council of Science Editors (CSE)
- humanities: Modern Language Association (MLA) or the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)

For the purposes of this chapter, we will confine ourselves to the two documentation formats that will be the most common in your undergraduate courses: the style manuals from APA and MLA.

These two systems of documentation have been refined over many generations so that academics can rely on certain standards of attribution when they cite each other's work and when their work is cited. When you enter into an academic conversation in a given discipline, it's imperative that you play by its rules.

This table illustrates a brief comparison of the basic elements of MLA and APA formatting and the differences between them:

MLA	APA
1 inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman	1 inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman
Includes Main Argument and a Works Cited page	Includes Title Page, Abstract, Argument, and Reference page
Header with Last Name, Page # on the right	Header with Running Head, PAPER TITLE on the left and page # on the right
Student information is at the top left, not in header. Includes Name, Instructor name, course, and date.	Student information is on a Title page, which includes title, author, and institution.

MLA	APA
[Last Name] 1 [Your Name] [Instructor Name] [Course Number] [Date] [Title]: [Subtitle] [Research papers that use MLA format do not include a cover page unless requested by your instructor. Instead, start with the information shown. Do not bold the title or use all capital letters. Capitalize the first and last words of the title, and all principal words. If your paper includes a subtitle, separate it from the title by a colon and space, as shown. For more specific guidance on capitalization, see the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th Edition (MLA 7th Edition)*.] [All text—including titles, quotations, notes, and list of works cited—uses double line spacing. Body text and note text use a half-inch first-line indent. The list of works cited uses a half-inch hanging indent. Table titles and source text use a quarter-inch indent. To access all of these text formats, on the Home tab of the ribbon, check out Styles.] [MLA format discourages extensive use of content notes. But, when you need to add notes, you can use either endnotes or footnotes. *MLA 7th Edition* indicates that you should use a superscript, Arabic numeral at an appropriate place in the text for the note reference. To begin the note text, use the same numeral, not superscript, and followed by a period.] [If you use endnotes, they should be on a separate page, at the end of your text and preceding the list of works cited. If you use footnotes, consult your professor for preferred format.]	Running head: [SHORTENED TITLE UP TO 50 CHARACTERS] 1 [Title Here, up to 12 Words, on One to Two Lines] [Author Name(s), First M. Last, Omit Titles and Degrees] [Institutional Affiliation(s)] Author Note [Include any grant/funding information and a complete correspondence address.]

The Right Look

Using design options, you can vary the look of your written work. You can make design choices based on your personal preferences, requirements, purpose, and audience. You have many options regarding both text formatting and use of visuals.

Think about a résumé, an event flyer, a page in a research paper, a business letter, and a page in a novel. All these items start out exactly the same—as a blank page. The second step is typically also the same—text is added. The third step, however, differs, as the text formatting is varied to create the desired look. Based on requirements or audience expectations, you will sometimes want to conform to conventions. Other times, you can employ more personal choices.

For example, an essay conforming to the American Psychological Association (APA) or Modern Language Association (MLA) style sheet has very rigid requirements regarding font choice, margin size, subhead formatting, and placement of page numbers. Likewise, a business letter has some audience-expected features, such as date, name and address of person receiving the letter, greeting, introduction, body, closing, salutation, signature, and contact information for the sender of the letter. A business letter, however, does have a bit more flexibility than a paper written in APA style does since you can vary some aspects, such as your font choices and margins. On the other hand, a business letter written in an unusual or silly font will not likely be well received, so you'll want to make choices with audience expectations in mind.

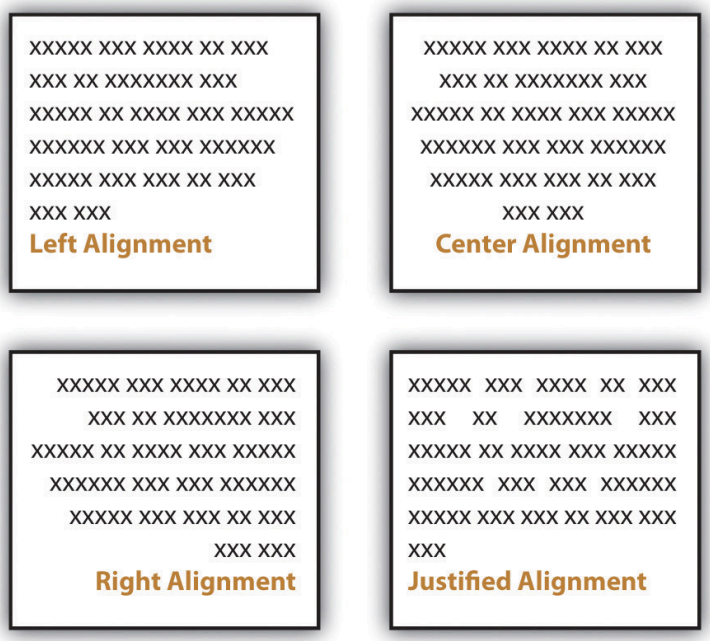
White Space: Margins and Line Spacing

White space is the area on a page (hard-copy or digital) that is not covered with text or images. Keep in mind that well-used white space makes a page more visually appealing and easier to read. In academic writing, white space can be used to describe the space between lines of text and the margins of the document.

In an academic setting, the format chosen usually has specific guidelines for white space. In most cases, use double spacing for the text body and use one-inch margins all around. You should not skip additional spaces in your paper. New paragraphs should be indented by pressing the Tab key one time.

Alignment on Page

Alignment choices can also affect the overall look of a page of text. With most word processing software, you can choose to align text to the left, to the right, or to the center. You can also justify the text, which is sort of a combination of the other three options:



Most business and academic documents use left alignment as the standard format. The other three options are used less often but can provide effective alternatives in specific situations. For example, you will usually center-align text on a title page; you will typically right-align the page numbers in a document header, and you might justify text when you want to fit the maximum amount of text within the given space (such as within a newspaper article). Both center-aligned text and right-aligned text should be used sparingly since they are difficult to read in large amounts.

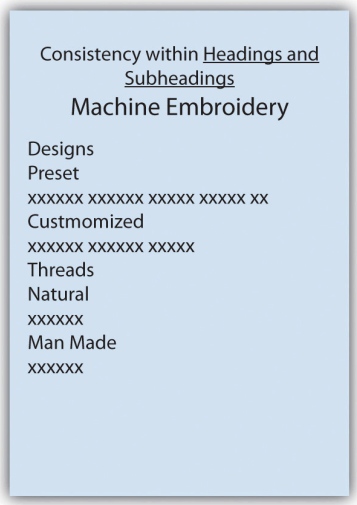
USING TEXT FEATURES

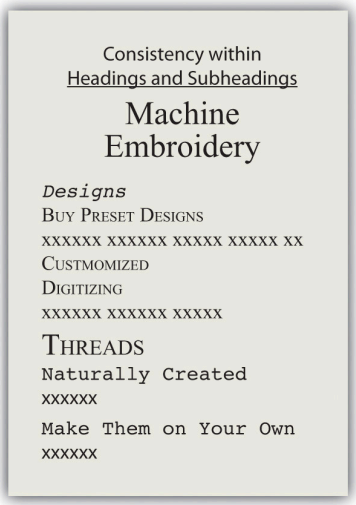
Along with basic layout choices, you can control the look and feel of a document

using certain text features. As with the other formatting options, you should base your choices on requirements of the format you are using.

Headings and Subheadings

If permitted by the academic format, you can use headings and subheadings to break up text to make it easier to read. Keep two points in mind when you are deciding whether to use headings and subheadings: consistency and organization. Your headings should follow a consistent pattern in regards to both parallelism and content hierarchy, and the headings should help the readers see the relationships between parts of the text.





Headings and subheadings also provide a means of organizing text into categories that help readers comprehend the relationship between parts of the text both during a thorough read and when quickly glancing over the text. Clearly, headings and subheadings are not appropriate in some situations, such as within business letters and in documents that are only a couple of paragraphs long.

Take efforts to create short, informative headings and subheadings. Within a document, maintain consistency for headings and subheadings. For example, you might choose to make all the main headings gerund phrases (e.g., Using Text Features) and all the subheadings questions (e.g., Will Visual Text Features Help?). Also, use the same font features for each level of heading to create consistency.

Fonts

Today's word processors typically offer a wide variety of font choices. While an invitation might look best in a swirly script for fanciness, and a poster often demands a dark, heavy font for distance viewing, academic writing does not offer as many choices. Two common fonts that are widely used in professional and academia settings are Times New Roman and Arial. Be careful to use the font options prescribed by your professor's expectations and the documentation format you are using.

Font Choice

Arial works well in professional settings.

So does Times New Roman.

Comic Sans, on the other hand, can make your writing appear too informal or elementary.

And Lucida Calligraphy is too swirly for such settings.

Font Size

For most text, size 12 font is a good size.

Size 10 is a little too small to be read easily by most people.

And, size 8 is way too small for most people.

On the other hand, size 14 is a little large.

And, anything size 16 or over feels like screaming text (unless it is in a special situation).

Typically, you should use 12-point font for standard text. Headings might be a size or two larger. In the absence of required sizes, you should use standard sizes to make your text easy to read.

Other Text Features

Along with font choices and sizes, you can also enhance your text using visual text features, such as those that follow. You can use the features in many ways, such as to call attention to text, to set text apart, and to make text easier to read at a glance.

- Bolding
- Italicizing
- Underlining
- Shading
- All caps
- Small caps
- Color
- Lists (such as this one)

As a rule, you should use these features sparingly so you do not diminish their effects. Exceptions to this general rule are some of the features that have specific, set uses. For example, standard format requires that you write acronyms in all caps and titles of books in italics.

CREATING AND FINDING VISUALS

It may be a cliché to say "a picture is worth a thousand words," but the truth is that visual images have power. However, visuals are not always welcome in academic writing. Be sure to follow the instructions of your professor! If you do use visuals, use them purposefully, not just to make your paper longer.
Types of visuals include the following:

- Photos
- Tables
- Charts
- Line graphs
- Pie charts
- Flow charts
- Concept clarification diagrams
- Stock photos

When possible, use a variety of types of visuals, but remember that any visuals you use should enhance the content of the text. For example, only add photos if viewing the photos will clarify the text. Near each visual, explain its purpose. Do not expect your readers to figure out the values of the visuals on their own. However, when you

explain the purpose, do not explain it so thoroughly that readers have no reason to look at the visuals.

You have three basic choices for finding visuals to use in your work. You can search the Internet, use photos you have taken, or create images by hand or on the computer.

Search the Web

The Internet is a powerful tool that you can use in several ways to find visuals to complement your work. If you simply click on "images" for your topic in a search engine, you will generate both royalty-free and protected images. It's important to choose to use images that are either yours to use or that are specifically labeled for re-use. When using the *Google* search engine, you can click on the images setting and then on "tools" to refine your search to images that have been licensed for reuse–that means that you can freely use them. It's important to always include the source and licensing for any visuals you find on the internet.

Use Your Own Images

Any pictures you take yourself are clearly royalty-free for your use. Taking a clear, meaningful picture that would be appropriate for use in your work is possible. To avoid rights issues, ask any human subjects included to sign a waiver giving you permission to use their likenesses. In the case of minors, you would obviously need to ask their guardians to sign the permission form.

Here's an example of a typical waiver:

Permission Form for Use of Human Likeness

I give *Joe Student* permission to use my likeness [or the likeness of _____ for whom I have guardian or parental responsibility] in his paper entitled "Paper Title." I understand that this paper could possibly appear in print or digital form as part of educational knowledge or research.

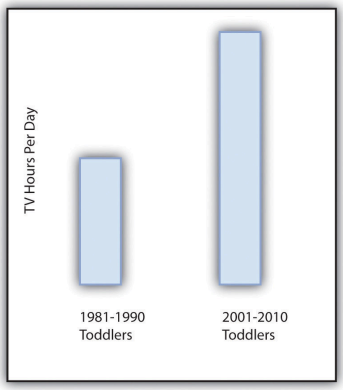
Signature_____
Date_____

Similarly, pictures taken by friends or relatives could be available for

your use as long as you get signed permission to use the photo as well as signed permission from any human subjects in the photo. Although it might seem silly to ask your sister, for example, to give you signed permission to use her photo or image, you never know what complications you could encounter later on. So always protect yourself with permissions.

Create Your Visuals

A third option is to create your visuals. You do not have to be an artist to successfully choose this option. You can use computer programs to generate very professional looking charts, graphs, tables, flow charts, and schematic images. The following examples show just a fraction of your options when using standard word processing software programs.



Percent of Overweight U.S. Children	
1981-1990	2001-2010
6%	15%

When you create graphics, make sure to group the components. If you find that your graphics are not holding together when viewed on other computers or in other programs, save each graphic in a separate JPEG file and use the JPEGs in your paper.

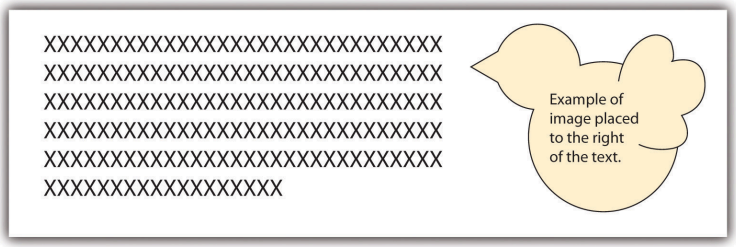
Sites like Canva.com offer free accounts that allow you create a variety of visuals by mixing photographs, graphics, charts, text, and other elements. These types of sites can give you greater flexibility and ease of use.

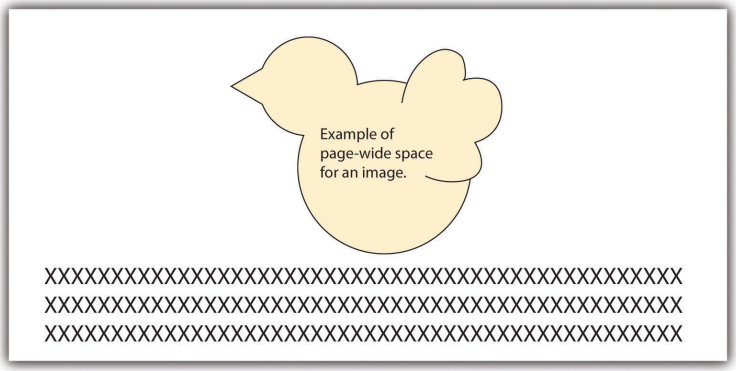
Subject your visuals to the same level of scrutiny as your writing. Keep in mind that if you find one person who has a problem with

one of your visuals, there will be others who also take exception. On the other hand, remember that you can never please everyone, so you will have to use your judgment.

Physically Placing Images into Text

When you insert an image into your text, you must make some physical decisions. One of the most common choices is to place the image to the right or left of your text.





Another choice is to move the text down to create page-wide space for the image. In such situations, the image is typically placed above the related text. This format is usually used at the beginning of a document where the image treatment doesn't break up the text.

Uses and Abuses of Visual Rhetoric

You should choose visuals to advance your argument rather than just to decorate your pages. Just as you would not include words that are fluff, you should not include meaningless images.

Also, just as you aim to avoid the use of fallacies in your text, you also need to be careful not to use fallacious visuals. For example, if you were arguing for or against the proposition that big dogs make good pets for families, you might show a picture of a Rottweiler.

Rottweiler A

Rottweiler B

How could the choice of either of these photos impact the reader?

Thanks to common programs such as Photoshop, you can easily alter a photo, but make sure to do so ethically. For example, say that you are making an argument that the Moser Company unfairly hires only young people and disposes of employees as they age. You decide to show a photo of some of the employees to make your point. You crop the original photo in into the version shown as Moser Company B.

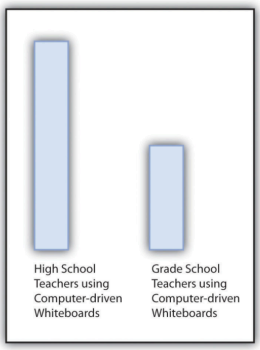
Moser Company A

Moser Company B

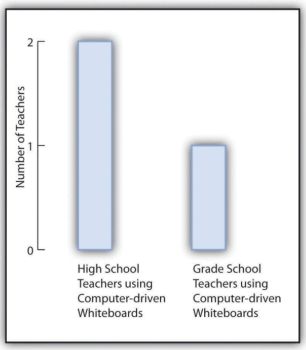
Notice how the second photo crops out the elderly female employee. This gives an unfair and inaccurate representation.

This cropping choice would be an example of a faked, misleading photo and would be unethical.

More than likely, you have seen tables or graphs that paint a reality that is not exactly accurate. For example, these two graphs could be used as proof that "twice as many" high school teachers as grade school teachers choose to use computer-driven whiteboards.



Graph A



Graph B

Graph A seems to support this statement nicely. If you look at Graph B, however, you realize that the entire sample includes only

three teachers, so "twice as many" means, literally, two out of three—an inadequate sample that leads to neither impressive nor convincing data. Be very careful not to misrepresent data using tables and graphs, whether knowingly or accidentally.

Photos in this section cropped from © Thinkstock

Weighing Your Options for Visuals

Visuals, like oral or written text, can make ethical, logical, and emotional appeals. Two examples of ethical appeals are a respected logo and a photo of the author in professional dress. Graphs, charts, and tables are examples of logical appeals. For the most part, nearly *all* visuals, because they quickly catch a reader's eye, operate on an emotional level—even those that are designed to make ethical and logical appeals.

Consider the following options as you choose visuals for your work:

- Choose visuals that your audience will understand and appreciate. Besides adding information, visuals can help you establish common ground with your audience.

- Think about the possible emotional reactions to your visuals and decide if you they are reactions you want to evoke.
- Make sure you choose ethically when using images to make an ethical appeal. For example, it is unacceptable to use an agency for credibility if you do not have the access rights, or the suggested connection is not real.
- Make sure you present the information accurately and in a balanced way when using images such as charts and tables to create a logical appeal.
- Look for visuals that are royalty-free or create your own, unless you are prepared to pay for visuals.
- Spend some time browsing through possible visuals in hopes of seeing something that makes a claim that works with your argument if you do not know what claim you are trying to make with a visual. (A caveat: You can fritter away a lot of time looking for visuals, so don't browse for visuals at the expense of reading and writing.)
- Make sure you choose visuals that align with the ethical standards of your work, because visuals can sway readers quickly. If your text is solidly ethical, but your picture(s) are inflammatory, you might compromise the ethics of your whole work.
- Keep captions brief if you need to use them. Some images carry meaning without any explanation. If you can't keep the caption brief, you probably need a different visual or better context for the visual in the text of your essay.

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18. Formatting: MLA Style

DR. KAREN PALMER

MLA stands for Modern Language Association. In most Humanities and English courses, papers should follow MLA formatting guidelines. In general, that means that papers will

- Have a one inch margin on all sides
- Use 12 pt. Times New Roman font
- Be double-spaced
- Contain a heading at the top left containing the student's name, professor's name, class name, and the date.
- Contain a unique title centered on the first page.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=71#oembed-1

Order of Pages

MLA requires the following set order of pages with each listed page

on the list starting on a new page. If your paper does not require one or more of the pages, skip over those pages, but maintain the order of the pages you do use.

- Body of text
- Notes
- Citation list
- Appendices

No title page is needed unless your instructor requests it. Instead of a title page, MLA requires that you double-space your name, instructor's name, course name or number, and the date at the top left. Next, continuing to double space, center the title on the page and start your text under the title.

Page Numbers and Paper Identification

Page numbers should be placed at the top, right margin one-half inch down from the top of the page. Before the page number, use your last name in a running head.

Margins

Make margins one inch on both sides and top and bottom.

Headings and Subheadings

Use double spacing with no additional returns. There are five levels of headings in MLA style.

Heading Levels

First Level: Bold, Aligned Left

Second Level: Italics, Aligned Left

Third level: Centered, Bold

Fourth Level: Centered, Italics

Fifth Level: Underlined, Aligned Left

If you have only two headings, use only the first two formats and so on. Typically, you will have two or three levels, but you might have as many as five levels. Keep in mind that the title does not count as a heading level, you should use the levels consistently, and you must have a minimum of two headings at each level.

Fonts

Choose a font that is straight forward with no curly flairs or other "fancy" twists, such as Times New Roman or Arial. Use 12-point font.

Paragraph Indentations

Indent the first line of each paragraph one-half inch from the left margin by using the tab key (rather than spacing over).

Line Spacing

Double-space all text, including titles, subheadings, tables, captions, and citation lists. Do not skip additional spaces between lines anywhere in your paper.

Spacing after Punctuation

Leave only one space after all punctuation (both inside and at the end of sentences).

Example of MLA Formatted Paper

image

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19. Formatting APA Style

DR. KAREN PALMER

APA stands for the American Psychological Association. APA formatting is used by disciplines in the Social Sciences, like psychology. It is also used by nursing students.

Here is a video by author Mark Hatala, PhD, reviewing the APA Manuscript Elements:

https://youtube.com/watch?v=sGhNzgcjFXI

Some sample papers: https://apastyle.apa.org/learn/faqs/view-sample-papers

Order of Pages

APA requires the following set order of pages with each listed page on the list starting on a new page. If your paper does not require one or more of the pages, skip over those pages, but maintain the order of the pages you do use.

- Title page
- Abstract
- Body
- Text
- References
- Footnotes (If used, these may be placed at bottom of individual

pages or placed on a separate page following the citations.)

- Tables too large to place within the text body can be included in this position
- Figures too large to place within the text body can be included in this position
- Appendices

Title Page

A double-spaced title page should include the required information centered on the top half of the page. The title page information can vary based on your instructor's requests, but standard APA guidelines include either the title, your name, and your college name, course name, the instructor's name, and the due date.

The title should be centered about three to four lines down from the top of the page.

Here is an example:

An Innovative Approach to Eliminating Food Insecurity

Jane Doe

Yavapai College

ENG 102

Dr. Palmer

February 26, 2020

APA also provides students with a Title Page Guide.

Page Numbers and Paper Identification

Page numbers should be placed at the top, right margin one-half inch down from the top of the page. In professional papers, a running head is required. APA does not require a running head for student papers, but some professors might ask you to include one as practice. Across from the page number, flush left, include the title of the paper in a running head. If the title of the paper is lengthy, use an abbreviated version in the running head.

Margins

Make margins one inch on both sides and top and bottom.

Headings and Subheadings

Use double spacing with no additional returns. Before you decide where to place your headings, you have to decide how many levels of headings you will have. Typically, you will have two or three levels, but you might have as many as five levels. Keep in mind that the title does not count as a heading level, you should use the levels consistently, and you must have a minimum of two headings at each level.

Example

First level heading: Centered, Bold Title

Text begins in a new paragraph.

Second level heading: Flush Left, Bold

Text begins in a new paragraph.

Third level heading: Flush Left Bold Italic

Text begins in a new paragraph.

Fourth level heading: Indented, Bold, Ends with a Period. Text continues on after the heading.

Fifth level heading: Indented, Bold Italic. Ends with a Period. Text continues on after the heading.

Fonts

A variety of fonts can be used in APA style papers.

Sans serif options: 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, or 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode.

Serif options: 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or normal (10-point) Computer Modern.

Paragraph Indentations

Indent the first word of each paragraph by using the tab key.

Line Spacing

Double-space all text, including titles, subheadings, tables, captions, and citation lists.

Spacing after Punctuation

Space once after punctuation within a sentence, such as commas, colon, and semicolons, and twice after end punctuation.

For additional help formatting your paper in APA Style, please click HERE.

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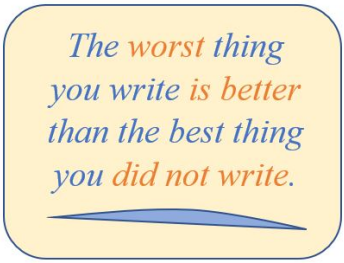
PART VI

DRAFTING

20. Introductions and Conclusions

DR. KAREN PALMER AND SANDI VAN LIEU

Introductions



The introduction has two main jobs. First, it sets the stage for the argument that you will be making, letting readers know what is coming. Second, it connects that argument to the audience's experiences so that they will want to read the argument. For the purposes of an introductory composition course, an introduction is usually no longer than a paragraph (four-six sentences). However, if a paper is longer than 5-6 pages, the introduction might be longer. In a 10 page paper, an introduction might be about a page. In a 200 page dissertation, the introduction will be chapter length–10-15 pages!

Parts of an Introduction

An introduction has three parts: a hook, an introduction to the topic, and a thesis.

- Hook: The hook captures the reader's attention with an intriguing question, a surprising fact, or a story that pulls them

in. Your hook should relate the information in the argument to the reader's experience, connecting the reader to the argument. (Hint: you must know who your audience is to do this effectively!)

- Introduction to the topic: The introduction to the topic serves as a bridge between the hook and the thesis. It tells readers how the hook relates to your argument and gives them them the basic details about the topic. If you are writing about a piece of literature, for example, this is where you would include the title and author.
- Thesis: The thesis is a one sentence statement that tells readers what the purpose of your essay is and gives a "map" of the paper. Your thesis should include both an arguable opinion about your topic and the main points you will cover in your essay.

Here is a sample introduction paragraph from an argument paper about community gardens:

> Did you know that three in four college students will go hungry at some point of their college career? Even though there are campus food banks popping up around the country to address food insecurity for college students, the problem still exists. Campus gardens might be a way to enhance what food banks are already doing. Wasatch Gardens provides an innovative solution for fighting hunger on college campuses through creating community gardens that can assist the efforts of food banks.

The Hook is the question at the beginning of the paragraph–it provides a surprising statistic about food insecurity on college campuses. The last sentence is the **thesis**–it presents the author's

opinion on the topic. The middle two sentences introduce the topic of the paper and connect the hook to the thesis.

Checklist:

Here's a checklist that can help you make sure your introduction includes all the necessary components:My introduction is a minimum of 4-6 sentences:

◊ I start with an engaging sentence that relates to my main topic.

◊ I grab the reader's attention with a surprising fact, and interesting quote, or a question.

◊ I set the tone for the rest of the essay.

◊ I move from general to specific, with the thesis as the last sentence in the intro.

◊ I have a clear thesis that sums up what the paper is about.

Conclusions

Like the introduction, the conclusion of a paper should be brief but powerful. A conclusion helps the writer to wrap up the argument successfully. One way to do this is by presenting the introduction backward. Instead of moving from broad to specific, go the other way. First, re-state the thesis, then relate it back to your topic. Finally, end with that idea that you used to connect readers to the

topic. If you asked a question, give the answer in the conclusion. If you told a story, tell readers the rest of the story. Depending on the type of essay, a conclusion might also include a call to action. The goal is to leave readers feeling that the time they spent reading the essay was worth their time because they learned something new or were presented information in a way that they hadn't considered previously.

Here is a sample conclusion from the Community Garden essay:

> Wasatch Gardens provides college campuses with a model for an innovative solution that can help to alleviate food insecurity on their campuses. Even for colleges that already have a campus food bank, adding a campus garden might be a way to enhance the services they provide. Not only would campus gardens provide nutritious food for students, but it could provide job experience for agriculture students and provide a living wage, as well. College campuses would do well to consider the benefits of incorporating a community garden to combat food insecurity on their campuses.

Note that the first sentence here restates the thesis, then the paragraph moves from the specific solution to a more general call to action that is related to the hook–the number of students facing food insecurity on college campuses–recapping the main points of the essay along the way.

Exercise 1

1. Using your current course essay topic, write an outline. Then, use the checklist as you edit your introduction:

◊ I start with an engaging sentence that relates to my main topic.

◊ I grab the reader's attention with a surprising fact, and interesting quote, or a question.

◊ I set the tone for the rest of the essay.

◊ I move from general to specific, with the thesis as the last sentence in the intro.

◊ I have a clear thesis that sums up what the paper is about.

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21. Body Paragraph Basics

While body paragraphs can and should vary within your essay, there are some basic guidelines to follow when writing your paragraphs. Each paragraph should begin with a topic sentence, include primary support and evidence, and wrap up with a concluding statement. Body paragraphs must have the following:

- Unity—everything refers back to main point
- Coherence—all points connect to form a whole; one point leads to another
- Support—examples and details

Begin with a Topic Sentence

By definition, all sentences in the paragraph should relate to one main idea. This is referred to as **unity**. Unity is achieved when everything refers back to the main point.

- All sentences should relate back to topic sentence & thesis.
- Do not include any ideas that are irrelevant or off-topic.

The main idea should be clear and obvious to readers and is typically presented within the topic sentence. If another main idea comes up as you are drafting a paragraph, it's time to go back to your outline to see where that idea fits in. If in revising a draft you notice that a paragraph has wandered into another main idea, you should consider splitting it into two paragraphs.

In academic writing, the topic sentence is usually the first sentence in a paragraph, but it does not have to be located there.

The topic sentence is, in essence, a one-sentence summary of the point of the paragraph. All topic sentences should do the following:

- Narrow the focus of the paragraph
- Accurately predict the direction of the paragraph
- Refer back to the Thesis statement

Use Transition Words

Coherence is achieved when all points connect to form a whole; one point leads to another. Coherence is mainly achieved through the use of transitions.

Transitions—words and phrases which connect your sentences so that your writing flows smoothly.

The first sentence of a paragraph always has to help a reader move smoothly from the last paragraph. Sometimes two paragraphs are close enough in content that a transition can be implied without actually using transition words. Other times, specific transitions are needed.

Transition words are useful for more than just transitioning to a new paragraph. They can also help you connect ideas to each other within paragraphs. This table gives some ideas for how to use transitions to connect ideas in different ways:

Purpose	Examples
To compare/contrast	after that, again, also, although, and then, but, despite, even though, finally, first/second/third, etc, however, in contrast, in the same way, likewise, nevertheless, next, on the other hand, similarly, then
To signal cause/effect	as a result, because, consequently, due to , hence, since, therefore, thus
To show sequence or time	after, as soon as, at that time, before, during, earlier, finally, immediately, in the meantime, later, meanwhile, now, presently, simultaneously, so far, soon, until, then, thereafter, when, while
To indicate place or direction	above, adjacent to, below, beside, beyond, close, nearby, next to, north/south/east/west, opposite, to the left/right
To present examples	for example, for instance, in fact, to illustrate, specifically
To suggest relationships	and, also, besides, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, too

Introductory Sentences

When no transition is used, an introductory sentence is needed so the reader knows what is going on. If a transition sentence is used, it is logical to follow it with an introductory sentence or to have one joint sentence.

Here are some examples:

- **A transition sentence:** Canned goods are not the only delicious foods available at a farmers' market.
- **An introductory sentence:** Farmers' markets feature a wide variety of fresh produce.
- **A transition/introductory combination sentence:** Along with canned goods, farmers' markets also feature whatever produce is fresh that week.

Support the Topic Sentence

Finally, a body paragraph must have **support**. All sentences in the paragraph should present details that clarify and support the topic sentence. Together, all the sentences within the paragraph should flow smoothly so that readers can easily grasp its meaning.

Support is achieved through adequate examples and details. Each body paragraph should include at least two examples to support the main idea of the paragraph. In an essay in which you are incorporating outside sources, this means that you should have at least one citation in all body paragraphs. Each example should include at least one specific detail that further illustrates the point.

Always follow-up quotes with your own thoughts, arguments, analysis, etc.

When you choose sentences and ideas to support the topic sentence, keep in mind that paragraphs should not be overly long or overly short. A half page of double-spaced text is a nice average length for a paragraph. At a minimum, unless you are aiming for a dramatic effect, a paragraph should include at least three sentences. Although there is really no maximum size for a paragraph, keep in mind that lengthy paragraphs create confusion and reading difficulty. For this reason, try to keep all paragraphs to no more than one double-spaced page (or approximately 250 words).

The Quote Formula

When using quotes to support your topic sentences, it's important to follow the quote formula. Simply inserting a quote is not enough–you must explain to readers why you are using the particular quote and guide them in understanding how the quote pertains to your argument. There are three simple steps to incorporating quotes in your writing:

1. Introduce the quote. Here, you tell readers what the author is doing.
2. Give the quote. Here, you give an actual quote from the poem. Make sure to use quotation marks.
3. Use a parenthesis after the quotation marks to include the source information.
4. Explain the quote. Tell readers what the quote means.

To illustrate, take a look at the next paragraph in the paper quoted above. The parts of the quote formula are identified by using **bold** font for the introduction to the quote and *italics* for the explanation

of the quote (note that the numbers in parenthesis indicate the lines of the poem being discussed):

> Lawrence continues showing the gentler side of the snake by using similes. **For example, Lawrence says**, "He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do, / And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do" (16-17). *By comparing the snake to harmless, everyday farm animals, Lawrence is saying that he sees this snake as a harmless animal.* **He continues showing the gentle side of the snake when he says,** "He drank enough / And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken" (41-42). *An evil animal would not look "dreamily" and satisfied like a person whose thirst has been quenched.* **He also shows the snake to be more of a person when he says,** "How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to drink at my water-trough / And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless" (28-30). *By using the word "guest", Lawrence shows that he does not think the snake is invading his yard but is welcome to come and help himself.* **Then Lawrence sees an even greater side of the snake when he says,** "[a]nd [the snake] looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air" (45). *Quite opposite of the snake representing the evil devil, Lawrence compares the snake to a god.* **And, like most gods described in mythology, the snake is arrogant. When Lawrence says the snake** "looked around…unseeing" (45), *it seems as if everything around the snake is beneath him, not worthy of his notice.* The use of similes throughout the poem enhances the idea that the snake is gentle and even god-like.

Don't Forget to Wrap the Paragraph Up!

Each paragraph needs a final sentence that lets the reader know that the idea is finished and it is time to move onto a new paragraph and a new idea. A common way to close a paragraph is to reiterate the purpose of the paragraph in a way that shows the purpose has been met.

Here's an example body paragraph from a student paper. In this paper, the student is analyzing a poem. Note that the parts of the paragraph are identified as follows:

Hook: **Bold**

Support: Regular text

Wrap up: *Italics*

> **By using personification throughout the poem, Lawrence depicts a gentle snake that is more like a person than a creature.** Lawrence begins the poem by telling how a snake came to drink at his water-trough. Instead of describing the snake as an animal or using "it" to talk about the snake, Lawrence says that he "...must wait...for there he was at the trough before me" (6). Lawrence continues to show a softer side of the snake when he says "[the snake] rested his throat upon the stone bottom... / He sipped with his straight mouth, / Softly drank... / Silently" (9-13). Instead of a thrashing, dangerous creature, here is a quietly drinking person. Lawrence continues this image in the very next line. "Someone was before me at my water-trough, / And I, like a second comer, waiting" (14-15). *Throughout these lines, the snake becomes less of an animal and more of a person coming to drink.*

Note how the last sentence tells the reader what his examples show. Also note that the in text citation shows the LINE of the poem only.

Exercise 1

1. Choose a paragraph in an essay. You may use either an essay that you find online or one that you have written. Identify the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and wrap up sentence.

2. Write a short paragraph about the importance of time management. Chose a quote from THIS site (or use any quote about time management) and incorporate the quote by using the quote formula.

Attributions

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22. Using Quotes, Paraphrases, and Summaries

This chapter will discuss using and integrating sources into your essay to support your ideas. This is one of the most important parts of the writing process, because the sources "support" and "prove" your claims. Remember the 80% rule, though–at least 80% of your writing should be your own words!

Integrating Sources

Your goal within a research paper is to integrate other sources smoothly into your paper to support the points you are making. As long as you give proper credit, you can ethically reference anyone else's work. You should not, however, create a paper that is made up of one reference after another without any of your input. You should also avoid using half-page or whole-page quotations. Make sure to write enough of your material so that your sources are integrated into your work rather than making up the bulk of your paper.

Read, Think, Write:

Think of yourself as a kind of museum docent or tour guide when you are integrating sources into your work. You'll usually want to take some time to set up your use of a source by placing it in a proper context. That's why in most cases, before you even launch into quotation, paraphrase, or summary, you will have probably already used what's called a "signal phrase" that identifies the author of the source, and often the specific publication (whether web or print)

from which it is taken. After your use of the source, you'll need to follow up with analysis and commentary on how you think it fits into the larger context of your argument.

Quotes

Quotes involve the following:

- Introducing the quote
- Taking a source word-for-word, putting it in your paper, and using quotation marks.
- Citing the source correctly in the documentation style you are using for your paper.
- Wrapping up the quote with your own words in a way that clearly shows readers how the quote is related to your argument.

Paraphrases and summaries

Paraphrases involve the following:

- Taking details from a source and putting them in your own words.
- Must be cited correctly.
- No page number needed.

Summaries involve the following:

As you look for sources:

Underline

- Main ideas, support, answers to questions, key words

Annotate

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- Taking the main idea of a source and summarizing it in your own words.
- Must be cited correctly.
- No page number needed.

Paraphrased and summarized text is cited within text in the same way that quoted material is cited except that quotations are not used.

Properly Summarizing and Paraphrasing

When you summarize, you should write in your own words and the result should be substantially shorter than the original text. In addition, the sentence structure should be your original format. In other words, you should not take a sentence and replace core words with synonyms.

You should also use your words when you paraphrase. Paraphrasing should also involve your own sentence structure. Paraphrasing might, however, be as long or even longer than the original text. When you paraphrase, you should include, in your words, all the ideas from the original text in the same order as in the original text. You should not insert any of your ideas.

Both summaries and paraphrases should maintain the original author's intent and slant. Taking details out of context to suit your purposes is not ethical since it does not honor the original author's ideas.

Study the examples in the following table for clarification between summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and plagiarizing.

Summary Key Points:

- Reduce the original passage to about two-thirds.
- Concentrate on ship of ideas.

Take Notes

- Jot down relevant points.

on ma in ide as.

- Put it in your own words without changing the idea.
- Don't add

ideas or personal thoughts.

- Hint: Read it, close it, then tell someone what it was

about.

- Use a citation. (We will discuss this next week)

Original text	Some dramatic differences were obvious between online and face-to-face classrooms. For example, 73 percent of the students responded that they felt like they knew their face-to-face classmates, but only 35 percent of the subjects felt they knew their online classmates. In regards to having personal discussion with classmates, 83 percent of the subjects had such discussions in face-to-face classes, but only 32 percent in online classes. Only 52 percent of subjects said they remembered people from their online classes, whereas 94 percent remembered people from their face-to-face classes. Similarly, liking to do group projects differs from 52 percent (face-to-face) to 22 percent (online) and viewing classes as friendly, connected groups differs from 73 percent (face-to-face) to 52 percent (online). These results show that students generally feel less connected in online classes.
Summarized text	Students report a more personal connection to students in face-to-face classes than in online classes.
Paraphrased text	Study results show a clear difference between online and face-to-face classrooms. About twice as many students indicated they knew their classmates in face-to-face classes than in online classes. Students in face-to-face classes were about two-and-a-half times more likely to have discussions with classmates than were students in online classes. Students in face-to-face classes were about twice as likely to remember classmates as were students in online classes. Students in face-to-face classes viewed group projects as positive about two-and-a-half times more often than did students in online classes. Students in face-to-face classes saw class as a friendly place 73 percent of the time compared to 52 percent for online classes. Summing up these results, it is clear that students feel more connected in face-to-face classes than in online classes.
Quoted text	The study showed that personal discussions are much more likely to take place in face-to-face classes than in online classes since “83 percent of the subjects had such discussions in face-to-face classes, but only 32 percent in online classes.”
Plagiarized text	Some major differences were clear between Internet and in-person classrooms. For example, 73 percent of the study participants felt they were acquainted with their in-person classmates, but only 35 percent of the participants indicated they knew their distance classmates.

Exercise 1

1. Consider these two sentences:

- The KOA system is a large camping organization in the United States.
- KOA campers and staff take part in many public service activities.

Explain whether each of these statements is common knowledge or proprietary and why.

2. Online, find a source on a topic of interest to you. Copy a paragraph from the source. Then, complete the following:

1. Summarize the paragraph.
2. Paraphrase the paragraph.
3. Write a paragraph about the passage that includes a direct quotation from it.

Integrating Summaries, Paraphrases, and Quotes Within Paragraphs

Below are some examples of the various ways paragraphs can be organized. You'll see that all paragraphs have a topic sentence. After this you may include summaries, paraphrases, or quotes from your sources, along with your own commentary or analysis on the topic.

Example 1:

Throughout the play, and as the secret is rapidly uncovered, the audience is made to think that Torvald dearly loves Nora. He gives her an allowance in order to make their Christmas a joyful one and he rushes to her aid when she asks for help in perfecting the tarantella dance. Then right before their marriage started to fall apart due to the secret, he confessed how strong his attraction was for her. However, having spent much time with the couple, Nora's friend Kristine Linde is aware of the couple's lack of communication and deep connection that show they truly understand one another (Ibsen 580). Prior to the dialogue between Torvald and Nora at the end of the play, she tells Mr. Krogstad, "This terrible secret has to come out. They have to have a complete understanding between them" (Ibsen 581). What Kristine said was what made the audience anticipate the scene with Nora and Torvald in the end. It is due to this conversation between her and Mr. Krogstad that the secret of Nora forging her father's signature in order to borrow four thousand eight hundred kroners was finally made known to Torvald. Torvald's reaction to it, with much anticipation to the conversation following his reading the letter, came as a surprise to most of the audience.

Topic sentence
Summary
Example as support
Quote as support
Analysis/Evaluation

Example 2:

The myths of the sea diminish as the boat approaches the shore, undetected by the rescue house. The crew is made diminutive by the ignorance of the land inhabitants within their view. The crew imagines "drowned—if I am going to be drowned, why, in the name of the seven mad gods who rule the sea, was I allowed to come thus far and contemplate sand and trees? Was I brought here merely to have my nose dragged away as I was about to nibble the sacred cheese of life?" (Crane 9, 13, 15). These 'gods' remain unnamed, except for 'fate,' almost as if they do not exist at all; yet this phrase is repeated three times in the story, as the grim, lonely reality of their plight sets in. The mysticism is sufficiently reduced and without fanfare, the difficult realism of being stranded takes over.

Topic sentence
Summary
Quote as support
Analysis/Evaluation

Example 3:

Even though Dickens believes in and hates the evil in the world, he rejects Original Sin. In fact, 'sin' is hardly mentioned at all in his writings (House 112). Martha in Dickens's *David Copperfield* speaks of repentance, but neither she nor David says that it is 'sin' she must repent of. House notes that, "Edith expects repentance of Mr. Dombey, but she does not say that he has sinned. Evil is always terrifyingly real; but the source of it is obscure" (112). Instead of believing that sin came to men through Adam (see Romans 15:12-15), Dickens implies that it comes from one's own self will. Copperfield says, "We can all do some good, if we will" (House 111). Dickens sees virtue in everyone, and it is the evil in the world that acts as barricades "which prevent him from being himself" (House 112). In essence, Dickens sees all mankind as good and the evils in the world have blinded him of that good. Through his stories, Dickens tries to produce an emotion of sympathy and a spirit of goodness that has always been there, but has been hidden. This good comes from one's own self will.

Topic sentence
Summary
Quote as support
Analysis
Quote as support
Analysis/Evaluation

Example 4:

Hester goes against traditional societal thought by committing the affair. Although the book skips telling the details of the affair, it is clear that what Hester has done is "sinful passion" (Hawthorne 73). Being in the puritan society, she had to have known the risk she was taking by committing the affair, and afterward she does acknowledge that she was wrong (though we are not quite sure whether or not she actually regrets it). Still, she was willing to challenge her society in order to fulfill her heart's passion, showing her willingness to be an individual and create her own ideology. After her punishment, she spends most of her time isolated in deep thought—a Byronic trait. As Hawthorne commentator McFarland Pennell points out, "Hester develops independent ways of thinking, assuming a freedom of thought that allows her to reject the world's laws….Hester questions woman's lot in life. She comes to reject the social systems that govern woman's place" (74). Not only does Hester reject her society's thoughts by committing the affair, but through her isolation and cruel treatment she also expands her beliefs on woman's roles thus ushering in a form of subtle feminism.

Topic sentence
Analysis
Summary
Analysis/Evaluation
Example as support
Quote as support
Analysis/Evaluation

Example 5:

If colleges, states, and the federal government do not get a hold of rising tuition prices and make changes, there could be severe impacts. Education Secretary Arne Duncan says, "As a nation, we need more college graduates in order to stay competitive in the global economy. But if the costs keep on rising, especially at a time when family incomes are hurting, college will become increasingly unaffordable for the middle class" ("Cost of college degree," 2012, para. 8-9). If tuition continues to rise, student enrollment may drop, which will affect colleges financially, both of which will have negative effects on the economy; this is similar to the concept of inflation. Another severe impact will be students getting more and more loans, which has the potential to lead to a "bubble burst," similar to the housing crisis. One source argues that until the root cause of the problems are addressed, students will continue to graduate with large amounts of debt that burden them and create a drag on the economy (Moon, 2014). Therefore, it is critical that colleges, states, and the federal government work on steading college tuition prices.

Topic sentence

Quote as support

Arguments

Paraphrase as support

Argument

Exercise 2

1. Look at one specific paragraph in your essay rough draft. Using colored pens, mark what each sentence is (topic sentence, paraphrase, summary, support, argument, etc...). If your paragraph is lacking source support, work on integrating it as demonstrated above.

Correctly Citing Sources

Citing sources is critical since you do not want to be guilty of stealing ideas from others, and using others' intellectual property without giving them credit is, indeed, a form of stealing. A bonus that comes with citing sources is that aligning others' ideas with

your ideas adds credibility to your ideas and helps establish your ethos. Also, when you address more than one viewpoint, you strengthen your viewpoint.

In order to know exactly how you should cite sources, you need to know the reference style you will be using. Regardless of which citation style you use, you should follow the following general guidelines:

- Enclose all direct quotations in quotation marks and cite the source within the text, including page number, author, and year (if your style requires all these parts) so it is very clear where you acquired the information.
- When you summarize or paraphrase text, do not use quotations, but note the author and year (or other required information depending on the citation style) either as part of the sentence or in parentheses following the sentence to clearly note that the ideas belong to someone else.
- At the end of your paper, include a complete list of references, each properly cited using the required citation style.

Additional Resources:

Quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing sources:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/quoting_paraphrasing_and_summarizing/index.html

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23. Avoiding Plagiarism

DR. KAREN PALMER

What is Plagiarism?

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The term plagiarism is derived from the Latin word for "kidnapper." When you plagiarize, you essentially 'kidnap' another person's words or ideas and pass them off as your own without acknowledgment. Plagiarism is often a deliberate act. Whether a student is trying to get out of writing a paper and copies one from the web or a songwriter ' steals' lyrics from a band member, plagiarism is wrong. Deliberate plagiarism is an intentional misrepresentation meant to deceive the reader.

Students often plagiarize **unintentionally**, as well, simply because they do not realize what should be cited. For example, a student might include a statistic in his/her paper and not give the source. That is plagiarism. If a student copies a sentence or two from a Wikipedia article and gives the source in parentheses after the quote, but does not put the quote in quotations marks, that is plagiarism.

Another method of inadvertent plagiarism is to paraphrase too closely. You can avoid this pitfall by reading a paragraph and then, without looking back, writing about the paragraph. Unless you have a photographic memory, this method will result in you rewording the idea. When you finish writing, look back to make sure you

included all aspects of the original text and to clarify that you depicted the ideas accurately.

When you are planning to quote an author's exact words, follow these guidelines:

- If possible, copy and paste the quotation directly from your Research Journal so you know you have not made any inadvertent changes.
- Be very careful not to change any word orders, word choices, spellings, or punctuation.
- Use quotation marks.
- If you choose to omit any words from the quotation, indicate this omission by replacing the words with ellipses (...).
- If you add additional words to the quotation, place them within square brackets ([]).
- Immediately include the in-text citation in parenthesis at the end of the sentence in which the quotation appears.

Avoiding Plagiarism

One way to avoid unintentional plagiarism is to begin by writing down your own ideas first. Put an asterisk * in the text where you know you want to insert a quote, but don't put the quote in yet. This method ensures that you are consciously inserting quotes at a time when you can take the time to cite the source properly. One side benefit of this method is that you don't lose your train of thought while writing. Another is that you are focusing on your own words and ideas—not simply reporting what others have said. In fact, APA guidelines state that no more than 20% of a text should be referenced from other sources.

Note that ideas that are common knowledge do not need to be cited. Common knowledge includes well-known facts or general knowledge (like the number of states in the union or the team that

won the Super Bowl). Sometimes what is common knowledge in the field you are studying may not be common knowledge to you. But, if you see the same thing over and over again in all of your sources, this is probably common knowledge. When in doubt, always cite!

Consequences of Plagiarism

The consequences of plagiarism vary widely, depending on the writing situation. Songwriters caught plagiarizing face hefty fines, as well as the possible end to their careers. Academic writers may lose their jobs. Students can receive failing grades or even be expelled from school. Regardless of your writing situation, your credibility as a writer and as a person and as a research is compromised. Take the extra time to verify your sources and give credit where credit is due.

Exercise 1

1. Research an instance of plagiarism that made the news. Discuss the issue with your group. What happened? What could the person have done differently to avoid plagiarism?

Exercise 2

1. Look at your Turnitin report for your essay rough draft. Is there anything you should adjust as to avoid plagiarism?

Attribution

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PART VII

DOCUMENTATION

24. Creating a List of Sources Overview

DR. KAREN PALMER

When using research to support your ideas, creating a list of sources is required. No matter what format you are working with (APA, MLA, etc), you will need to create a list of sources at the end of your paper.

Below is a general overview of some of the most common documentation guidelines for creating a list of sources. You can also find the complete instructions for the most common documentation styles at the websites below:

- APA: http://www.apastyle.org
- MLA: http://www.mla.org
- CMS: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org

Some general online searches, especially those conducted on your library databases, are also likely to generate guidelines for a variety of documentation styles. Look for an opportunity to click on a "citation" or "documentation" icon, or ask a member of the library staff for guidance.

You can even get help through the word processing program you typically use. Microsoft Word, for instance, has an entire tab on the taskbar devoted to managing and documenting sources in all three of the styles featured here. Also, don't forget the free resources that abound on the web from various online writing labs (OWLs) managed by writing programs at colleges and universities across the country.

Citation Machine provides a tool for citing online sources that is particularly helpful.

Developing a List of Sources

Each different documentation style has its own set of guidelines for creating a list of references at the end of the essay (called "works cited" in MLA, "references" in APA, and "bibliography" in CMS).

Source lists should always be in alphabetical order by the first word of each reference, and you should use hanging indentation (with the first line of each reference flush with the margin and subsequent lines indented one-half inch).

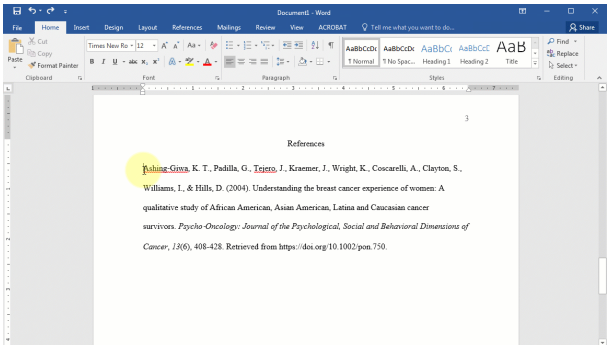
Tips:

1. Use the "Insert page" feature to make sure the Works Cited is on its own page at the end of your document. Put your cursor at the end of your paper, then insert a new page. Start typing your list of sources on the new page.
2. Center the heading at the top of the page. Follow the guidelines for the documentation style you are using.
3. The entire page should be double spaced, just like the rest of your paper.
4. Sources should be in alphabetical order.
5. Sources should use a Hanging Indent.

Use a Hanging Indent

1. Highlight the text you want to format.
2. Right click.
3. Choose Paragraph.

4. Choose Hanging Indent.



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Exercise 1

1. In your essay rough draft, create a hanging indent.

Additional Resource:

If you don't know how to cite a certain type of source, please see the OWL at Purdue website: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

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25. List of Sources MLA Style: Works Cited

MLA: Works Cited

In an MLA paper, the sources are listed at the end of the paper on the Works Cited page. Sources should be in alphabetical order by author's last name or the title if there is no author.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=96#oembed-1

The formatting for Works Cited entries generally follows this pattern:

Author. Title of Source. Title of Container (self contained if a book), Other contributors (translators or editors), Version (edition), Number (vol. and/or no.), Publisher, Publication date, Location (pages, paragraphs, URL, or DOI). 2nd container's title, other contributors, version, number, publisher, publication date, location, date of access (if applicable).

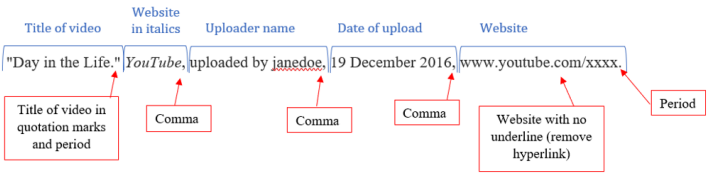
A "container" is a larger work that a source is found within. For

example, when citing a chapter in a book, the name of the chapter would be the title of the source and the name of the book would be the title of the container. Another example might be a page on a website. The page is the source, and the website is the container. An article in a newspaper would be the source, and the newspaper would be the container.

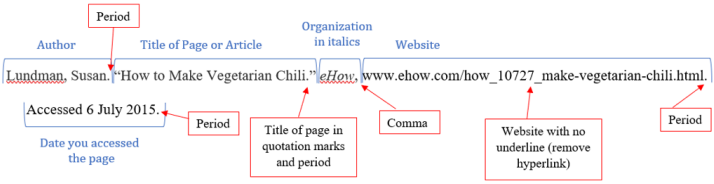
Since the items needed for each source doesn't change, citing every type of source is the same. If one of the items needed is missing or doesn't exist, just skip it.

Works Cited: Website NO author in MLA

Works Cited: YouTube video in MLA



Works Cited: Website with author in MLA

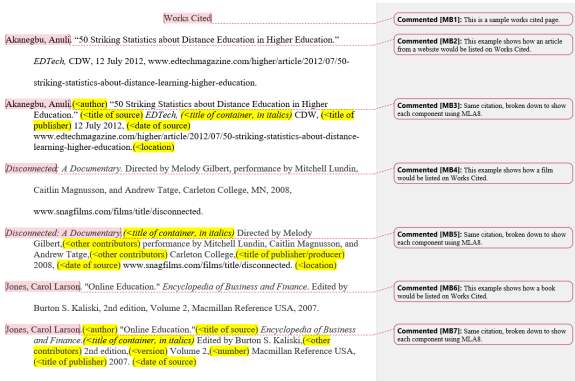


Source Type	Example Citation
Book	Gleick, James. *Chaos: Making a New Science*. Penguin, 1987.
Short Story/Article from a Book	Cisneros, Sandra. "Eleven." Exploring Literature Writing and Arguing About Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and the Essay, edited by Frank Madden, Longman, 2016, pp. 26-28.
Article from a Magazine	Sanders, Scott Russell. "Under the Influence: Paying the Price of My Father's Booze." Harper's, Nov. 1989, pp. 68-75.
Article from a database	Solomon, Diana. "Anne Finch, Restoration Playwright." Trudeau, Lawrence J. Poetry Criticism, vol. 156, Gale, 2014. *Literature Criticism Online*, https://link-galegroup-com.proxy.yc.edu/apps/doc/PQUTEO549578763/LCO?u=yava&sid=LCO&xid=df2c7f9f. Accessed 10 Apr. 2019. Originally published in *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2011, pp. 37-56.
Entire Website	"Castles in Medieval Times." *yourchildlearns.com*. 2000. Owl and Mouse Educational Software. 9 March 2003. <http://www.yourchildlearns.com/castle_history.htm (Links to an external site.)>. Accessed July 29, 2011.

Source Type	Example Citation
Article/Blog post on a Website.	Morin, Amy. "Mom Am I Fat?: Helping Your Teen Have a Positive Body Image." Verywell Family, About Inc., 18 Jan. 2019, www.verywellfamily.com/media-and-teens-body-image. Accessed 12 May 2019. Piercy, Marge. "Barbie Doll." Poem Hunter, C. Ekrem Teymur, 6 June 2011, https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/barbie-doll/. Accessed 3 Sept. 2019.
A Film	*The Empire Strikes Back*.Dir. George Lucas. Perf. Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher. Twentieth Century Fox, 1980.
YouTube Video	McGonigal, Jane. "Gaming and Productivity." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Think, 3 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3E.
Yelp/Social Media Posts	*B., Elizabeth. "Olsen's Grain." Yelp, 10/4/16. https://www.yelp.com/biz/olsens-grain-prescott?hrid=HjFTGmfTuS6rvsmVpTNZfQ&utm_campaign=www_review_share_popup&utm_medium =copy_link&utm_source=(direct). Accessed 10/10/16.*

Click Here for a great guide for MLA citation creation.

Sample Works Cited



Works Cited

Akanegbu, Anuli. "50 Striking Statistics about Distance Education in Higher Education." *EDTech*, CDW, 12 July 2012, www.edtechmagazine.com/higher/article/2012/07/50-striking-statistics-about-distance-learning-higher-education.

Akanegbu, Anuli.(<author) "50 Striking Statistics about Distance Education in Higher Education." (<title of source) *EDTech, (<title of container, in italics)* CDW, (<title of publisher) 12 July 2012, (<date of source) www.edtechmagazine.com/higher/article/2012/07/50-striking-statistics-about-distance-learning-higher-education.(<location)

Disconnected: A Documentary. Directed by Melody Gilbert, performance by Mitchell Lundin, Caitlin Magnusson, and Andrew Tatge, Carleton College, MN, 2008, www.snagfilms.com/films/title/disconnected.

Disconnected: A Documentary.(<title of container, in italics) Directed by Melody Gilbert,(<other contributors) performance by Mitchell Lundin, Caitlin Magnusson, and Andrew Tatge,(<other contributors) Carleton College,(<title of publisher/producer) 2008, (<date of source) www.snagfilms.com/films/title/disconnected. (<location)

Jones, Carol Larson. "Online Education." *Encyclopedia of Business and Finance*. Edited by Burton S. Kaliski, 2nd edition, Volume 2, Macmillan Reference USA, 2007.

Jones, Carol Larson.(<author) "Online Education."(<title of source) *Encyclopedia of Business and Finance.(<title of container, in italics)* Edited by Burton S. Kaliski,(<other contributors) 2nd edition,(<version) Volume 2,(<number) Macmillan Reference USA, (<title of publisher) 2007. (<date of source)

Commented [MB1]: This is a sample works cited page.

Commented [MB2]: This example shows how an article from a website would be listed on Works Cited.

Commented [MB3]: Same citation, broken down to show each component using MLA8.

Commented [MB4]: This example shows how a film would be listed on Works Cited.

Commented [MB5]: Same citation, broken down to show each component using MLA8.

Commented [MB6]: This example shows how a book would be listed on Works Cited.

Commented [MB7]: Same citation, broken down to show each component using MLA8.

This image of a Works Cited page is from "Creating a Works Cited Page" licensed CC BY NC SA. To view a PDF of this page, click HERE.

Attributions

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- *Unless otherwise noted, images created by Dr. Sandi Van Lieu and licensed CC BY NC SA*

26. List of Sources APA: References Page

DR. KAREN PALMER

APA: References Page

In an APA paper, the sources used in the paper are listed on the References page in alphabetical order. APA Style offers sample student and professional papers, including a free annotated student sample paper.

Here's a video showing how to format a Reference List:

> *One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=99#oembed-1*

Unlike MLA, which uses the same basic format for every type of source, the formatting in APA style changes for each type of source. One thing that stays the same is that the author is followed by the date. Here are some sample citations:

Source Type	Example Citation
Book	Gleick, J. (1988). *Chaos: Making a new science*. New York: Penguin Books.
Short Story/Article from a Book	Cisneros, S. (2016). "Eleven." In F. Madden (Ed.), *Exploring Literature Writing and Arguing About Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and the Essay* (pp. 26-28), New York: Longman.
Article from a Magazine	Sanders, S. R. (1989, November). "Under the Influence: Paying the Price of My Father's Booze." *Harper's*, 68-75.
Article from a database	Solomon, D. (2014). Anne Finch, Restoration Playwright. In L. J. Trudeau, *Poetry Criticism* (Vol. 156). Farmington Hills, MI: Gale. (Reprinted from *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 2011, 30[1], 37-56) Retrieved from https://link-galegroup-com.proxy.yc.edu/apps/doc/PQUTEO549578763/LCO?u=yava&sid=LCO&xid=df2c7f9f
Entire Website	Owl and Mouse Educational Software. (2000). "Castles in Medieval Times." *Retrieved from* http://www.yourchildlearns.com/castle_history.htm.

Source Type	Example Citation
Article/Blog post on a Website.	Morin, A. (18, Jan 2019). "Mom Am I Fat?: Helping Your Teen Have a Positive Body Image." *Verywell Family*. Retrieved from www.verywellfamily.com/media-and-teens-body-image. Piercy, M. (2011). "Barbie Doll." *Poem Hunter*, Retrieved from https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/barbie-doll/.
A Film	Lucas. G. (Director). (1980). *The Empire Strikes Back*. [Motion Picture]. United States: Twentieth Century Fox.
YouTube Video	McGonigal, J. [Big Think]. (2012, July 03). Gaming and Productivity [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3
Yelp/Social Media Posts	B., Elizabeth. [B. Elizabeth]. (10/4/16.)."Olsen's Grain." [Yelp Review] Retrieved from https://www.yelp.com/biz/olsens-grain-prescott?hrid=HjFTGmfTuS6rvsmVpTNZfQ&utm_campaign=www_review_share_popup&utm_medium =copy_link&utm_source=(direct). Accessed 10/10/16.

Click Here for a great guide for APA citation creation.

Sample References Page

The formatting for an APA References page is almost identical to a Works Cited page in MLA. Sources should be listed alphabetically with a hanging indent. This means that the first line of the citation is flush to the left margin, and all additional lines are indented. Citations will look like reverse paragraphs. This formatting helps readers find the reference source more easily.The only difference is the heading at the top of the page should be References. Here is a sample APA References page:

3

References

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. (2019, October 3). *Outbreak of lung injury associated with e-cigarette use, or vaping.* https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html

Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Miech, R. A., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2016). *Monitoring the Future national survey results on drug use, 1975-2015: Overview, key findings on adolescent drug use*. Institute for Social Research. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED578539

Kaplan, S., & Richtel, M. (2019, September 11). JUUL illegally marketed e-cigarettes, F.D.A. says. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/09/health/vaping-juul-e-cigarettes-fda.html

Truth Initiative. (2018, July 19). *E-cigarettes: Facts, stats, and regulations*. https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/emerging-tobacco-products/e-cigarettes-facts-stats-and-regulations

Image of a screenshot of a sample paper licensed CC BY.

Tips:

1. Use the “Insert page” feature to make sure the References page is on its own page at the end of your document. Put your cursor at the end of your paper, then insert a new page. Start typing your References page on the new page.
2. Center the heading References at the top of the page. Do NOT use any special formatting for the heading.
3. The entire page should be double spaced, just like the rest of your paper.
4. Sources should be in alphabetical order.
5. Sources should use a Hanging Indent.

Attribution

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27. In-Text (Parenthetical) Citations

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU AND DR. KAREN PALMER

In-Text Citations

The first step is to correctly cite each source you will use in your paper in your list of sources. Then, when you include a quote or a reference from a source, be sure to correctly cite the source in an in-text citation.

- Introduce your quote (don't just copy and paste something from your source!).
- Make sure the quote is in quotation marks.
- Properly cite the quote with an in-text citation. Before the end mark, in parenthesis, type the first word/words of the source listing and the page number, if applicable.
- Wrap up your quote by reiterating for readers what point the quote makes (analysis/evaluation).

The in-text citation must match the first word in the list of sources. So, if your source has an author, you would put the author's name in the in-text citation and also at the end in the works cited. See the following example from a paper formatted using MLA documentation style:

boundaries.

Hester goes against traditional societal thought by committing the affair in the first place. Although the book skips telling the details of the affair, it is clear that what Hester has done is "sinful passion" (Hawthorne 73). Being in the puritan society, she had to have known the risk she was taking by committing the affair, and afterward she does acknowledge that she was wrong (though we are not quite sure whether or not she actually regrets it). Still, the fact that she was willing to challenge her society in order to fulfill her heart's passion shows her willingness to be an individual and create her own ideology. After her punishment, she spends most of her time isolated in deep thought (another Byronic trait). As Hawthorne commentator Melissa

Works Cited

Baym, Nina, ed., et al. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 4th ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1995.

Bloom, Harold, ed. *Bloom's Reviews: Nathaniel Hawthorne's* The Scarlet Letter. Broomall, PA: Chelsea House Publishers, 1998.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. New York: Bantam Books, 1965. Originally published in 1850.

James, Henry. *Daisy Miller*. New York: Amereon House, 1987. Originally published in 1878.

MacMaster, Anne. "Wharton, Race, and *The Age of Innocence*: Three Historical Contexts. Found in, *A Forward Glance*, Colquitt, Clare, ed. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999.

Formatting In-Text References

When you use others' ideas, you have a variety of options for integrating these sources into your text. The main requirement is that you make it clear within your in-text reference that the information is not yours and that you clearly indicate where you got the idea. The following box shows some alternate phrases for signaling that the ideas you are using belong to another writer. Using a variety of wording makes writing more interesting. Note: Past tense is used in these examples. You may elect to use present tense ("writes") or past perfect tense ("has written"), but keep your tense use consistent. Some disciplines have specific requirements for tense. For example, if you are writing about literature, you should always use the present tense.

Phrases That Signal an Idea Belongs to Another

Writer (*APA style includes the date of publication in parenthesis; MLA style does not*):

- According to Starr (2010)…
- Acknowledging that…
- Starr (2010) stated…
- As Starr (2010) noted…
- In 2010, Starr reported…
- In the words of Starr (2010)…
- It is obvious, according to Starr (2010), that…
- Starr (2010) argued that…
- Starr (2010) disagreed when she said…
- Starr (2010) emphasized the importance of…
- Starr (2010) suggested…
- Starr observed in 2010 that…
- Technology specialist, Linda Starr, claimed that…(2010).
- …indicated Starr (2010).

- ...wrote Starr (2010)

The Tables below shows some actual examples of integrating sources within the guidelines of APA and MLA documentation formats. Note how the cited details are woven in with the author's ideas.

Integrating Sources (Using Direct Quotations):

	APA	MLA
Explanation	**Short Quotations:** Place within quotation marks and follow with page number in parentheses (p. #). Include the author's name and date either in a signal phrase before the quotation or at the end (name, year, p. #).	**Short Quotations:** Place within quotation marks and follow with page number in parentheses (#). Include the author's name either in a signal phrase before the quotation or at the end (name #)
	Long Quotations (forty words or more): Place in an inset block of text without quotations. Include the author's name and date either in a signal phrase before the quotation or at the end (name, year, p. #).	**Long Quotations (more than four lines):** Place in an inset block of text without quotations. Include the author's name either in a signal phrase before the quotation or at the end (name #).
Example #1	According to Fullan (2001), "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think—it's as simple and complex as that" (p. 107).	According to Fullan, "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think—it's as simple and complex as that" (107).
Example #2	"Educational change depends on what teachers do and think—it's as simple and complex as that" (Fullan, 2001, p. 107).	"Educational change depends on what teachers do and think—it's as simple and complex as that" (Fullan 107).

Examples 1:

Author's Name Not in the Sentence:

If you *don't* say the author's name in the sentence, then the author's name needs to go in the in-text citation. Remember that direct quotes require page numbers.

MLA:

The author writes, "Not mine, not mine, not mine, but Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four" (Cisneros 1).

APA:

The author writes, "Not mine, not mine, not mine, but Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four" (Cisneros, 1991, p. 1).

Author's Name in the Sentence:

If you *do* say the author's name in the sentence (usually in the transition or signal phrase), then the author's name doesn't need to go in the in-text citation. Remember that direct quotes require page numbers.

MLA:

Cisneros writes, "Not mine, not mine, not mine, but Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four" (1).

APA:

Cisneros (1991) writes, "Not mine, not mine, not mine, but

Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four" (p. 1).

Integrating Sources (Summarized or Paraphrased Ideas):

	APA	MLA
Explanation	**Author's name:** Either within a signal phrase or in parentheses before the period at the end of the sentence. **Year:** Either within parentheses after the name that is used in a signal phrase or after the name and a comma within the parentheses before the period at the end of the sentence (name, year).	**Author's name:** Either within a signal phrase or in parentheses before the period at the end of the sentence. **Page number:** Either alone before the period at the end of the sentence or after the name within the parentheses before the period at the end of the sentence (name #).
Example #1	Many school staffs discuss integrating technology without making significant progress in that direction. Starr (2010) indicated that teachers' lack of personal understanding of technology could cause roadblocks to integrating technology into classrooms.	Many school staffs discuss integrating technology without making significant progress in that direction. Starr indicated that teachers' lack of personal understanding of technology can cause road blocks to integrating technology into classrooms (1).
Example #2	Many school staffs discuss integrating technology without making significant progress in that direction. Teachers' lack of personal understanding of technology can cause roadblocks to integrating technology into classrooms (Starr, 2010).	Many school staffs discuss integrating technology without making significant progress in that direction. Teachers' lack of personal understanding of technology can cause roadblocks to integrating technology into classrooms (Starr 1).

Two Authors:

	APA	MLA
Example #1	Merriman and Nicoletti (2008) suggest that US K–12 education must take on a structure that is globally acceptable.	Merriman and Nicoletti suggest that US K–12 education must take on a structure that is globally acceptable (9).
Example #2	US K–12 education must take on a structure that is globally acceptable (Merriman & Nicoletti, 2008).	US K–12 education must take on a structure that is globally acceptable (Merriman and Nicoletti 9).

Multiple Authors:

	APA	MLA
Explanation	**Three to five Authors:** List all three authors at first reference (name, name, and name) and the first name plus "et al." for subsequent references (name et al.). **Six or more authors:** For all references, list the first name plus "et al." (name et al.).	**Three authors:** Treat in same manner as two authors: (name, name, and name). **Four or more authors:** You can choose to list all authors or to use the first author name plus "et al." (name et al.).
Example #1	Borsheim, Merritt, and Reed (2008) suggest that teachers do not have to give up traditional curricula in order to integrate technology.	Borsheim, Merritt, and Reed (2008) suggest that teachers do not have to give up traditional curricula in order to integrate technology (87).
Example #2	In fact, it has been argued that technology has become part of education without a great deal of effort from teachers (Borsheim et al., 2008).	Some have argued that technology has become part of education without a great deal of effort from teachers (Borsheim et al. 87).

Personal Communication:

	APA	MLA
Example #1	Stanforth (personal communication, July 17, 2010) indicated she had been using a computer board in her classroom for three years and could not imagine giving it up.	Stanforth indicated she had been using a computer board in her classroom for three years and could not imagine giving it up.
Example #2	Many teachers are angry that they are being pushed to include technology because they like the way their classrooms work without it (Kennedy, personal e-mail, June 25, 2009).	Many teachers are angry that they are being pushed to include technology because they like the way their classrooms work without it (Kennedy).

Additional Notes:

If an article/source is viewed in PDF, you can use the paragraph number or the page number, depending on what's easier. For example, if the PDF has 100 paragraphs, then it might be difficult to count them all, but if the PDF only has two pages, yet is a short story with many lines, then it might be easier to count the paragraphs.

Example:

(Hemingway, par. 1)

(Hemingway 3)

In MLA, you DO NOT us a comma before the page

number, but you DO use a comma if you are using a paragraph number rather than a page number.

For page number, you simply put the number in the citation, like this:

(Cisneros 1).

For paragraph number, you need the "par." like this:

(Cisneros, par. 2).

Examples with No Authors:

It is recommended that you always choose sources that have an author so that you can determine the author's credibility; however, if your instructor allows you to use sources (usually websites) with no authors, then follow the formatting rules below.

If a source doesn't have an author, use the title of the source (such as the title of the web page), or the name of the organization.

MLA Summary or Paraphrase:

A dry desert is different from a coastal desert in several ways ("Deserts").

According to Center for Disease Control, the wearing a masks helps to prevent one from getting Covid-19.

MLA Direct Quote (Note: page numbers are no longer required for websites with no author):

A dry desert "has specific characteristics that differentiate" it from a coastal desert ("Deserts").

According to Center for Disease Control, the best way to "prevent transmission of Covid-19 is to wear a mask."

According to one organization, the best way to "prevent transmission of Covid-19 is to wear a mask" (Center for Disease Control).

APA Summary or Paraphrase:

A dry desert is different from a coastal desert in several ways ("Deserts," 2018).

According to Center for Disease Control (2020), the wearing a masks helps to prevent one from getting Covid-19.

APA Direct Quote (use paragraph numbers (para.) for websites):

A dry desert "has specific characteristics that differentiate" it from a coastal desert ("Deserts," 2018, para. 5).

According to Center for Disease Control (2020), the best way to "prevent transmission of Covid-19 is to wear a mask" (para. 4).

According to one organization, the best way to "prevent

transmission of Covid-19 is to wear a mask" (Center for Disease Control, 2020, para. 4).

Video Overviews

MLA Citation

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=103#oembed-2

APA Citation

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=103#oembed-1

Exercise 1

1. Go through your essay rough draft and make sure that each in-text citation directly matches the Works Cited or Reference page. For example, if my in-text citation says this…

(Smith 54)

…then "Smith" must be the first word in my Works Cited:

Smith, John. "Creating a website…."

Especially watch that your websites match as well. For example, in my in-text citation says this…

(Center for Disease Control).

…then "Center for Disease Control" must be the first word in my Works Cited:

Center for Disease Control. "Staying Safe…."

Exercise 2

1. Go through your essay and check all of your in-text citations that they are in the correct format.

Additional Resources:

The OWL at Purdue is one of the best websites you can use for how to do proper in-text citations. There are several rules about sources such as quoting a source within a source, citing multiple authors, and more. Because of this, it's important you use this website to determine how to probably use the in-text citations. Also, check the appendix of this textbook for the MLA/APA guides.

MLA: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_in_text_citations_the_basics.html

APA: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/in_text_citations_the_basics.html

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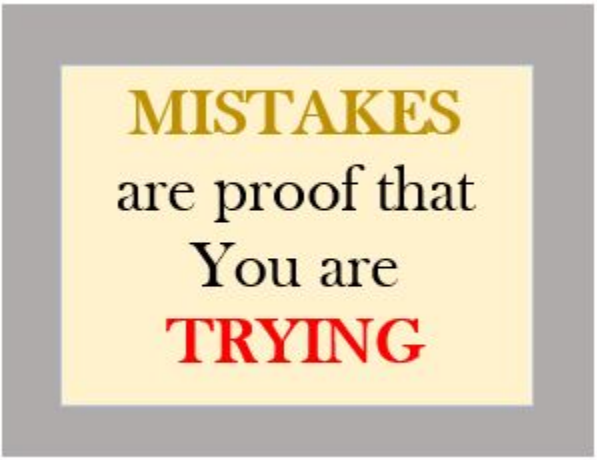
PART VIII

REVISION

28. Revision Strategies

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU AND DR. KAREN PALMER



Revision

Revision is an important part of the writing process. Our first draft should never be our final draft. There is always room for improvement. A published author of a New York Times best-selling novel can still find opportunities to make the novel better.

It's important to note that revision concerns making changes to what is said and how it is said. It includes adding or deleting paragraphs, changing the organization of points in the paper, adding more support, clarifying ideas, etc. Revision is not a matter of fixing spelling errors and adding punctuation marks. Instead, revision is

where an author refines the ideas to ensure that the purpose of the message is fulfilled.

In addition to taking note of comments from peer review, students should consider taking their papers to a Writing Lab or Learning Center on their campus for additional feedback. Reading the paper out loud to a friend or a family member can also help students find areas that could be improved.

Revise Purposefully

You should read through your first complete draft once you have finished it and carefully reconsider all aspects of your essay. As you review, keep in mind that your paper's purpose has to be clear to others, not just to you. Try to read through your paper from the point of view of a member of your targeted audience who is reading your paper for the first time. Make sure you have clarified the points your audience will need to have clarified and that you haven't over-clarified the points your audience will already completely understand.

Review
for Purpose
Edit and
Proofread
Make a
Final Overview

Revisiting Your Statement of Purpose

Self-questioning is a useful tool when you are in the reviewing process. As you begin the process of revision, reexamine the six elements of the rhetorical situation that made up your original statement of purpose (voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, and reception):

- **Voice:** Does it sound like a real human being wrote this draft? Does my introduction project a clear sense of who I am? Honestly, would someone other than my paid instructor or assigned peer(s) read beyond the first paragraph of this essay?
- **Audience:** Does my writing draw in a specific set of readers with a catchy hook? Do I address the same audience throughout the essay? If I don't, am I being intentional about shifting from one audience to another?
- **Message:** Are my main points strong and clear? Do I have ample support for each of them? Do my supporting details clearly support my main points?
- **Tone:** Am I using the proper tone given my audience? Is my language too casual or not professional enough? Or is it needlessly formal and stiff sounding? Does my tone stay consistent throughout the draft?
- **Attitude:** Will my organization make sense to another reader? Does my stance toward the topic stay consistent throughout the draft? If it doesn't, do I explain the cause of the transformation in my attitude?
- **Reception:** Is my goal or intent for writing clear? How is this essay likely to be received? What kind of motivation, ideas, or emotions will this draft draw out of my readers? What will my readers do, think, or feel immediately after finishing this essay?

Additional Revision Strategies

As you read through your paper look for:

- Unity
- Does everything refer back to main point?
- Does each topic sentence refer to the thesis?
- Does each sentence in each body paragraph refer back to the topic sentence?
- Do I have enough details, examples, and other forms of support?
- Is each example followed by at least one supporting detail?
- Are all points connected to form a whole?
- Are transitions used to move from one idea to the next?

Revision Tips

- Take a break from your draft before attempting to revise.
- Read your draft out loud and listen to your words.
- Imagine yourself as your reader.
- Look for consistent problem areas.
- Get feedback from peers.
- Get help from a tutor at your college's Learning Center or Writing Lab (usually free!)

Exercise 1

1. Find multiple drafts of an essay you have recently completed. Write a descriptive outline of at least two distinct drafts you wrote during the process.

2. For a recently completed essay, discuss how at least one element of your statement of purpose (voice, audience, message, tone, attitude, or reception) changed over the course of the writing process.

Exercise 2

1. With your writing group, develop five questions you think everyone in your class should have to answer about their essay drafts before submitting them for evaluation from a peer or your instructor.

Attributions

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- *Content from "Chapter 8: Revising" licensed under CC BY NC SA.*
- *Additional revision strategies and tips created by Dr. Sandi Van Lieu and licensed under CC BY NC SA.*

29. Sentence Variety

DR. KAREN PALMER

Imagine a world where all music was in a single monotone, all paintings were the same shade of green, and all dancing consisted of one slow dance step. Writing with only one kind of sentence style would fit nicely into that world. In truth, music, art, and dance gain much beauty and interest from wide variation. You, as a writer, also have the option to vary your sentence style strategically.

Varying Sentence Length

Text of varying lengths is easier to read than text where the sentences are all about the same length. A whole page of extremely long sentences is overwhelming. Try reading a high-level academic paper on a scientific topic. The sentences are often long and involved, which results in difficult reading. A whole page of very short sentences, on the other hand, is choppy and seems unsophisticated.

Consider the following text that begins the first chapter of Mark Twain's *A Tramp Abroad*. Twain begins with a long sentence (thirty-three words), follows with a medium-length sentence (seventeen words), and closes with two short sentences (six and five words, respectively). This mix of sentence lengths creates text that flows smoothly and is easy to read.

> One day it occurred to me that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man

adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot. After much thought, I decided that I was a person fitted to furnish to mankind this spectacle. So I determined to do it. This was in March, 1878.

Now read a different version of the same paragraph. Notice how the short sentences sound choppy and juvenile.

I was thinking one day. I thought of something the world hadn't seen lately. My thought was of an adventurous man. The man was on a walking trip through Europe. I thought some more. Then I decided that I should take such a trip. I should give the world something to watch. So I determined to do it. This was in March 1878.

Here's another version of the same paragraph written in one long and rather overwhelming sentence.

One day it occurred to me that it had been many years since the world had been afforded the spectacle of a man adventurous enough to undertake a journey through Europe on foot, so after much thought, I decided that I was a person fitted to furnish to mankind this spectacle, and it was in March 1878 that I decided I was determined to do it.

Combining Sentences

Choosing exactly the right mix of sentence lengths can be challenging. If you use too many short sentences, your writing will be viewed as simplistic. If you use too many long sentences, your writing will be considered convoluted. Even if you use all medium-length sentences, your writing might be dubbed as monotonous. The trick is to use a variety of sentence lengths. If you find you have too many short, choppy sentences, you can combine some of them to add a little variety.

Since an abundance of short sentences will give a simplistic appearance to your writing, you don't want to use an excessive number of them close together. You can combine short sentences as a means of explaining an idea or a connection between two ideas. When you combine two complete sentences, you have to choose to either subordinate one of the ideas to the other or coordinate the two ideas by giving them equal weight. Your choice should always reflect the intended emphasis and causality of the two initial sentences.

Two short, choppy sentences	Combined sentence
He snarled at Princess. She snarled at Rover.	Rover snarled at Princess, but she proved to be the alpha dog by snarling right back at him.

Using a Variety of Sentence Formats

Like making all your sentences the same length, starting all your sentences in the same format—say, with "the" or "there"—could result in seriously boring text. When almost every sentence of a text begins exactly alike, it develops a boring and monotonous rhythm.

Original: The girl was terribly upset when her purse was stolen. There wasn't anything that could get the image out of her mind. The thief was running when he grabbed her purse. The girl didn't see him coming and was caught off guard. The girl fell down and never got a good look at him.

As a rule, within a given paragraph, you should try to avoid starting more than two sentences with the same word. Even if you vary your openings slightly but still follow the basic subject–verb–object format every time, you're missing an opportunity to make your sentences more interesting.

Revision: Having her purse stolen upset the girl terribly. Her mind held onto the image and would not let it go. Unfortunately, she didn't see him coming and was so caught off guard that she fell down and never got a good look at him.

One technique that will help you avoid using the same format is to make a conscious effort to vary your sentence constructions. Along with changing the beginnings of sentences, you can add variety by combining sentences, adding words, expanding descriptions or

ideas, and creating and moving clauses. Using all these techniques throughout a paper will create a nice mix of sentence formats.

Sentence Constructions	Examples
Opening adverb	Slyly, Princess snatched the bone while Rover was looking away.
Conjunctive adverb	Rover thought he was guarding his bone; however, Princess was setting up her moment.
Coordinating conjunction	Rover had the bone, but Princess was determined to get it.
Dependent clause	While Rover was looking away, Princess snatched the bone.
Introductory phrase	Feeling jealous, Princess made a plan to get the bone.

Adding Words

You can add variety and interest to your sentences by adding words to expand the sentences. This suggestion in no way means to add meaningless words to a sentence just to enlarge and change the sentence. Only add words when they add value to your work.

A short sentence	Value-adding words added to a short sentence
Rover had a bone.	Rover was gnawing on a bone in the corner of the yard under the cherry tree.

Expanding Descriptions or Ideas

This tactic is more specific than the “add words” tactic, but it can be coupled with it.

An existing sentence	Expanded descriptions and ideas
Rover was gnawing on a bone in the corner of the yard under the tree.	My Lab, Rover, was gnawing on a rawhide bone in the corner of the yard under the cherry tree.

Creating and Moving Clauses

Adding new clauses or moving existing clauses is another way to add interest and variety.

Sentence with a clause	Sentence with the clause moved
Rover was a large Labrador, and Princess was a small poodle who got the best of him.	Although Princess was a small poodle, she got the best of Rover, a large Labrador.

Exercise 1

1. Rewrite the following paragraph using some of the sentence variation ideas in this section. After you are finished rewriting, identify the types of changes you made:

My family went on vacation. It was the summer after my first year of college. It was odd not to be in charge of my own actions. My parents were nice but always in charge. My brother and sister were fine with it. It wasn't OK with me, though. It wasn't OK with me to have to go to bed at 10:00 p.m. My idea would have been to go to town then. My parents said it was bedtime since we had to get up early to go hiking. It wasn't my idea to go walking early! My next vacation might be with friends. It will be nice to go with my family again as long as it isn't too soon.

Exercise 2

1. Rewrite this sentence so that it begins with an adverb:

My roommate found my cell phone.

2. Rewrite this sentence so that it begins with an introductory phrase:

It is a long, interesting drive.

3. Combine the following two sentences into one sentence where the relationship between the two ideas is emphasized:

In size, Idaho is the fourteenth-largest state in the United States.

In population, Idaho ranks thirty-ninth in the United States.

Exercise 3

1. Write a paragraph about a childhood memory. Include about one-third short sentences (seven or fewer words), one-third medium sentences (between twelve and twenty-four words), and one-third long sentences (more than twenty-five words). Include at least ten sentences. After each sentence, include the number of words in parentheses.

2. Write a paragraph about something you have done during the last couple of weeks. Do not use more than two sentences with the same format or opening phrasing. Include at least eight sentences.

Attributions

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30. Transitions

DR. KAREN PALMER

Transitions are used in writing in many ways. Most students know that transitions are used to transition to a new idea in the paper. Usually, this occurs at the beginning of a paragraph. For example, in a paper giving the steps to complete a process, a student might begin each paragraph with the number of the step: First, second, third, etc. The student could also use words like "after" to indicate the order of the processes. ie After completing step one, you should begin the second step.

Transitions can also be used within paragraphs to connect one sentence to another so that readers can easily follow the intended meanings of sentences and relationships between sentences. Sometimes students forget to connect their ideas together, leaving readers wondering how one thing relates to another. This often happens in two common areas:

1. Between the hook and the introduction to the topic in an introduction paragraph. Make sure you make the relationship between the hook and the topic clear. The hook is designed to draw readers into the topic…not just to get their attention and then move on.
2. When using quotes. Often students simply drop a quote into their writing and expect readers to understand the purpose of the quote. Make sure to connect the quote to the purpose of the paragraph clearly for readers.

The following table shows some commonly used transition words and what their purpose is:

Purpose	Common Transition Words
To compare/ contrast	after that, again, also, although, and then, but, despite, even though, finally, first/second/ third/etc., however, in contrast, in the same way, likewise, nevertheless, next, on the other hand, similarly, then
To signal cause and effect	as a result, because, consequently, due to, hence, since, therefore, thus
To show sequence or time	after, as soon as, at that time, before, during, earlier, finally, immediately, in the meantime, later, meanwhile, now, presently, simultaneously, so far, soon, until, then, thereafter, when, while
To indicate place or direction	above, adjacent to, below, beside, beyond, close, nearby, next to, north/south/east/west, opposite, to the left/right
To present examples	for example, for instance, in fact, to illustrate, specifically
To suggest relationships	and, also, besides, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, too

Exercise 1

1. In your essay rough draft, look at each paragraph to see that it flows smoothly from the paragraph before it. If not, work on adding in transition words.

Exercise 2

1. In your essay rough draft, take a single paragraph and look to see that each sentence flows smoothly from one sentence to the next. If not, work on adding transition words.

Exercise 3

1. In your essay rough draft, check to make sure that each quote has a transition (signal phrase into it). For example:

As one expert notes, "Quote" (citation).

According to Jane Smith, "Quote" (citation).

Attributions

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31. Using Strong Verbs

DR. KAREN PALMER

When revising your paper, one thing to look for is your verb use. Using wimpy verbs can make your writing appear uninteresting and lackluster. However, using strong verbs livens up your writing and keeps readers interested. In each of the sections below, we identify some ideas for strengthening your verbs. You can use the Find feature in Word to search for each of these types of weak verbs and determine how you might make revisions that will make your writing more interesting.

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Avoid "State of Being" Verbs

Read through your paper and look for any forms of the verbs be, do, and have.

am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been

do, does, did, doing, done

have, has, had, having

These are verbs that reflect a state of being, rather than action. To spice up your writing, try to change at least some of those 'state of being' verbs to more active options. =

Example:

He had a lot of clothes.

His clothes overflowed his closets.

Notice that when we eliminate the state of being verb, the sentence gets much more interesting!

Avoid Verbs Followed by an Adverb

Look for any places in your writing where a verb is followed by an adverb.

She walked slowly.

He ate quickly.

Replace these pairs of verbs and adverbs with a stronger verb that conveys the feeling of the adverb.

She dragged her feet.

He gulped his food.

Use Active Voice

Two sentences can generally say the same thing but leave an entirely different impression based on the verb choices. For example, which of the following sentences gives you the most vivid mental picture?

A bald eagle was overhead and now is low in the sky near me.

OR

A bald eagle soared overhead and then dove low, seemingly coming right at me.

Even though the passive voice might include an action verb, the strength of the action verb is lessened by the structure of the sentence. Also, the passive voice tends to create unnecessary wordiness.

Exercise 1

Read the following sentences and think of a way to reword each using an action verb in active voice.

1. Original: The zebras were fed by the zoo workers. (eight words)

2. Original: Water was spewed in the air by the elephant. (nine words)

3. Original: The home of the hippopotamus was cleaned up and made tidy by Hank the Hippo Man. (sixteen words)

When to Use Passive Voice

Sometimes passive voice actually is the best option. The point is to only use passive voice when you consciously decide to do so. There are several different situations where the passive voice is more useful than the active voice.

- When you don't know who did the action: *The paper had been moved.*
- When you want to hide who did the action: *The window had*

been broken.

- When you want to emphasize the person or thing the action was done to (or the person or thing that performed the action is not important): *Caroline was hurt when Kent broke up with her. or The park was flooded all week.*
- When you do not want to place credit, responsibility, or blame: *A mistake was made in the investigation that resulted in the wrong person being on trial.*
- When you want to maintain the impression of objectivity: *It was noted that only first graders chose to eat the fruit.*
- A subject that can't actually *do* anything: *Caroline was hurt when she fell into the trees.*
- When you want to avoid using a gendered construction and pluralizing is not an option: *If the password is forgotten by the user, a security question will be asked.*

However, some instructors and/or disciplines prefer that the passive voice not be used. This could be due to requirements for writing in that discipline, or it could be a way for an instructor to be sure students don't overuse the passive voice. Overuse of the passive voice makes writing dull, so be sure you are using it appropriately.

Avoid "There is/There are/It is" Constructions

You might have developed a tendency to use another rather dull and unimaginative form of passive voice, by starting sentences with "there is," "there are," "there were," "it is," or "it was." Read each of the following examples of this kind of **passive voice construction**. In your head, think of a way to reword the sentence to make it more interesting by using an action verb.

Look through your paper and circle any sentence that begin with "There is" or "There are" or "It is." These sentence openings can

make your writing seem dull and repetitive. Try removing "There is" or "There are" to make your sentences more interesting.

It is interesting to study literature.

vs The study of literature interests me.

As a rule, try to express yourself with action verbs instead of forms of the verb "to be." Sometimes it is fine to use forms of the verb "to be," such as "is" or "are," but it is easy to overuse them (as in this sentence—twice). Overuse of such verbs results in dull writing.

Exercise 2

Read each of the following sentences and note the use of the verb "to be." In your head, think of a way to reword the sentence to make it more interesting by using an action verb. Then look at how each revision uses one or more *action verbs*.

Example:

Original: A photo was snapped, the tiger was upset, and Elizabeth was on the ground.

Revision: Elizabeth innocently *snapped* the photo and the lion *let out* a roar that *sent* Elizabeth *scrambling* backward until she *fell* down.

1. Original: A giraffe's neck is long and thin, but it is as much as five hundred pounds in weight.

2. Original: An elephant is able to drink eighty gallons of water and is likely to eat one thousand pounds of vegetation in a day.

3. Original: There are thousands of butterflies in the Butterfly House.

4. Original: There were four giraffes eating leaves from the trees.

Attributions

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32. Writing Clearly and Concisely

DR. KAREN PALMER

When revising, it's important to check to be sure that you are conveying your ideas accurately and in a way that keeps readers' attention. This means eliminating repetitive ideas, using straightforward language, using appropriate language, and, sometimes, using figurative language.

Eliminating Repetitive Ideas

Unless you are providing definitions on purpose, stating one idea in two ways within a single sentence is redundant and not necessary. Read each example and think about how you could revise the sentence to remove repetitive phrasing that adds wordiness. Then study the suggested revision below each example.

Original: Use a **very heavy skillet made of cast iron** to bake an extra juicy meatloaf.

Revision: Use a cast iron skillet to bake a very juicy meatloaf.

Original: Joe thought **to himself**, "I think I'll make caramelized grilled salmon tonight."

Revision: Joe thought, "I think I'll make caramelized grilled salmon tonight."

Removing Repeated Words

As a general rule, you should try not to repeat a word within a sentence. Sometimes you simply need to choose a different word. But often you can actually remove repeated words. Read this example and think about how you could revise the sentence to remove a repeated word that adds wordiness. Then check out the revision below the sentence.

Original: The student who won the cooking contest is a very talented and ambitious **student**.

Revision: The student who won the cooking contest is very talented and ambitious.

Use Straightforward Language

Rewording to Eliminate Unneeded Words

If a sentence has words that are not necessary to carry the meaning, those words are unneeded and can be removed to reduce wordiness. Read each example and think about how you could revise the sentence to remove phrasing that adds wordiness. Then check out the suggested revisions to each sentence.

Original: Andy **has the ability to make** the most fabulous twice-baked potatoes.

Revision: Andy makes the most fabulous twice-baked potatoes.

Original: For his **part in the** cooking class group project, Malik **was responsible for making** the mustard reduction sauce.

Revision: Malik made the mustard reduction sauce for his cooking class group project.

Use Specific Words

You will always give clearer information if you write with specific rather than general words.

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Look at the following example and think about how you could reword it using specific terms. Then check out the following revision to see one possible option.

Original: The **animals** got out and ruined the **garden produce**.

Revision: The *horses* got out and ruined the *tomatoes and cucumbers*.

General Words	Specific Words
children	Tess and Abby
animals	dogs
food	cheeseburger and a salad

Use Concrete Words

Another way to make your writing clearer and more interesting is to use concrete, rather than abstract, words. Abstract words do not have physical properties. But concrete words evoke senses of taste, smell, hearing, sight, and touch. For example, you could say, "My shoe feels odd." This statement does not give a sense of why your shoe feels odd since odd is an abstract word that doesn't suggest any physical characteristics. Or you could say, "My shoe feels wet." This statement gives you a sense of how your shoe feels to the touch. It also gives a sense of how your shoe might look as well as how it might smell. Look at the following example and think about how you could reword it using concrete words. Then check out the following revision to see one possible option.

Original: The horses **got** out and **ruined** the tomatoes and cucumbers.

Revision: The horses *stampeded* out and *squished and squirted* the tomatoes and cucumbers.

Abstract Words	Concrete Words
noise	clanging and squealing
success	a job I like and enough money to live comfortably
civility	treating others with respect

Focusing on Both Denotations and Connotations

Consider that the words "laid-back" and "lackadaisical" both mean "unhurried and slow-moving." If someone said you were a "laid-back" student, you would likely be just fine with that comment, but if someone said you were a "lackadaisical" student, you might not like the connotation. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs all have both denotations and connotations. The denotation is the definition of a word. The connotation is the emotional sense of a word. For example, look at these three words:

- excited
- agitated
- flustered

The three words all mean to be stirred emotionally. In fact, you might see one of the words as a definition of another one of them. And you would definitely see the three words in a common list in a thesaurus. So the denotations for the three words are about the same. But the connotations are quite different. The word "excited" often has a positive, fun underlying meaning; "agitated" carries a sense of being upset; and "flustered" suggests a person is somewhat out of control. When you are choosing a word to use, you should first think of a word based on its denotation. Then you should consider if the connotation fits your intent.

Using Appropriate Language

As a writer, you do not want inappropriate word choice to get in the way of your message. For this reason, you need to strive to use language that is accurate and appropriate for the writing situation. Learn for yourself which words you tend to confuse with each other. Omit jargon (technical words and phrases common to a specific profession or discipline) and slang (invented words and phrases specific to a certain group of people), unless your audience and purpose call for such language. Avoid using outdated words and phrases (cliches), such as "dial the number." Be straightforward in your writing rather than using euphemisms (a gentler, but sometimes inaccurate, way of saying something). Be clear about the level of formality needed for each different piece of writing and adhere to that level.

Guarding against Misusing Words

If you are uncertain about the meaning of a word, look the word up before you use it. Also, if your spellchecker identifies a misspelled word, don't automatically accept the suggested replacement word. Make an informed decision about each word you use.

Tonya is so ~~photographic~~! She always looks good in pictures.
photogenic

Equipment and memories can be photographic, but to look good in pictures is to be photogenic. To catch an error of this nature, you clearly have to realize the word in question is a problem. The truth is, your best chance at knowing how a wide range of words should be used is to read widely and frequently and to pay attention to words as you read.

Focusing on Easily Confused Words

Words in homophone sets are often mistaken for each other. The table below presents some examples of commonly confused words other than homophones. You will notice that some of the words in the table have similar sounds that lead to their confusion. Other words in the table are confused due to similar meanings. Keep your personal list handy as you discover pairings of words that give you trouble.

Commonly Confused Words

affect	effect	good	well
all ready	already	lay	lie
allusion	illusion	leave	let
among	between	ordinance	ordnance
are	our	precede	proceed
award	reward	quiet	quite
breath	breathe	quote	quotation
can	may	sit	set
conscience	conscious	statue	statute
desert	dessert	that	which
emigrate	immigrate	through	thorough
especially	specially	who	whom
explicit	implicit		

Writing without Jargon or Slang

Jargon and slang both have their places. Using jargon is fine as long as you can safely assume your readers also know the jargon. For example, if you are a lawyer, and you are writing to others in the legal profession, using legal jargon is perfectly fine. On the other hand, if you are writing for people outside the legal profession, using legal jargon would most likely be confusing, and you should avoid it. Of course, lawyers must use legal jargon in papers they prepare for customers. However, those papers are designed to navigate within the legal system.

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You are, of course, free to use slang within your personal life, but unless you happen to be writing a sociolinguistic study of slang itself, it really has no place in academic writing. Even if you are writing somewhat casual responses in an online discussion for a class, you should avoid using slang or other forms of abbreviated communication common to IM (instant messaging) and texting.

Using Clichés Sparingly

Clichés are phrases that were once original and interesting creations but that became so often used that they have ceased to be interesting and are now viewed as overworked. If you have a tendency to use a cliché or see one while you are proofreading, replace it with plain language instead.

as fresh as a daisy	as slow as molasses	as white as snow
beat around the bush	being led down the primrose path	big as life
bottomless pit	busy as a bee	can't see the forest for the trees
chip off the old block	dead of winter	dirt cheap
don't upset the apple cart	down to earth	flat as a pancake
for everything there is a season	from feast to famine	go with the flow
gone to pot	green with envy	growing like a weed
heaven on earth	here's mud in your eye	in a nutshell
in the doghouse	just a drop in the bucket	knock on wood
light as a feather	like a duck out of water	made in the shade
muddy the water	naked as a jaybird	nutty as a fruitcake
old as dirt	our neck of the woods	plain as the nose on your face
raking in the dough	sick as a dog	stick in the mud
stubborn as a mule	sweet as apple pie	thorn in my side
two peas in a pod	under the weather	walks on water
water under the bridge	when pigs fly	

Avoid Flowery or Pretentious Language

Some writers choose to control meaning with flowery or pretentious language, euphemisms, and double-talk. All these choices obscure direct communication and therefore have no place in academic writing. Study the following three examples that clarify each of these misdirection techniques.

Technique	Example	Misdirection Involved	Straightforward Alternative
Flowery or pretentious language	Your delightful invitation arrived completely out of the blue, and I would absolutely love to attend such a significant and important event, but we already have a commitment.	The speaker seems to be trying very hard to relay serious regrets for having to refuse an invitation. But the overkill makes it sound insincere.	We are really sorry, but we have a prior commitment. I hope you have a great event.
Euphemisms	My father is follicly challenged.	The speaker wants to talk about his or her father's lack of hair without having to use the word "bald."	My father is bald.
Double-talk	I was unavoidably detained from arriving to the evening meeting on time because I became preoccupied with one of my colleagues after the close of the work day.	The speaker was busy with a colleague after work and is trying to explain being tardy for an evening meeting.	I'm sorry to be late to the meeting. Work ran later than usual.

Presenting an Appropriate Level of Formality

Look at the following three sentences. They all three carry roughly the same meaning. Which one is the best way to write the sentence?

1. The doctor said, "A full eight hours of work is going to be too much for this patient to handle for at least the next two weeks."
2. The doctor said I couldn't work full days for the next two weeks.
3. my md said 8 hrs of wrk R 2M2H for the next 2 wks.

If you said, "It depends," you are right! Each version is appropriate in certain situations. Every writing situation requires you to make a judgment regarding the level of formality you want to use. Base your decision on a combination of the subject matter, the audience, and your purpose for writing. For example, if you are sending a text message to a friend about going bowling, the formality shown in example three is fine. If, on the other hand, you are sending a text message to that same friend about the death of a mutual friend, you would logically move up the formality of your tone at least to the level of example two.

Enhancing Writing with

Figurative Language

Figurative language is a general term that includes writing tools such as alliteration, analogies, hyperbole, idioms, metaphors, onomatopoeia, personification, and similes. By using figurative language, you can make your writing both more interesting and easier to understand.

Figure of Speech	Definition	Effect	Example
Alliteration	Repetition of single letters at the beginning of words.	Gives a poetic, flowing sound to words.	Dana *d*anced *d*own the *d*rive *d*aintily.
Analogy	The comparison of familiar and unfamiliar ideas or items by showing a feature they have in common.	Makes an unfamiliar idea or item easier to understand.	Writing a book is *like raising a toddler*. It takes all your time and attention, but you'll enjoy every minute of it!
Hyberbole	A greatly exaggerated point	Emphasizes the point	I must have written *a thousand pages* this weekend.

Figure of Speech	Definition	Effect	Example
Idiom	A group of words that carries a meaning other than the actual meanings of the words.	A colorful way to send a message.	I think this assignment will be *a piece of cake*.
Metaphor	An overall comparison of two ideas or items by stating that one is the other.	Adds the connotations of one compared idea to the other compared idea.	This shirt *is a rag*.
Onomatopoeia	A single word that sounds like the idea it is describing.	A colorful way to describe an idea while adding a sense of sound.	The jazz band was known for its *wailing* horns and *clattering* drums.
Personification	Attributing human characteristics to nonhuman things.	Adds depth such as humor, drama, or interest.	The *spatula told me* that the grill was just a little too hot today.
Simile	Using the word “like” or “as” to indicate that one item or idea resembles another.	A colorful way to explain an item or idea.	Hanging out with you is *like eating watermelon* on a summer day.

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Exercise 1

1. Choose five of the commonly confused words that are sometimes problems for you. Write a definition for each word and use each word in a sentence.

2. List five examples of jargon from a field of your choice. Then list two situations in which you could use the jargon and two situations in which you should not use the jargon.

3. Make a list of five situations where you should use very formal writing and five situations where more casual or even very informal writing would be acceptable.

4. Rewrite the following sentences by eliminating unneeded words.

- I was late because of the fact that I could not leave the house until such time as my mother was ready to go.
- I used a pair of hot pads to remove the hot dishes from the oven.
- The bus arrived at 7:40 a.m., I got on the bus at 7:41 a.m., and I was getting off the bus by 7:49 a.m.

- The surface of the clean glass sparkled.

5. Fill in the blank in this sentence with a word that carries a connotation suggesting Kelly was still full of energy after her twenty laps: Kelly ____ out of the pool at the end of her twenty laps.

Exercise 2

1. Identify the general/abstract words used in these sentences and replace them with a specific/concrete word:

- I put my clothes somewhere and can't find them.
- I smelled something strong when I opened the refrigerator door.

2. Identify the cliché used in the following sentence and rewrite the sentence using straightforward language:

- We should be up and running by ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

3. Identify the misused word in the following sentence and replace it with a correct word:

- I'd rather walk then have to wait an hour for the bus.

4. Write a sentence using one of the types of figurative language.

5. Over the course of a week, record any instances of clichés or trite, overused expressions you hear in conversations with friends, coworkers, or family; in music, magazines, or newspapers; on television, film, or the Internet; or in your own language.

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33. Aligning Ideas

DR. KAREN PALMER

When revising your paper, checking to be sure that your ideas are properly aligned can help to strengthen your argument. Using parallelism to show that certain things or ideas are equal to each other is one way to enhance alignment in your paper. Proper subordination and coordination of ideas also helps align ideas properly in your paper.

Parallelism

Parallelism is the presentation of ideas of equal weight in the same grammatical fashion. It's one of those features of writing that's a matter of grammar, style, rhetoric, and content. Used well, it can enhance your readers' (and even your own) understanding and appreciation of a topic. You'll encounter parallelism in politics, advertising, religion, and poetry:

- "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country."
- "Strong enough for a man, but made for a woman."
- "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."
- "Some say the world will end in fire, / Some say in ice."

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=117#oembed-1

Here are a couple of examples of sentences in need of parallelism:

1. While it was raining, I had to run into the grocery store, the dry cleaners, and stop at the bookstore. This sentence is not parallel because it includes three equally weighted ideas but presents two of them with action verbs and one without. By simply adding words such as "duck into" to the middle item, the sentence becomes parallel: *While it was raining, I had to run into the grocery store, duck into the dry cleaners, and stop at the bookstore.*

2. The test was long and requiring skills we hadn't learned. This sentence is not parallel because it presents two like-weighted ideas using two different grammatical formats. Here is a parallel version: *The test was long and required skills we hadn't learned.*

Parallelism is most often an issue with paired ideas and items in a series as shown in the preceding two examples. A key idea to keep in mind is that you need to use common wording with both items, such as common articles (e.g., *the*, *a*, *an*) and common prepositions (e.g., *by*, *for*, *of*, *on*, *to*). The next two subsections provide more in-depth discussion of these two concepts.

Making Paired Items Parallel

In a sentence, paired items or ideas are often connected with either a comparative expression (e.g., *easier than*, *as much as*, *bigger than*), a coordinated conjunction (e.g., *and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, *yet*), or a correlative conjunction (e.g., *both…and*, *either…or*, *just as…so*, *neither…nor*, *not…but*, *not only…but also*, *whether…or*). Read the following **error examples**. Think of a way to correct each sentence. Then look below the error to see *possible corrections*. Note that you can usually correct each error in more than one way.

Our neighbor's house is bigger than the size of our house.

Possible Corrections:

Our neighbor's house is bigger than our house.

OR

The size of our neighbor's house is bigger than the size of our house.

Louie, my crazy black lab, loves running after Frisbees and plays with leaves.

Possible Corrections:

Louie, my crazy black lab, loves running after Frisbees and playing with leaves.

OR

Louie, my crazy black lab, loves to run after Frisbees and to play with leaves.

Not only was he rude, but also ate all the shrimp balls.

Possible Corrections:

Not only was he rude, but also he ate all the shrimp balls.

OR

Not only was he rude, but he also ate all the shrimp balls.

Making Items in a Series Parallel

Items in a series include ideas embedded in a sentence as well as those in numbered or bulleted lists. One way to check for parallelism is to say the sentence stem that precedes the first item and then, one at a time, add each subsequent series item to the stem. Assuming the stem works with the first item, subsequent items that do not work with the stem are not parallel with the first item.

After I get off work, I'm driving to the gym, doing five miles, and weights.

Stem prior to the first item: After I get off work, I'm…

Stem works with the first item: After I get off work, I'm driving to the gym.

Stem works with the second item: After I get off work, I'm doing five miles.

Stem does not work with the third item: After I get off work, weights.

A version of the sentence that is parallel: After I get off work, I'm driving to the gym, running five miles, and lifting weights.

Now stem does work with the third item: After I get off work, I'm lifting weights.

Example:

On Saturday, my roommates and I are playing in a game of pick-up basketball, collecting coats for charity, work on our homework for three hours, and go to a party in the Village.

- Possible Correction: *On Saturday, my roommates and I are going to play in a game of pick-up basketball, collect coats for charity,*

spend three hours on homework, and go to a party in the Village.

- OR: *On Saturday, my roommates and I are playing in a game of pick-up basketball, collecting coats for charity, spending three hours on homework, and going to a party in the Village.*

Utilizing Parallel Structure for Emphasis

If you take the most impressive or startling item in a series and place it last, you can draw attention to it as well as to the whole series. Look at the difference in the following two sentences.

Most impressive item buried within the series: In the accident, he received cuts on his face, a ruptured spleen, a cracked rib, and a mild concussion.

Most impressive item last: In the accident, he received cuts on his face, a mild concussion, a cracked rib, and a ruptured spleen.

Exercise 1

1. Indicate whether relevant parts of each sentence are parallel. Then rewrite the problem sentences to make them parallel.

- Even though I don't get paid as much, working in the psychology office is more meaningful than working at the fast food restaurant.
- According to Lester, both going to a movie and midnight bowling are still being considered.
- Abby, the attorney, and the child advocate named Becca held a meeting before the whole group arrived.
- I have already packed casual pants, my favorite casual tops, dress pants, dress tops, some socks, plenty of underwear, and three pairs of shoes.

2. Write a sentence telling what you did this past weekend. Include an embedded series or a list in your sentence and make sure the items are parallel.

3. Write a sentence comparing two college classes. Make sure the comparison items are parallel.

Using Subordination and

Coordination

Subordination and coordination are used to clarify the relative level of importance or the relationship between and among words, phrases, or clauses within sentences. You can use subordination to arrange sentence parts of unequal importance and coordination to convey the idea that sentence parts are of equal importance.

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Subordination

Subordination allows you to convey differences in importance between details within a sentence. You can use the technique within a single sentence or to combine two or more smaller sentences. You should always present the most important idea in an independent clause and use dependent clauses and phrases to present the less important ideas. Start each dependent clause with a subordinating conjunction (e.g., *after*, *because*, *by the time*, *even though*, *if*, *just*

in case, *now that*, *once*, *only if*, *since*, *though*, *unless*, *until*, *when*, *whether*, *while*) or a relative pronoun (e.g., *that*, *what*, *whatever*, *which*, *whichever*, *who*, *whoever*, *whom*, *whomever*, *whose*). These starters signal the reader that the idea is subordinate. Here's a sentence that uses a relative pronoun to convey subordination:

> I will come to your house or meet you at the gym, **whichever** works best for you.

The core idea is that I will either come to your house or meet you at the gym. The fact that you'll choose whichever option works best for you is subordinate, set apart with the relative pronoun "whichever."

In the next example, two smaller sentences are combined using the subordinating conjunction "because":

> - Smaller sentence 1: The number of students who live at home and take online college classes has risen in the past ten years.
> - Smaller sentence 2: The rise has been due to increased marketing of university online programs.
> - Larger sentence using subordination (version 1): The number of students living at home and taking online college classes has risen in the past ten years **because** of increased marketing of university online programs.
> - Larger sentence using subordination (version 2): **Because** of increased marketing of university online programs, the number of students living at home and taking online courses has risen in the past ten years.

Subordination Pitfalls

You will want to avoid two common subordination mistakes: placing main ideas in subordinate clauses or phrases and placing too many subordinate ideas in one sentence.

Here's an example of a sentence that subordinates the main idea:

- LoDo, a charming neighborhood featuring great art galleries, restaurants, cafés, and shops, is located in the Lower Downtown District of Denver.

The problem here is that main idea is embedded in a subordinate clause. Instead of focusing on the distinctive features of the LoDo neighborhood, the sentence makes it appear as if the main idea is the neighborhood's location in Denver. Here's a revision:

- LoDo, located in the Lower Downtown District of Denver, is a charming neighborhood featuring great art galleries, restaurants, cafés, and shops.

A sentence with too many subordinated ideas is confusing and difficult to read.

Here's an example:

- Television executives, who make the decisions about which shows to pull and which to extend, need to consider more than their individual opinions so that they do not pull another *Star Trek* mess-up where they don't recognize a great show when they see it, while balancing the need to maintain a schedule that appeals to a broad audience, considering that new types of shows don't yet have a broad following.

And here's a possible revision:

- Television executives need to consider more than their individual opinions when they decide which shows to pull and which to extend. Many years ago, some of these very executives decided that *Star Trek* should be canceled, clearly demonstrating they do not always know which shows will become great. Television executives should also balance the need to maintain a schedule that appeals to a broad audience with an appreciation for new types of shows that don't yet have a broad following.

Coordination

Some sentences have two or more equal ideas. You can use coordination to show a common level of importance among parts of a sentence, such as subjects, verbs, and objectsw.

Subject example: Both green beans and asparagus are great with grilled fish.

Verb example: We neither talked nor laughed during the whole two hours.

Object example: Machine embroidery combines the beauty of high-quality stitching and the expediency of modern technology.

The underlined ideas within each sentence carry equal weight within their individual sentences. As examples of coordination, they can be connected with coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, *yet*) or correlative conjunctions (*both…and*, *either…or*, *just as…so*, *neither…nor*, *not…but*, *not only…but also*, *whether…or*).

Controlling Emphasis

You likely use subordination and coordination automatically. For example, if you say that something happened (e.g., Dale broke his leg while sledding) because of something else (e.g., he broke his leg when he sledded into a tree), you can use separate sentences, or you can use subordination within one sentence.

Ideas presented in two sentences: Dale broke his leg while sledding this weekend. His leg broke when the sled hit a tree.

Ideas presented in one sentence using subordination: This weekend, Dale broke his leg when his sled hit a tree. [Dale broke his leg is the main idea. The fact that it happened when the sled hit a tree is the subordinated idea.]

A natural way to use coordination is, for example, to discuss two things you plan to do on vacation. You can present the two ideas in separate sentences or in one sentence using coordination to signal equal emphases.

Ideas presented in two sentences: I'm planning to see the Statue of Liberty while I'm in New York. I'm also going to go to a Broadway play.

Ideas presented in one sentence using coordination: While I'm in New York, I am planning to see the Statue of Liberty and go to a Broadway play.

Exercise 2

1. Write a sentence about the thrill of deep-sea diving and

include the subordinate idea that the scenery is often amazing.

2. Write a sentence including intercollegiate sports and intramural sports as coordinating ideas of equal weight.

3. Write a sentence using "new car" as an emphasized main idea and "red interior" as a less emphasized subordinated idea.

4. Write a sentence using "blogs" and "Facebook" as coordinated ideas with equal emphases.

5. Using ideas of your own, write a sentence that demonstrates the use of subordinating ideas.

6. Using ideas of your own, write a sentence that demonstrates the use of coordinating ideas.

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34. Peer Review

In many situations, you will be required to have at least one of your peers review your essay (and you will, in turn, review at least one peer's essay). Even if you're not required to exchange drafts with a peer, it's essential at some point before you begin editing your paper to have another pair of eyes on your paper. Therefore, if you don't have a peer review assigned or a draft graded by your instructor prior to submitting a final draft, a good idea is to make an appointment with the **Academic Learning Center** or the **Writing Lab** at YC. This is a free service for students, so take advantage of it!

In this video, Dr. Ellen Turner discusses the importance of peer review:

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Accepting Reviews

You may receive suggestions from peers, instructors, or tutors. It's important to approach their suggestions with the right attitude. An important attribute of successful people is being teachable. This means that you take on an attitude of humility–acknowledging that you don't know everything–and that you are willing to learn from others to improve your work. When you receive suggestions for content changes, try to put aside any tendencies to react

defensively, so that you can consider their ideas for revisions with an open mind.

If you are accustomed only to getting feedback from **instructors** that is accompanied by a grade, you may need to get used to the difference between evaluation and judgment. In college settings, instructors often prefer to intervene most extensively after you have completed an outline or a first draft, with evaluative commentary that tends to be suggestive, forward-looking, and free of a final quantitative judgment (like a grade). If you read your instructors' feedback in those circumstances as final, you can miss the point of the exercise. You're supposed to do something with this sort of commentary, not just read it as the justification for a (nonexistent) grade.

Sometimes **peers** think they're supposed to "sound like an English teacher" so they fall into the trap of "correcting" your draft, but in most cases, the prompts used in college-level peer reviewing discourage that sort of thing. In many situations, your peers will give you ideas that will add value to your paper, and you will want to include them. In other situations, your peers' ideas will not really work into the plan you have for your paper. It is not unusual for peers to offer ideas that you may not want to implement. Remember, your peers' ideas are only suggestions, and it is your essay, and you are the person who will make the final decisions. If your peers happen to be a part of the audience to which you are writing, they can sometimes give you invaluable ideas. And if they're not, take the initiative to find outside readers who might actually be a part of your audience.

If you decide to visit a **tutor** to get additional help on your paper, it's very important to be sure that the tutor understands the assignment information. Make sure you bring a clear copy of the assignment with you so the tutor is aware of what the instructor is asking of you. Don't expect a tutor to simply tell you what to change or to "fix" your paper for you. If possible, have questions in mind to ask about how you might improve your paper. Remember, the paper

is ultimately your responsibility, so it's up to you whether to take all the advice offered by the tutor.

Giving Reviews

Reading a text as a reviewer should be considered both a privilege and an opportunity. The professional world demands the ability to negotiate ideas and work collaboratively to achieve success, and peer review offers a wonderful way to practice those skills. Peer review, then, offers advantages beyond merely helping a classmate earn a better grade. Peer Review offers an opportunity to apply what students have learned in the role of a teacher. By looking at their peers' work, a student will better retain what has been learned and become a better writer in the process.

Reviewing Responsibly

As peer reviewers approach a text, they should bring with them several qualities: an ability to remain focused on the task of improving the text; an ability to prioritize the needs of the author; and an ability to provide specific, insightful feedback. Peer reviewers should think critically about how well a text fulfills its purpose in regard to the rhetorical situation of the essay. Focusing on how well a fellow student presents his/her argument should help keep peer reviewers from attacking the author as a human being and should prevent the reviewer from hijacking the text with suggestions that change the stance of the author or the purpose of the writing.

Reviewers should understand that the draft is not final. Since the text will likely be revised, focusing on issues of grammar or spelling is not as useful as focusing on the content and rhetorical strategies

of the text. In order of importance, reviewers should focus on issues of content, focus, organization, topic, and purpose.

A good reviewer should offer insight that is grounded in the text. Engaging writing critically requires the ability to point out inconsistencies, to question logic, to seek clarification, and to open the author's eyes to anything he or she may have taken for granted.

Giving great feedback isn't just something you'll need to do for your classes–it's a skill you need for life, too! Learn more in this TED video:

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A Process for Reviewing Peer Papers

If you have not been given specific instructions for completing peer review by your instructor, here are some general guidelines to follow:

1) First, read the paper all the way through, just as you would a poem or a short story. Appreciate what the writer is trying to say before you begin making comments, either good or bad. If you can't figure out what the writer's point is, try reading the paper a second time through. Remember, you are part of the audience for this paper, so it's important that you 'get it'!

2) Second, hold the paper up against the assignment criteria. When you feel that you understand what the writer is trying to say, jot down what you think his/her main point is. Take a look at the assignment's major criteria. For an ad analysis, a reviewer

might look for a clear thesis statement that indicates the strategies used by the advertiser, a strong description of the ad, a discussion of the magazine in which the ad was located, a discussion of the strategies used with examples from the ad, etc. Does the writer fulfill the criteria?

3) Give the writer feedback containing at least three positive comments, as well as pointing out at least three areas that the writer could improve. Remember to include specific examples. Don't just tell a writer his intro lacks luster…give him some ideas to spice it up. Don't just say, "I like the paper," give reasons why. Offering suggestions and reasons help the author to make better decisions about revision.

4) Your review should include the following three items: a recap of the main point, three things you like about the paper, and three areas the paper could be improved. As you do so, remember the golden rule. Speak to others with respect and consideration. Your job is to help them do better, not put them in their place. However, just telling someone they did a great job when you see areas they can improve is not fair. Find a balance between constructive criticism and encouragement.

5) Remember to focus on revision, not on editing or proofreading.

When you are reviewing a peer's essay, keep in mind that the author likely knows more about the topic than you do, so don't question content unless you are certain of your facts. Also, do not suggest changes just because you would do it differently or because you want to give the impression that you are offering ideas. Only suggest changes that you seriously think would make the essay stronger.

Exercise 1

In some courses, your instructor might give you a specific format to use to when completing peer reviews. Choose one of three sample essays on this site and complete a peer review either using the three step method above or the table below. Compare your suggestions with those given on the site.

Questions		**Answers**
1. What does the writer do well in this essay?		
2. What does the writer need to work on in this essay?		
3. Does the introduction grab your attention? Does it lead smoothly to a thesis? If not, what could the writer do to improve it?		

4. Does each paragraph develop one main idea? Do each of the topic sentences tie back to the thesis?		
5. Does the writer offer evidence for the points he or she makes in each paragraph? If so, is the evidence convincing?		
6. Does the writer use transitions between paragraphs and ideas?		

7. Does the conclusion briefly summarize in a fresh way the writer's main argument and then end on a memorable note (such as a quotation, thought, image, or call to action)? What is that memorable impression that the conclusion leaves?		
8. Is the essay formatted correctly (margins, font, spacing, etc.)? If not, what needs to be corrected?		

9. Are there grammar and spelling errors in the essay? Is the MLA and in-text citations done correctly?		
10. Any final thoughts?		

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PART IX

EDITING

35. Editing Strategies

Editing is the very final step in writing an essay. Think of editing as the icing on the cake. This is where a writer will make the final product look great. Students should not begin editing until they are sure that the draft is exactly how they want it.

Submitting papers to a service like Turnitin or Grammarly can help students find grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. However, while Turnitin and Grammarly are both wonderful options for helping you edit your papers, understanding the basics of grammar will help you to make better editing decisions.

Whether you are new to the English language or a native speaker, learning the rules of grammar might seem intimidating. However, it's important to remember that, if you are speaking English, you are using grammar. You might not know the terms to talk about how you speak, but the knowledge is there. If you are a native speaker, you likely know whether or not something sounds correct.

Here is a great checklist to use prior to submitting a final draft:

Editing Checklist

Editing Checklist for Academic Essays

Format

- All papers are in MLA format

    - Appropriate headings and page numbering are used
    - Margins are correct: 1/2 inch from top to right header, 1 inch all around
    - Spacing is set to double, with no extra line spaces between headings and title, title and body, or between paragraphs

- Within the essay, parenthetical citations are used (Lastname 13).
- A works cited page is included when appropriate, with all necessary information.

Mechanics: Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar, Syntax

- Did I run spell-check?
- Did I check homonyms? (Example: to, too, and two)
- Did I look up difficult words?
- Did I proofread aloud to catch obvious errors?
- Are all sentences complete (subject & verb, complete thought)?
- Did I use one verb tense throughout (unless there was a good reason to switch)?
- Did I use present tense verbs to discuss texts?
- Have I checked for run-on sentences and comma splices?
- Does my paper flow when read aloud? Did I use different sentence lengths and styles?

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Editing and Proofreading

When you have made some revisions to your draft based on feedback and your recalibration of your purpose for writing, you may now feel your essay is nearly complete. However, you should plan to read through the entire final draft at least one additional time. During this stage of editing and proofreading your entire essay, you should be looking for general consistency and clarity. Also, pay particular attention to parts of the paper you have moved around or changed in other ways to make sure that your new versions still work smoothly.

Although you might think editing and proofreading isn't necessary since you were fairly careful when you were writing, the truth is that even the very brightest people and best writers make mistakes when they write. One of the main reasons that you are likely to make mistakes is that your mind and fingers are not always moving along at the same speed nor are they necessarily in sync. So what ends up on the page isn't always exactly what you intended. A second reason is that, as you make changes and adjustments, you might not totally match up the original parts and revised parts. Finally, a third key reason for proofreading is because you likely have errors you typically make and proofreading gives you a chance to correct those errors.

Review
for Purpose
Edit and
Proofread
Make a
Final Overview

Editing and proofreading can work well with a partner. You can offer to be another pair of eyes for peers in exchange for their doing the same for you. Whether you are editing and proofreading your work or the work of a peer, the process is basically the same. Although the rest of this section assumes you are editing and proofreading your work, you can simply shift the personal issues, such as "Am I…" to a viewpoint that will work with a peer, such as "Is she…"

As you edit and proofread, you should look for common problem areas that stick out, including the quality writing components covered in sentence style, word choice, punctuation, mechanic, grammar, sentence building. There are certain writing rules that you must follow, but other more stylistic writing elements are more subjective and will require judgment calls on your part.

Be proactive in evaluating these subjective, stylistic issues since failure to do so can weaken the potential impact of your essay. Keeping the following questions in mind as you edit and proofread will help you notice and consider some of those subjective issues:

- **At the word level:** Am I using descriptive words? Am I varying my word choices rather than using the same words over and over? Am I using active verbs? Am I writing concisely? Does every word in each sentence perform a function?
- **At the sentence level:** Am I using a variety of sentence beginnings? Am I using a variety of sentence formats? Am I using ample and varied transitions? Does every sentence advance the value of the essay?
- **At the paragraph and essay level:** How does this essay look? Am I using paragraphing and paragraph breaks to my advantage? Are there opportunities to make this essay work better visually? Are the visuals I'm already using necessary? Am I using the required formatting (or, if there's room for creativity, am I using the optimal formatting)? Is my essay the proper length?

Key Takeaways

- Edit and proofread your work since it is easy to make mistakes between your mind and your typing fingers, as well as when you are moving around parts of your essay.
- Trading a nearly final version of a draft with peers is a valuable exercise since others can often more easily see your mistakes than you can. When you edit and proofread for a peer, you use the same process as when you edit and proofread for yourself.
- As you are editing and proofreading, you will encounter some issues that are either right or wrong and you simply have to correct them when they are wrong. Other more stylistic issues, such as using adequate transitions, ample descriptive words, and enough variety in sentence formats, are subjective. Besides dealing with matters of correctness, you will have to make choices about subjective and stylistic issues while you proofread.

More Editing Tips

- Work with a clean printed copy, double-spaced to allow room to mark corrections.
- Read your essay backwards.
- Use spell-check and Grammarly, but be aware of each change you are making (they are not always accurate).
- Read your essay out loud.

Exercise 1

1. Write a one-page piece about how you decided which college to attend. Give a copy of your file (or a hard copy) to three different peers to edit and proofread. Then edit and proofread your page yourself. Finally, compare your editing and proofreading results to those of your three peers. Categorize the suggested revisions and corrections as objective standards of correctness or subjective matters of style.

2. Create a "personal editing and proofreading guide" that includes an overview of both objective and subjective issues covered in this book that are common problems for you in your writing. In your guide, include tips from this book and self-questions that can help you with your problem writing areas.

The following checklist shows examples of the types of things that you might look for as you make a final pass (or final passes) through your paper. It often works best to make a separate pass for each issue because you are less likely to miss an issue and you will probably be able to make multiple, single-issue passes more quickly than you can make one multiple-issue pass.

- All subheadings are placed correctly (such as in the center or at the beginning of a page).
- All the text is the same size and font throughout.
- The page numbers are all formatted and appearing as intended.
- All image and picture captions are appearing correctly.

- All spellings of proper nouns have been corrected.
- The words "there" and "their" and "they're" are spelled correctly. (Or you can insert your top recurring error here.)
- References are all included in the citation list.
- Within the citation list, references are all in a single, required format (no moving back and forth between Modern Language Association [MLA] and American Psychological Association [APA], for instance).
- All the formatting conventions for the final manuscript follow the style sheet assigned by the instructor (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style [CMS], or other).

This isn't intended to be an all-inclusive checklist. Rather, it simply gives you an idea of the types of things for which you might look as you conduct your final check. You should develop your unique list that might or might not include these same items.

Key Takeaways

- Often a good way to make sure you do not miss any details you want to change is to make a separate pass through your essay for each area of concern. You can conduct passes by flipping through hard copies, clicking through pages on a computer, or using the "find" feature on a computer.
- You should conduct a final overview with isolated checks after you are finished editing and proofreading the final draft.
- As you are writing, make a checklist of recurring isolated issues that you notice in your work. Use this list to conduct

isolated checks on the final draft of your paper.

Exercise 2

Complete each sentence to create a logical item for a list to use for a final isolated check. Do not use any of the examples given in the text.

1. All the subheadings are…
2. The spacing between paragraphs…
3. Each page includes…
4. I have correctly spelled…
5. The photos are all placed…
6. The words in the flow charts and diagrams…

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36. Grammar Basics: Understand the Vocabulary

DR. KAREN PALMER

The first step in understanding the rules of grammar is to understand the vocabulary of grammar. In this chapter, we will be discussing the eight **Parts of Speech** in the English language, as well as the main **Parts of a Sentence**.

Parts of Speech

In English, words are used in one of eight parts of speech: noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb, conjunction, preposition, and interjection.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=124#oembed-2

This table includes an explanation and examples of each of the eight parts of speech:

Part of Speech	Description	Sample Sentence	Examples
Noun	Person, place, or thing	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	game, Mary, apples, carrots
Pronoun	Takes the place of a noun	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	her
Adjective	Describes a noun or pronoun	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	the, silly
Verb	Shows action or state of being	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	ate
Adverb	Describes a verb, another adverb, or an adjective and tells how, where, or when something is done	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	quickly

Part of Speech	Description	Sample Sentence	Examples
Conjunction	Joins words, phrases, and clauses	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	and
Preposition	First word in a phrase that indicates the relationship of the phrase to other words in the sentence	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	after
Interjection	A word that shows emotion and is not related to the rest of the sentence	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	Wow!

Exercise 1

Practice identifying the Parts of Speech:

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Parts of a Sentence

Once you know the eight parts of speech, you can look at how those parts of speech work. In this section, we'll discuss the jobs the different parts of speech do in a sentence. Understanding how the parts of speech work—what jobs they can do—will expand your grammar vocabulary and help you to better understand how to correct your own writing, whether you are using a service like Grammarly or Turnitin or whether you are editing on your own.

Subject & Predicate

Every sentence must have a subject and a predicate (AKA a verb). The **simple subject** of a sentence is the noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause the sentence is about, and the **simple predicate** is action being done by the simple subject. We can also divide a sentence into the **complete subject** and the **complete predicate** by drawing a straight vertical line in between the simple subject and the simple predicate. In the examples below, the simple subject is in **bold** and the predicate is in ***bold italics***:

Einstein's general **theory** of relativity **| *has been subjected*** to many tests of validity over the years.

In a secure landfill, the **soil** on top and the **cover | *block*** storm water intrusion into the landfill. (*compound subject*)

The **pressure | *is maintained*** at about 2250 pounds per square inch then ***lowered*** to form steam at about 600 pounds per square inch. (*compound predicate*)

Direct Object

A direct object—a noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause acting as a noun—takes the action of the main verb (e.g., the verb is happening to the object). A direct object can be identified by asking "*what*?" about the verb/predicate. In the example below, we would ask "The pencil contains what?" The answer, "workings," is the direct object:

The housing assembly of a mechanical **pencil | *contains*** \ the mechanical *workings* of the pencil.

Subject Complement

A subject complement functions a bit like a direct object. The difference is that a direct object follows an active verb–a verb that denotes action, like eat, read, or drive–and a subject complement follows a 'be' verb–am, is, are, was, were, etc. In this case, the be verb acts as an equal sign in math (=). It tells us something about the subject of the sentence. A subject complement can be a noun, a pronoun, or an adjective.

The dog is a male. (dog = male)

The dog is mine. (dog = mine)

The dog is hungry. (dog = hungry)

Indirect Object

An indirect object—a noun, pronoun, phrase, or clause acting as a noun—receives the action expressed in the sentence. It can be identified by asking *to* or *for whom* of the direct object. In the

example below, we would ask "For whom is the walkway being designed?" The answer, "citizens," is our indirect object.

> The **company | *is designing*** senior citizens a new *walkway* to the park area.

Phrases and Clauses

Phrases and clauses are groups of words that act as a unit and perform a single function within a sentence. A phrase may have a partial subject or verb but not both; a clause has both a subject and a verb. There are two types of clauses: independent and dependent. An independent clause is free to stand by itself–it functions as a complete sentence. A dependent clause, however, is dependent on something else: it cannot stand on its own. Any clause with a subordinating conjunction (like *when* or *since*) is a dependent clause. For example, "I was a little girl in 1995" is an independent clause, but "Because I was a little girl in 1995" is a dependent clause. Clauses that start with relative pronouns, like *which*, also become dependent clauses.

> *One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=124#oembed-3*

Adverbial Clause

An adverbial clause functions like an adverb. It modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. For example, in the sentence, "The dog eats when he is hungry," the clause "when he is hungry" modifies the verb "eats." It tells us when the dog eats. Because "when he is hungry" has both a subject and a verb, it is a clause, not a phrase. Since it can't stand along (it starts with a subordinating conjunction), it is a dependent clause.

Absolute Phrase

An absolute phrase is one of the more difficult parts of a sentence to identify. An absolute phrase modifies an entire sentence and typically has either a subject or a verb or a subject and a partial verb. The verb is often in gerund form, meaning it ends in "ing."

Having done his best, the student submitted his test.

In this example, the phrase "Having done his best" tells us about the subject, "the student," and about the predicate, "submitted his test." The phrase only has a predicate, so it is a phrase, not a clause. Since it modifies the entire sentence, it's an absolute phrase.

Noun Clause AKA Nominative Clause

A noun clause is a dependent clause that functions like a noun in a sentence. It can take the place of a subject, an object of the

preposition, or a direct object–anything a noun can do, a noun clause can do.

> The hungry teenager will eat whatever he finds.

The complete subject is "The hungry teenager," and the predicate is "will eat." When we ask "Will eat what?" the answer is "whatever he finds." That means that "whatever he finds" is the direct object. Since "whatever he finds" has a subject and a verb itself, we know it is a clause. So, since we have a clause doing a noun job, we know we have a noun clause.

Prepositional Phrases

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that behaves as an adjective or an adverb, modifying a noun or a verb. Prepositional phrases contain a preposition (a word that specifies place, direction, or time) and an object of the preposition (a noun phrase or pronoun that follows the preposition). In general, a prepositional phrase follows this format: Preposition + article/adjective + noun/pronoun. For example, "on the box" is a prepositional phrase. In fact, if you think of all the things you can do in relation to a box, you'll gain a better understanding of how prepositional phrases function in a sentence.

> image
> What can you do in relation to the box? You can go...
> over the box, under the box, around the box, through the box, to the box, from the box, above the box, below the box,

etc.

"3D Box" by kunal licensed under CC SA.

The following table lists some of the most common prepositions:

above	beneath	into	toward
across	beside	like	under
against	between	near	under
after	beyond	near	until
among	by	on	up
around	despite	over	with
at	except	past	without
before	for	since	
behind	from	through	
below	inside	throughout	

Appositives

An appositive is a word or group of words that describes or renames a noun or pronoun. Incorporating appositives into your writing is a useful way of combining sentences that are too short and choppy. An appositive may be placed anywhere in a sentence, but it must come directly before or after the noun to which it refers:

Appositive after noun: Scott, a poorly trained athlete, was not expected to win the race.

Appositive before noun: A poorly trained athlete, Scott was not expected to win the race.

Unlike relative clauses, appositives are always punctuated by a comma or a set commas.

Exercise 2

Complete this quiz for practice identifying parts of a sentence.

Additional Resources:

You might also want to take a look at this video explaining the parts of a sentence:

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37. All About Verbs: Tenses, Mood, and Subject-Verb Agreement

DR. KAREN PALMER

Choosing Appropriate Verb Tenses

In order to understand verb tenses, it's important to understand what verb tense refers to. In general, verb tense gives us information about three different areas.

First, the tense of a verb usually gives readers a **sense of time**. In other words, verb tense explains if the action in the sentence took place previously (past tense), is taking place right now (present tense), or will take place some time in the future (future tense).

Second, tense can indicate **continual or recurring action** (progressive), action that has completely taken place as of a certain time (perfect), and action that began in the past but continues or recurs through the present time (perfect progressive).

Finally verbs can indicate **person** (first, second, or third) and **number**(singular or plural).

The following image gives a broad overview of how a verb can communicate whether an action is occurring in the past, present,

or future; if the action is complete, recurring, or continuing from the past; and what the person and number of the subject is. In this image, progressive tense is called “continuous”:

Verb tenses in English

Image licensed CC BY SA.

Verb tenses allow you to attach timing to sentences you write and say. To make your meaning clear, you need to choose the correct tense for the timing and you need to be sure to include all the needed words for that tense.

Verb Tenses	**Timing of Action**	**Additional Words and Endings Needed to Complete Verb**	**Examples**
Simple present	Taking place right now	None	I hike.
			You hike.
			She hikes.
Simple past	Started and finished in the past	Add *–ed* to verb.	I hiked.
			You hiked.
			She hiked.
Simple future	Will take place after now	Add *will* or *shall* to the present-tense verb	I will hike.
			You will hike.
			She will hike.
Present progressive	Taking place right now and will continue to take place	Add *am*, *is*, or *are* to the verb + *–ing*	I am hiking
			You are hiking.
			He is hiking.
Past progressive	Took place in the past at the same time that another action took place	Add *was* or *were* to the verb + *–ing*	I was hiking.
			You were hiking.

Verb Tenses	**Timing of Action**	**Additional Words and Endings Needed to Complete Verb**	**Examples**
			He was hiking.
Future progressive	Will take place in the future and will continue on indefinitely	Add *will be* or *shall be* to the verb + *–ing*	I will be hiking.
			You will be hiking.
			He will be hiking.
Present perfect	Happened at an indefinite time in the past or started in the past and continues now	Add *has* or *have* to the past participle of the verb (usually-*ed*)	I have hiked this trail before. (in the past)
			I have hiked this trail since I was five years old. (in the past and continues)
Past perfect	Took place before some other past action	Add *had* to the past participle of the verb (usually *–ed*)	By the time I saw Jenny, I had hiked past the food station.
Future perfect	Will take place some time in the future before some other action	Add *will have* to the past participle of the verb (usually-*ed*)	I will have hiked for two hours before you even wake up.

Verb Tenses	**Timing of Action**	**Additional Words and Endings Needed to Complete Verb**	**Examples**
Present perfect progressive	Began in the past, continues now, and might continue into the future	Add *has* or *have been* to the verb + *ing*	I have been hiking for a while.
Past perfect progressive	Took place on an ongoing basis in the past and was completed before another past action	Add *had been* to the verb + *–ing*	You had been walking for an hour when you saw the swans.
Future perfect progressive	Takes place in the future on an ongoing basis	Add *will have been* to the verb + *–ing*	They will have been hiking once a week by then.

In this chart, you can see how the verb “to run” changes depending on the time, state of action, person, and number:

Person	Singular Present	Plural Present	Singular Past	Plural Past	Singular Past Participle	Plural Past Participle	Singular Progressive	Plural Progressive
First	I run.	We run.	I ran.	We ran.	I have run.	We have run.	I am running.	We are running.
Second	You run.	You all run.	You ran.	You all ran.	You have run.	You all have run.	You are running.	You all are running.
Third	He/she/it runs.	They run.	He/she/it ran.	They ran.	He/she/it has run.	They have run.	He/she/it is running.	They are running.

Here is a video reviewing all of the tenses and how they work:

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Using Irregular Verbs Correctly

Irregular verbs are verbs that do not follow the expected verb tense patterns. Note the difference between regular and irregular verbs in the two tables below:

Regular Verbs		
Base	**Past Tense**	**Past Participle (Preceded by Form of “to Have”)**
accept	accepted	accepted
bump	bumped	bumped
dry	dried	dried
hop	hopped	hopped
observe	observed	observed
print	printed	printed
shrug	shrugged	shrugged
wobble	wobbled	wobbled

Irregular Verbs		
Base	**Past Tense**	**Past Participle (Preceded by Form of "to Have")**
break	broke	broken
bite	bit	bitten
catch	caught	caught
teach	taught	taught
awake	awoke	awoke/awakened
arise	arose	arisen
bear	bore	borne
bring	brought	brought
choose	chose	chosen
come	came	come
do	did	done
eat	ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen
***Note that some words have more than one conjugation based on meaning. For example, the sun and lights shine/shone/shone, but when we deal with shoes, we shine/shined/shined.**		

Irregular Verbs		
Base	**Past Tense**	**Past Participle (Preceded by Form of "to Have")**
freeze	froze	frozen
get	got	got/gotten
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
run	ran	run
drink	drank	drunk
ring	rang	rung
have	had	had
hear	heard	heard
know	knew	known
lay	laid	laid
lead	led	led
lie	lay	lain
***Note that some words have more than one conjugation based on meaning. For example, the sun and lights shine/shone/shone, but when we deal with shoes, we shine/shined/shined.**		

Irregular Verbs		
Base	**Past Tense**	**Past Participle (Preceded by Form of "to Have")**
ride	rode	ridden
rise	rose	risen
say	said	said
see	saw	saw
shine*	shone	shone
shine*	shined	shined
take	took	taken
***Note that some words have more than one conjugation based on meaning. For example, the sun and lights shine/shone/shone, but when we deal with shoes, we shine/shined/shined.**		

Now look at how a regular and irregular verb are conjugated side by side:

Verb Tenses for the Regular Verb "Look" and the Irregular Verb "Eat"

Tense	Number and Person	Past	Present	Future
Simple **Past: main verb + –*ed* or irregular variations** **Present: main verb** **Future: will or shall + main verb**	**First-person singular**	I looked.	I look.	I will look.
		I ate.	I eat.	I will eat.
	First-person plural	We looked.	We look.	We will look.
		We ate.	We eat.	We will eat.
	Second-person singular	You looked.	You look.	You will look.
		You ate.	You eat.	You will eat.
	Second-person plural	You looked.	You look.	You will look.
		You ate.	You eat.	You will eat.
	Third-person singular	He looked.	He looks.	He will look.
		She ate.	She eats.	She will eat.
	Third-person plural	They looked.	They look.	They will look.
		They ate.	They eat.	They will eat.

Tense	Number and Person	Past	Present	Future
Progressive **Verb + –*ing* and a form of the verb "to be"** **Past: was, were** **Present: am, is, are** **Future: will be**	**First-person singular**	I was looking.	I am looking.	I will be looking.
		I was eating.	I am eating.	I will be eating.
	First-person plural	We were looking.	We are looking.	We will be looking.
		We were eating.	We are eating.	We will be eating.
	Second-person singular	You were looking.	You are looking.	You will be eating.
		You were eating.	You are eating.	You will be looking.
	Second-person plural	You were eating.	You are eating.	You will be eating.
		You were looking.	You are looking.	You will be looking.
	Third-person singular	He was looking.	He is looking.	He will be looking.
		She was eating.	She is eating.	She will be eating.
	Third-person plural	They were looking.	They are looking.	They will be looking.
		They were eating.	They are eating.	They will be eating.

Tense	Number and Person	Past	Present	Future
Perfect **Past participle and a form of the verb "to be"** **Past: had** **Present: has, have** **Future: will have**	**First-person singular**	I had looked.	I have looked.	I will have looked.
		I had eaten.	I have eaten.	I will have eaten.
	First-person plural	We had looked.	We have looked.	We will have looked.
		We had eaten.	We have eaten.	We will have eaten.
	Second-person singular	You had looked.	You have looked.	You will have looked.
		You had eaten.	You have eaten.	You will have eaten.
	Second-person plural	You had looked.	You have looked.	You will have looked.
		You had eaten.	You have eaten.	You will have eaten.
	Third-person singular	He had looked.	He has looked.	He will have looked.
		She had eaten.	She has eaten.	She will have eaten.
	Third-person plural	They had looked.	They have looked.	They will have looked.
		They had eaten.	They have eaten.	They will have eaten.

Tense	Number and Person	Past	Present	Future
Perfect progressive **Verb + *–ing* and a form of the verb "to be"** **Past: had been** **Present: has been, have been** **Future: will have been**	**First-person singular**	I had been looking.	I have been looking.	I will have been looking.
		I had been eating.	I have been eating.	I will have been eating.
	First-person plural	We had been looking.	We have been looking.	We will have been looking.
		We had been eating.	We have been eating.	We will have been eating.
	Second-person singular	You had been looking.	You have been looking.	You will have been looking.
		You had been eating.	You have been eating.	You will have been eating.
	Second-person plural	You had been looking.	You have been looking.	You will have been looking.
		You had been eating.	You have been eating.	You will have been eating.
	Third-person singular	He had been looking.	He has been looking.	He will have been looking.
		She had been eating.	She has been eating.	She will have been eating.

Tense	Number and Person	Past	Present	Future
	Third-person plural	They had been looking.	They have been looking.	They will have been looking.
		They had been eating.	They have been eating.	They will have been eating.

Handling Specific Problematic Verbs

Some verbs are especially problematic either because their meanings are confused or because some of their forms sound alike. Handle these verbs by knowing which ones give you trouble and then focusing on the conjugation of those specific verbs. Some of these most commonly troublesome verbs are in the following table. You need to know two key verb types to read this table: transitive (when an object receives the action of the verb; in other words, something is done to something) and intransitive (a verb that does not act on an object).

Problematic Verb Set (Base, Past, P. Part.)	**Guidelines**	**Examples**
borrow…lend	The verb *borrow* means "to temporarily get from someone else," and *lend* means "to temporarily give to someone else."	I *borrowed* Kyle's backpack since I had *lent* mine to Alice.
borrow, borrowed, borrowed		
lend, lent, lent		
bring…take	The starting point of the action causes the confusion between these two verbs. If you *bring* something, you have to start somewhere else and end up at the common location. If you *take* something, you have to start at the common location and end up somewhere else.	He *brought* his clean life jacket to the river and *took* away a filthy life jacket.
bring, brought, brought		
take, took, taken		
feel…think	The verb *feel* is emotion based and the verb *think* is logic based.	I *feel* excited about the tree-top ride, but I *think* it might cost more than I can afford.
feel, felt, felt		
think, thought, thought		

Problematic Verb Set (Base, Past, P. Part.)	**Guidelines**	**Examples**
lay…lie	The verb *lay* is transitive and means "to put," so whenever you put something down, use *lay*. If you could replace the verb with *put* or *place*, you should use *lay*. The verb *lie* means "to rest" or "to tell a falsehood."	I *laid* my sunglasses down on a rock.
lay, laid, laid		I *lay* on the rock myself for twenty minutes.
lie, lay, lain (rest)		The ranger jokingly *lied* about the trail being a short one.
lie, lied, lied (fib)		
learn…teach	The verb *learn* always means to "take in information" and to *teach* always means to "give out information."	I *learned* that Yellowstone was the first national park in the United States. When we go there this summer, I'm going to see what Old Faithful can *teach* me about geysers.
learn, learned, learned		
teach, taught, taught		
raise…rise	The verb *raise* is transitive, so you always have to raise something. The verb *rise* means to "go up" or "get up."	We are planning to *rise* early so that we are ready to start hiking when the sun rises, so *raise* your hand now if you have a problem with that plan.
raise, raised, raised		

Problematic Verb Set (Base, Past, P. Part.)	**Guidelines**	**Examples**
rise, rose, risen		
set…sit	The verb *sit* is always intransitive and *set* usually transitive. The most common confusion is when referring to putting something down. Whenever the meaning is *to put*, use *set*.	The squirrel *set* his nut on the ground and *sat* looking at me.
set, set, set		
sit, sat, set		

Matching Infinitives and Participles to Verb Tenses

Verbals are words formed from verbs that function as other parts of speech. One type of verbals, gerunds (laughing, eating), always function as nouns (e.g., "*Laughing* is good for you"). Present, past, and present perfect participles are verbals that function as adjectives (e.g., "The sound of *laughing* children always cheered him up," "The sight of the *broken* tricycle left in the rain made him gloomy"). Infinitives (to laugh, to have eaten) are another main type of verbals that function as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs. When using any of these verbals, make sure you match the tense of the verb in the sentence.

Infinitives

When the action of the infinitive takes place after or at the same time as the action of the main verb, use the present tense:

We plan *to camp* in the National Redwood Forest this

week.

When the action of the infinitive takes place before the action of the main verb, present the infinitive in perfect tense:

We planned *to have been camping* in the National Redwood Forest last week.

Participle Phrases

Participle phrases can begin with the present participle, past participle, or present perfect participle.

The present participle is the correct choice when the action of the participle is happening at the same time as the action of the main verb:

Resulting in large openings called goosepen scars, fire ravages redwood trees without killing them.

When the action of the participle takes place before the action of the main verb, you can use either a past participle or a present perfect participle:

Scarred by a fire years ago, the large redwood tree still stands tall and awesome. (past participle in participle phrase)

Having posed for several pictures inside the redwood trunk, we climbed out and previewed the shots.

Exercise 1

1. Identify the verb tense used in each of the following sentences:

- I have heard that saying before.
- Joey seemed uncomfortable when he was at my house yesterday.
- You will be running in the second heat this afternoon.
- Lois is writing a letter to the editor.
- By ten o'clock tonight, we will have been walking for twenty hours.

2. Write three sentences using simple tense, three using progressive tense, three using perfect tense, and three using perfect progressive tense. Make sure to include each of the following variations at least once: past, present, future, first person, second person, third person, singular, and plural.

3. Write a set of three sentences each using one of the verbs *go*, *went*, and *gone*.

4. Write a sentence using the verb *freeze* in present progressive tense.

5. Write a sentence using the verb *ride* in past perfect progressive tense.

6. Write a sentence using the verb *lie* in simple future tense.

7. Write a sentence using the verb *learn* in past perfect tense.

8. Write three sentences using each of the following verbs as gerunds, infinitives, and participle phrases. Identify the part of speech in each case.

- love
- kick
- play
- eat
- drive

Managing Mood

The mood of a verb can be imperative, indicative, or subjunctive.

Although those three words might make mood sound somewhat complicated, in reality you are likely quite familiar with the different moods. Study this table for clarification.

Verb Moods	Explanations	Examples
Imperative	The subject is understood to be the reader and is not given in the sentence. Imperative sentences include the following: • Commands • Requests • Advice	• **Control** your partying when you are in college. • Please **keep** your future in mind as you make choices. • **Limit** partying to the weekends so you will be more likely to find success as a college student.
Indicative (or declarative)	Indicative sentences include the following: • Statements • Facts • Opinions • Questions	• During my first year in college, I was **more focused** on having fun with my friends than on studying. • About one-third of eighteen-year-old college freshmen **drop out** within their first year of college. • Although some colleges try to control your behavior with rules, you **need** to figure out for yourself how to successfully balance your class work and your personal life. • Do you think it **helps** to have midnight curfews for students who live in dormitories?

Verb Moods	**Explanations**	**Examples**
Subjunctive	Present-tense verbs remain in the base form rather than changing to match the number or person of the subject. Past-tense verbs are the same as simple past tense. Exception: The verb "to be" uses "were" in all situations. Subjunctive sentences include the following: • Wishes • Recommendations • Doubts • Contrary-to statements	• [present tense] It is important that I **be** [NOT am] focused on doing homework before partying. • [present tense] I suggest a student **work** [NOT student works] on assignments every Friday afternoon. • [past tense] If I **were** [NOT was] him, I'd have stayed at the library with my laptop for a few hours. • [past tense] If I **hadn't seen** it with my own eyes, I wouldn't have believed it.

Problems with mood occur when the mood shifts within a sentence, as shown in the following table. In the table, the revisions were all made to match the mood that the sentence initially used. You could also choose to make different revisions that are equally acceptable.

Verb Moods	Problem Shifts	Revisions
Started with imperative and switched to subjunctive	Control your schedule, and I'd choose the number of hours I need for homework before talking to anyone about weekend plans.	Control your schedule and choose the number of hours you need for homework before talking to anyone about weekend plans.
Started with indicative and switched to imperative	People don't think for themselves and stop being so wishy-washy.	Think for yourself and stop being so wishy-washy.
Started with subjunctive and switched to imperative	It matters that you be in charge of your success and you should stop blaming others.	It matters that you be in charge of your success and stop blaming others.

Exercise 2

1. The following passage has inconsistent verb moods. Identify the existing verb moods as imperative, indicative, and/or imperative. Then revise the passage so that it has consistent verb moods.

- Don't go to the party on Friday night. If I were you, I'd spend Friday in the library and go to the big party on Saturday. Physics majors need to stay focused.

2. Write three sentences using each of these verb moods in one of the sentences: imperative, indicative, subjunctive.

3. Write a passage with at least three sentences. Use a consistent verb mood throughout the passage.

Making Sure Subjects and Verbs Agree

By the time you reach college, you probably have a fairly well-developed sense of whether a sentence sounds right. In fact, that's one of the main reasons why you should get into the habit of reading

your drafts aloud before you submit them for peer or instructor review. Or better yet, ask a friend to read your draft back to you. You'll be surprised how many careless errors you catch just from hearing them.

One key aspect that can make a sentence sound incorrect is if the subject and verb do not agree. Sometimes this happens because the subject and verb are separated by a prepositional phrase or other words that confuse the writer. In any case, the rules for subject verb agreement are very clear cut.

In properly written sentences, the subjects and verbs must agree in number and person. Agreeing in number means that a plural subject is matched up with the plural form of the verb. Although the plural of a noun often ends in –s, it is the singular of a verb that usually ends in –s.

The *rabbit hops* all around the cage. (singular subject and verb)

The *rabbits hop* all around the cage. (plural subject and verb)

Agreeing in person means, for example, a third-person noun must be matched with the proper third-person verb. This chart shows first, second, and third person for a few present-tense verbs. As you can see, most of the verbs are the same in all columns except for the third-person singular. The verb "to be" at the bottom also varies in the first-person singular column. So to match subjects and verbs by person, you could choose, for example, to say "I am," but not "I are."

A Few Present-Tense Verbs

First-Person Singular: I	**First-Person Plural: We**	**Second-Person Singular: You**	**Second-Person Plural: You**	**Third-Person Singular: He, She, It**	**Third-Person Plural: They**
walk	walk	walk	walk	walks	walk
laugh	laugh	laugh	laugh	laughs	laugh
rattle	rattle	rattle	rattle	rattles	rattle
fall	fall	fall	fall	falls	fall
think	think	think	think	thinks	think
am	are	are	are	is	ar

It rattles when the wind blows. (third-person subject and verb)

I think I am a funny person. (first-person subject and verb)

Each of the following sentences represents a common type of **agreement error**. An *explanation* and a *correction* of the error follow each example:

1. Pete and Tara is siblings.

   A subject that includes the word "and" usually takes a plural verb even if the two nouns are singular.

   The sentence should read "Pete and Tara *are* siblings."

2. Biscuits and gravy are my favorite breakfast.

   Sometimes the word and connects two words that form a subject and are actually one thing. In this case, "biscuits and gravy" is one dish. So even though there are two nouns connected by the word "and," it is a singular subject and should take a singular verb.

   The sentence should read "Biscuits and gravy *is* my favorite breakfast."

3. The women who works here are treated well.

   Relative pronouns (*that, who, and which*) *can be singular or plural, depending on their antecedents (the words they stand for). The pronoun has the same number as the antecedent. In this case, "who" stands for "women" and "women" is plural, so the verb should be plural.*

   The sentence should read "The women who *work* here are treated well."

4. One of the girls sing in the chorus.

   A singular subject is separated by a phrase that ends with a plural noun. This pattern leads people to think that the plural noun ("girls" in this case) is the subject to which they should match the verb. But in reality, the verb ("sing") must match the singular subject ("one").

   The sentence should read "One of the girls *sings* in the chorus."

5. The data is unclear.

   The words "data" and "media" are both considered plural at all times when used in academic writing. In more casual writing, some people use a singular version of the two words.

   The sentence should read "The data *are* unclear."

6. The basketball players with the most press this month is the college men playing in the Final Four tournament.

   In some sentences, like this one, the verb comes before the subject. The word order can cause confusion, so you have to find the subject and verb and make sure they match.

   The sentence should read "The basketball players with the most press this month *are* the college men playing in the Final Four tournament."

7. I is ready to go.

   A subject and verb must agree in person. In this case, "I" is a first-person noun, but "is" is a third-person verb.

   The sentence should read "I *am* ready to go."

8. What we think are that Clyde Delber should resign immediately.

   Words that begin with "what" can take either a singular or a plural verb depending on whether "what" is understood as singular or plural. In this case, "we" collectively think one thing, so the verb should be singular even though "we" is plural.

   The sentence should read "What we think *is* that Clyde Delber should resign immediately."

9. Either the dog or the cats spends time on this window seat when I'm gone.

   The word "or" usually indicates a singular subject even though you see two nouns. This sentence is an exception to this guideline because at least one of the subjects is plural. When this happens, the verb should agree with the subject to which it is closest.

   The sentence should read "Either the dog or the cats *spend* time on this window seat when I'm gone."

10. Molly or Huck keep the books for the club, so one of them will know.

    The word "or" usually indicates a singular subject even though you see two nouns. An exception to this guideline is that if one of the subjects is plural, the verb should agree with the subject to which it is closest.

    The sentence should read "Molly or Huck *keeps* the books for the club, so one of them will know.

11. The wilderness scare me when I think of going out alone.

    When a singular noun ends with an -s, you might get confused and think it is a plural noun.

    The sentence should read "The wilderness *scares* me when I think of going out alone."

12. Each of the girls are happy to be here.

    Indefinite pronouns (anyone, each, either, everybody, and everyone) are always singular. So they have to always be used with singular verbs.

    The sentence should read "Each of the girls *is* happy to be here."

Exercise 3

1. Write one sentence showing the correct use of each of the guidelines presented in the tips within this section. (twelve total sentences)

2. Mark the subject and verb in each of the following sentences. Then identify the number and person for each subject/verb combination.

- We remember them every year at this time.
- The media are hungry for anything that sells news.
- You dance like someone who has had a lot of training.
- Denver or Salt Lake City sells the most of our ice sculptures each year.
- I, of all your siblings, am least likely to judge you.

3. These sentences have number errors, person errors, or both. Rewrite each sentence so that it is error free.

- The people in the town supports the local theater.
- Five cups are enough for a double recipe.
- Anna and Jonah runs after classes each day.
- The luckiest group was the math students who took the test first hour.
- Everybody are glad to help in a situation like this one.

Remember, subjects and verbs must agree in two ways: number (singular or plural) and person (first, second, or third). These two general rules hold through all the different subject/verb guidelines. As a rule, plural subjects end in –s and plural verbs do not end in –s. In this section, the noun is in **bold** and the verb is in *italic*.

Pairing Verbs with Singular and Plural Subjects

Many sentences have subjects and verbs that appear side by side. The subjects in these sentences are often clearly singular or plural, and they clearly determine the needed verb form.

Situation	Example	Caution
Typical singular subject followed directly by the verb	The US **government** *establishes* national parks on an ongoing basis, such as the six parks formed in Alaska in 1980.	Don't get confused into thinking that a singular subject needs a verb without an –s. The plural version would be "governments establish."
Typical plural subject followed directly by the verb	National **parks** *provide* wonderful opportunities for people to commune with nature.	The subject "parks" is plural and it agrees with "provide." The singular version would be "park provides."

Matching Subjects and Verbs That Are Separated by Other Words

When words fall between a subject and verb, the singular/plural state of the subject is sometimes confusing. Always make sure you are matching the verb to the subject and not to one of the words between the two.

Situation	Example	Caution
Words fall between subject and verb	Six national **parks** in Alaska *were formed* in 1980.	Mistaking “Alaska” for the subject would make it seem as if the verb should be “was formed.”

Joining Plural Verbs to Compound or Double Subjects

Compound subjects joined by the word “and” are plural since there is more than one of them. Double subjects joined by “or” or “nor” match to a verb based on the status of the subject closest to the verb.

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Compound subject with plural verb	**Rock and grass** *combine* to make Badlands National Park amazing.	"Rock and grass" is a plural subject formed by two singular words. Don't get confused and use "combines" for the verb because the individual subjects are singular.
Noncompound double subject functioning as a singular subject	Depending on where you look, **rock or grass** *dominates* your view.	Since the subjects are joined by "or," they do not automatically become plural because there are two of them.

Pairing Singular Verbs with Titles and Collective Subjects

Regardless of the singular or plural nature of the words within a title, the title is considered one unit; thus it is a singular noun. Similarly, collective nouns, such as "committee," function as singular nouns regardless of how many people or things might actually make up the collective noun.

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Title with singular verb	**Everglades National Park** *preserves* thousands of acres of wetlands.	This title isn't plural just because word "Everglades" is plural. The park is one thing and, therefore, is singular.
Collective subject with singular verb	The **team** *meets* twice a year at Far View Lodge in Mesa Verde National Park.	Although you know that the "team" is made up of more than one person, you must view "team" as a single unit.

Teaming Singular Verbs with Indefinite Subjects

Whether an indefinite subject is singular or plural depends on whether the indefinite noun has a singular or plural meaning on its own or based on the rest of the sentence.

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Indefinite subject with singular meaning on its own	**Each** of the fossils in the Petrified Forest National Park *tells* a story.	Even though there is more than one fossil, the word "each" is always singular. Many indefinite subjects are always singular. Examples include another, anyone, anything, each, everybody, everything, neither, nobody, one, other, and something.
Indefinite subject with singular meaning based on the rest of the sentence	All of **Arizona** *was* once located in a tropical region.	Since "Arizona" is singular, "all" is singular. Some indefinite subjects can be singular or plural. Examples include all, any, more, most, none, some, and such.

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Indefinite subject with plural meaning based on the rest of the sentence	All the petrified **trees** in the Petrified Forest National Park *are* millions of years old.	Since “trees” is plural, “all” is plural.
Indefinite subject with plural meaning on its own	**Both** scrubland and rock formations *are* common in desert settings.	Some indefinite subjects are always plural. Examples include both, few, fewer, many, others, several, and they.

Choosing Verbs When the Subject Comes after the Verb

The standard sentence format in English presents the subject before the verb. In reversed sentences, you need to find the subject and then make sure it matches the verb. To find the subject, fill the following blank with the verb and then ask the question of yourself: who or what _____?

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Subject comes after the verb	Throughout Mammoth Cave National Park *run* **passages** covering over 367 miles.	Who or what runs? The passages do. Even though you might be tempted to think “Mammoth Cave National Park” is the subject, it is not doing the action of the verb. Since “passages” is plural, it must match up to a plural verb.

Deciding If Relative Pronouns Take a Singular or Plural Verb

Relative pronouns, such as *who*, *which*, *that*, and *one of*, are singular or plural based on the pronoun's antecedent. You have to look at the antecedent of the relative clause to know whether to use a singular or plural verb.

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Relative pronoun that is singular	**The Organ**, **which** rises up seven hundred feet, *is* so named for its resemblance to a pipe organ.	The word "organ" is singular and is the antecedent for "which." So the word "which" is also singular. The word "which" is the subject for the relative clause "which rises up seven hundred feet" and, therefore, requires a singular verb (rises).
Relative pronoun that is plural	Arches National Park in Utah offers **sites** that *mesmerize* the most skeptical people.	The word "sites" is plural and is the antecedent for "that." The word "that" is the subject for the relative clause "that mesmerize the most skeptical people." So "that" is plural in this case and requires a plural verb (mesmerize).

Matching Singular Subjects to Gerunds and Infinitives

Sometimes, verbs can form nouns, which then function as nouns in a sentence.

Gerunds are nouns formed by adding *–ing* to a verb. Gerunds can combine with other words to form gerund phrases, which function as subjects in sentences. Gerund phrases are always considered singular. Examples: walking, running, sitting, etc.

Infinitives are the "to" forms of verbs, such as *to run* and *to sing*. Infinitives can be joined with other words to form an infinitive phrase. These phrases can serve as the subject of a sentence. Like gerund phrases, infinitive phrases are always singular. Examples: to walk, to run, to sit, etc.

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Gerund phrase as singular subject	**Veering** off the paths *is* not *recommended* on the steep hills of Acadia National Park.	Don't be fooled by the fact that "paths" is plural. The subject of this sentence is the whole gerund phrase, which is considered to be singular. So a singular verb is needed.
Infinitive phrase as singular subject	**To restore** Acadia National Park after the 1947 fire *was* a Rockefeller family mission.	All words in an infinitive phrase join together to create a singular subject.

Recognizing Singular Subjects That Look Plural and Then Choosing a Verb

Some subjects appear plural when they are actually singular. Some of these same subjects are plural in certain situations, so you have to pay close attention to the whole sentence.

Situation	Example	Watch Out For
Singular subjects that look plural	**Politics** *plays* a part in determining which areas are named as national parks.	Many subjects are or can be singular, but look plural, such as *athletics*, *mathematics*, *mumps*, *physics*, *politics*, *statistics*, and *news*. Take care when matching verbs to these subjects.
Subject that looks plural, and is sometimes singular and sometimes plural	**State and national politics** *sway* Congress during national park designation talks.	Just because words such as "politics" can be singular doesn't mean that they always are. In this case, the adjectives "state and national" clarify that different sources of politics are involved ("state politics" and "national politics"), so "politics" is plural in this case.

Exercise 4

1. Complete the interactive lesson in Subject Verb Agreement: Subject Verb Agreement Interactive Lesson

Exercise 5

1. Write sentences to meet each of the following criteria. For each sentence, be sure that the subjects and verbs agree.

2. Write a sentence that has words between the subject and verb.

3. Write a sentence with a compound subject.

4. Write a sentence that has a title of a song, movie, television show, or national park for a subject.

5. Write a sentence that has a collective noun for a subject.

6. Write a sentence that has an indefinite subject

(another, anyone, anything, each, everybody, everything, neither, nobody, one, other, or something).

7. Write a sentence where the subject comes after the verb.

8. Write a sentence that uses a relative pronoun as a singular subject.

9. Write a sentence that uses a relative pronoun as a plural subject.

10. Write a sentence that has a gerund phrase for the subject.

11. Write a sentence that has an infinitive phrase for the subject.

12. Write a sentence that has a subject that looks plural but is actually singular.

13. Write a sentence that has a subject that looks plural and is sometimes singular but is plural in this situation.

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38. Identifying Fragments, Run-ons, and Comma Splices

DR. KAREN PALMER

The most common sentence errors have one thing in common: they are mistakes about sentence boundaries and what punctuation to use. It's important to understand how to write complete sentences and fix errors related to making complete sentences (fragments, comma splices, run-on sentences).

Remember, an **independent clause** is a unit of meaning with a subject and a verb that can be punctuated as a complete sentence. Native speakers of English will usually recognize an independent clause by itself as a complete sentence.

A complete sentence must meet five simple criteria:

- It must have a subject.
- It must have a verb.
- It must begin with a capital letter.
- It must end with a period, question mark, or exclamation mark.
- It must make sense in English.

A comma splice, fragment, and run on do not meet the criteria for a complete, correct sentence.

A fragment is an incomplete sentence. A fragment will be missing a subject or a verb or both. Please watch this video from Kahn Academy:

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=128#oembed-1

A run-on sentence is two independent clauses joined with no intervening punctuation (i.e., run together). A run-on sentence has too many subjects and verbs!

A comma splice is two independent clauses (complete sentences) joined with a comma. A comma splice is basically a run-on sentence that has a comma between each sentence.

Here's another video from Kahn Academy that explains how to recognize run-ons and comma splices:

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Exercise 1

1. Complete this exercise that tests your ability to identify and correct fragments, run-ons, and comma splices:
   Fragments, Run Ons and Commas Splices Lesson

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39. Identifying Pronoun Problems

DR. KAREN PALMER

Understanding Pronouns

A first step in understanding how and when to use pronouns properly is having an overall picture of pronouns. In this section of the chapter, we'll cover pronoun **types** and **cases**.

Pronoun Types

There are seven types of pronouns: Personal, Possessive, Reflexive, Relative, Demonstrative, Indefinite, and Interrogative.

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Study the following table for an overview of the different types of pronouns. Note that some pronouns, such as possessive pronouns and interrogative pronouns, show up on more than one list:

<table>
<tr><th>Type of Pronoun</th><th>Use</th><th colspan="2">List of Pronouns</th><th>Example</th></tr>
<tr><td>Demonstrative pronouns</td><td>Refer to things</td><td colspan="2">that
these
this
those</td><td>This trail is the longest one.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Indefinite pronouns</td><td rowspan="2">Refer to nonspecific people or things</td><td>Singular:
anybody
anyone
everybody
everyone
everything
nothing
one
someone
somebody</td><td>Singular or plural:
all
any
more
most
none
some</td><td rowspan="2">Do you know anyone who has hiked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Plural:
both
few
many</td></tr>
</table>

Type of Pronoun	Use	List of Pronouns		Example
Interrogative pronouns	Are used in questions	that what whatever which whichever who whoever whom whose		**Who** wants to sign up to ride the mules down into the Grand Canyon?
Personal pronouns	Refer to people or things	**Subjective case:** he I it she they we you	**Objective case:** her him it me them us you	If **you** ask Alicia, **she** will tell **you** that **I** am too chicken to ride the mules even though none of **them** has ever gone over the edge.

Type of Pronoun	Use	List of Pronouns	Example
		Possessive case: his her(s) its my mine our(s) their(s) your(s)	
Possessive pronouns	Show ownership without using an apostrophe	his her(s) its my mine our(s) their(s) your(s)	Regardless of the expense, a helicopter ride is **my** choice for seeing the Grand Canyon.
Reciprocal pronouns	Refer to separate parts of a plural antecedent	each other one another	The mules calmly follow **each other** all the way up and down.

Type of Pronoun	Use	List of Pronouns	Example
Reflexive and intensive pronouns	End in *–self* or *–selves*. Reflexive pronouns are needed for a sentence to make sense, and intensive pronouns are optional within a sentence	herself himself itself myself oneself ourselves themselves yourself yourselves	The guides **themselves** put their lives in the hands, or rather hooves, of the mules every day.
Relative pronouns	Show how dependent clause relates to a noun	that what whatever which whichever who whoever whom whomever whose	As long as I get to see the Grand Canyon from a vantage point other than the edge, I am happy to choose **whichever** option you want.

Pronoun Cases

Pronouns in English have different forms for the subjective, adjective possessive, possessive, and objective cases. The subjective case refers to words as they are used in the subject position. The objective case is used when the pronoun is in the object position (the direct object, indirect object, or object of the preposition). The possessive cases designate pronouns used to show possession. (Note that the possessive cases are also known as Possessive Pronouns). Note that a pronoun can show possession in two ways. The reflexive pronouns are used to point back to the subject (i.e., I can do it myself). The table below shows the subjective, objective, adjective possessive, possessive, and reflexive versions in the first, second, and third singular and objective cases:

Person	Singular or Plural	Subjective	Objective	Adj. Possessive	Possessive
First	Singular	I	me	my	mine
Second	Singular	you	you	your	yours
Third	Singular	he/she/it	him/her/its	his/her/its	his/hers/its
First	Plural	we	us	our	ours
Second	Plural	you	you	your	yours
Third	Plural	they	them	their	theirs

Other types of pronouns can also have different cases:

Indefinite Pronouns

Subjective	**Possessive**	**Objective**
anybody	anybody's	anybody
everybody	everybody's	everybody
someone	someone's	someone

Relative Pronoun Case

Noun clauses can serve as subjects or objects and often begin with one of these relative pronouns: *that*, *what*, *whatever*, *which*, *whichever*, *who*, *whoever*, *whom*, *whomever*, *whose*. Logically, you should use subjective case pronouns in noun clauses that function as subjects and objective case pronouns in noun clauses that function as objects.

Subjective	Possessive	Objective
that		that
which		which
who	whose	whom
whoever	whoever's (slang)	whomever

Subjective Case Example: Joshua Tree National Park, **which is in California**, is named after a tree that is actually a member of the lily family.

Objective Case Example: A Joshua tree looks like neither its relative, the lily, nor the biblical figure, Joshua, **whom the tree is said to be named after**.

Tips for Avoiding Pronoun Case Problems

Now that you have a basic understanding about pronoun types and cases, it's time to address some typical problems with pronoun usage.

I vs Me

If you have trouble choosing between "I" and "me" in compound subject and object situations, remove the other subject or object, and try "I" or "me" alone.

Which of these two choices are correct?

At Bryce Canyon, Carol took thirty pictures of Anna and I.

OR

At Bryce Canyon, Carol took thirty pictures of Anna and me.

Test: At Bryce Canyon, Carol took thirty pictures of (I, me).

Result: Since the correct choice alone is "me," the correct choice within the compound object is also "me"—At Bryce Canyon, Carol took thirty pictures of Anna and me.

Who vs Whom

If you are confused about whether to use *who* or *whom* in a dependent clause, try isolating the clause that includes *who* or *whom*. Then reword the clause as a sentence and substitute a personal pronoun (subjective case: he, she, they; objective case: him, her, them) for *who* or *whom*. If *he*, *she*, or *they* sounds right, use *who*. If *him*, *her*, or *them* sounds right, use *whom*.

Example: I don't know (who, whom) to ask about where to stay at the Grand Tetons.

Test: Possible rewording—I don't know if I should ask (he, she, they, him, her, them).

Result: Since *him*, *her*, or *them* are the choices that work, the correct choice in the first sentence is *whom*—I don't know whom to ask about where to stay at the Grand Tetons.

If you are confused about whether to use *who* or *whom* at the beginning of a sentence, think of an answer for the sentence using

a personal pronoun. Then mimic the case of the answer pronoun in the original sentence.

Example 1: (Who, Whom) is getting up at sunrise to watch the sun come up over these magnificent trees?

Test: They will get up.

Result: Since *they* is subjective case, you should use *who*, which is also subjective case.

Example 2: (Who, Whom) did you ask to watch the fire?

Test: I asked her to watch the fire.

Result: Since *her* is objective case, you should use *whom*, which is also objective case.

When the Sentence is Incomplete

In casual usage, some words are sometimes left out, thus requiring a pronoun to do extra work. If you are confused about which pronoun case to use in these situations, think about how the sentence would be written if it were totally complete. Considering the whole sentence meaning should help clarify the pronoun choice.

Example 1: Harry likes camping more than (her, she).

Test: Harry likes camping more than she (likes camping).

Result: The pronoun *she* is the subject of the assumed verb *likes*. So subjective case is needed.

Example 2: Harry likes camping more than (her, she).

Test: Harry likes camping more than (he likes) her.

Result: The pronoun *her* is the object of the assumed verb *likes*. So objective case is needed.

We vs Us

If you are unsure whether to use *we* and *us* before a noun or noun phrase, say the sentence without the noun or noun phrase in place. Whichever pronoun works without the noun or noun phrase is also the correct pronoun to use with the noun.

Example 1: Even (us, we) people who like our creature comforts fall in love with nature when viewing the Grand Tetons.

Test: Even we fall in love with nature when viewing the Grand Tetons.

Result: Once *people who like our creature comforts* is dropped out, it becomes clear that the pronoun needs to be subjective case.

Example 2: Don't wait for (us, we) creature-comfort people to come up with a plan.

Test: Don't wait for us to come up with a plan.

Result: Once *creature-comfort people* is dropped, it becomes clear that the pronoun needs to be objective case.

Exercise 1

1. Choose the correct pronoun for each sentence. Then, for each choice, indicate whether it is subjective, objective, or possessive case.

- I don't know (her, she).
- (Us, We) girls are meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- (Who, Whom) do you think will show up first?
- That car is (theirs, their's).
- We aren't sure (who, whom) got here first.
- (Its, It's) about time we clear the air.
- The jacket fits him better than (I, me).

2. Complete these steps for the following sentences:

- Use one of these relative pronouns to fill in each of the following blanks: *that*, *what*, *whatever*, *which*, *whichever*, *who*, *whoever*, *whom*, *whomever*, *whose*.
- Determine whether the clause that each relative pronoun introduces is a noun clause or an adjective clause.
- For each noun clause, indicate whether it is subjective or objective case.

1. The swimmer _____ won the race had been sick all last week.
2. Caley, _____the coach thought would win her race, defaulted in the first lap.
3. The dog _____ ate your hot dog is behind the hose.

4. The boy _____ you saw is my brother.

Exercise 2

1. Complete this online quiz.

Making Pronouns and Antecedents Agree

Pronouns can be somewhat confusing, but they can help make your use of language smoother and more compact. For example, if your name were Pete Rando, you could write, "Pete Rando is going back to wait to go back to Pete Rando's camper until Pete Rando's friends have seen the sunset at the Grand Canyon." Or you could say, "I'm going to wait to go back to my camper until my friends have seen the sunset at the Grand Canyon." Another step in properly using

pronouns is to recognize a pronoun's **antecedent**, which is the noun or pronoun to which a pronoun refers, and make sure the pronoun and antecedent match in number, person, gender, and human versus nonhuman state. Also, to make the antecedent-pronoun match clear, the pronoun should follow relatively soon after the antecedent, and no other possible antecedent should fall between the antecedent and the pronoun.

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Antecedent Situations	Example in a Sentence	Pronoun Antecedent Guidelines
Compound antecedents	**Joey and Hannah** spent the weekend with **their** parents at the Grand Teton National Park.	As an antecedent, "Joey and Hannah" is plural, non-gender-specific, human, and third person, so the pronoun must match. Hence *their* works, but, for example, *our*, *his*, *her*, and *them* would not work.
Indefinite pronouns that act as an antecedent for other pronouns	**Some** of the moose left **their** footprints in our campsite.	Since "of the moose" is a nonessential phrase, the antecedent for *their* is *some*. The pronoun *some* can be singular or plural, so it agrees with *their*, which is plural.
Collective noun antecedents	The **Teton Range** is quite regal as **it** protrudes upwards nearly seven thousand feet.	*Teton Range* is a collective noun and, therefore, is considered single (multiple mountains within the range, but only one range). It is nonhuman, so it agrees with *it*. Collective nouns are sometimes an exception to the *human versus nonhuman* guideline since a noun, such as "crew" or "audience," can match to the pronoun *its*.
Antecedents and gender-biased pronouns	**Everyone** should make **his or her** own choice about hike lengths.	Years ago, acceptable writing included using male pronouns to refer to all unknown- or collective-gender antecedents. Today such usage is considered sexist. Some people opt to use *their* with singular antecedents instead of using *his or her*. Such usage should never be used in formal writing because it is technically incorrect since *everyone* is singular and *their* is plural.
Ambiguous antecedents	**Ambiguous:** The trails wind high into the mountains where they seem to disappear into the sky.	When a pronoun antecedent is unclear, such as in this situation where readers do not know if the trails or the mountains seem to disappear into the sky, you should reword the sentence by either (1) eliminating or (2) moving the pronoun (and probably other words).

Antecedent Situations	Example in a Sentence	Pronoun Antecedent Guidelines
		Example #1: The trails wind high into the mountains where the trails seem to disappear into the sky.
		Example #2: High in the mountains, the trails wind as they seem to disappear into the sky.
Vague or implied antecedents	**Vague or implied:** The Grand Teton park wetland trails go past areas where deer, elk, and moose are often seen, so it should be a lot of fun.	The antecedent of *it* is not clear because the writer used a shortcut. Instead of referring to any of the nouns that preceded it in the sentence, *it* refers to an unstated antecedent, such as *the experience* or *the hike*. A better way to write the sentence: The Grand Teton park wetland trails go past areas where deer, elk, and moose are often seen, so the hike should be a lot of fun.
Antecedents in previous sentences	**The Grand Teton National Park** was formed in 1929. In 1950, **it** was sort of re-formed when additional land was added.	Antecedents should be present within the same sentence unless the flow of the sentences is such that the antecedent/pronoun connection is very clear.

Connecting Pronouns and Antecedents Clearly

Matching a pronoun with its antecedent in terms of number (singular or plural) can be tricky. To avoid pronoun and antecedent problems, you should take three steps:

1. Identify the antecedent.
2. Determine if the antecedent is singular or plural.
3. Make sure the antecedent and pronoun match, preferably by making both plural if possible.

1. Antecedent Identification

The antecedent is the noun the pronoun represents in a sentence. When you see a pronoun, you should be able to understand its meaning by looking at the rest of the sentence. Look at the following sentence:

The Smiths picked apples for hours, and they put them in large boxes.

The antecedent for "they" is "the Smiths." The antecedent for "them" is "apples."

Read each of the following sentences and note the *antecedent* for each *pronoun*.

- LaBeth fell on the floor and found out *it* was harder than *she* thought.

  it—*floor*; she—*LaBeth*

- The women chatted as *they* jogged along with *their* pets.

  they—*the women*; their—*the women's*

- When Abe lost *his* gloves, *he* backtracked looking for *them*.

  his—*Abe's*; he—*Abe*; them—*gloves*

As sentences become more complicated or whole paragraphs are involved, identifying pronoun antecedents might also become more complicated. As long as pronouns and antecedents are used properly, however, you should be able to find the antecedent for each pronoun.

Read the following sentences and note the *antecedent* for each *pronoun*:

The ancient Mayans targeted December 12, 2012, as a momentous day that marks the end of a 5,126-year era.

Today scholars speculate about what the Mayans expected to happen on that day and if *they* (*the Mayans*) saw *it* (*December* 12, 2012) as a time for celebration or fear. Some say that the end of an era would have been a cause for celebration. Others view *it* (*December* 12, 2012) as an impending ominous situation due to *its* (*December* 12, 2012's) unknown nature. At any rate, *you* (*the reader*) can rest assured that many scholars will be paying attention as the upcoming date draws near.

2. Determine if the Antecedent is Singular or Plural

When you are writing and using pronouns and antecedents, begin by identifying whether the antecedent is singular or plural. As you can see by looking at the following table, making this determination is sometimes not as easy as it might seem:

Antecedent	Singular or Plural?	Explanation
dog	Singular	Common singular nouns function as singular antecedents.
singers	Plural	Common plural nouns function as plural antecedents.
everybody	Singular	Indefinite pronouns sometimes function as antecedents. Since they refer to nonspecific things or people, their number can be ambiguous. To solve this problem, indefinite pronouns are treated as singular. Other indefinite pronouns include anyone, each, everyone, someone, and something.
team	Singular	Words that stand for one group are singular even though the group includes plural members.
team members	Plural	By very definition, the members in a group number more than one, so the term is plural.
coat and hat	Plural	When two or more nouns are joined by “and,” they create a plural entity.
coat or hat	Singular	When two or more nouns are joined by “or,” the singular or plural determination of such an antecedent is based on the last-mentioned noun. In this case, “hat” is mentioned last and is singular. So the antecedent is singular.
coat or hats	Plural	Since the last-mentioned noun in this set is plural, as an antecedent this set would be plural.

Antecedent	Singular or Plural?	Explanation
coats or hat	Singular	Since the last-mentioned noun in this set is singular, as an antecedent this set would be singular, even though the set includes a plural noun. (Note: as a matter of style, try to avoid this arrangement by using the “singular or plural” sequence for your antecedents.)

3. Make sure the Antecedent and Pronoun Match

Antecedents and pronouns need to match in terms of number (singular or plural) and gender. For purposes of clarity, try to keep a pronoun relatively close to its antecedent. When the antecedent is not immediately clear, make a change such as rearranging the words, changing from singular to plural, or replacing the pronoun with a noun. Each of the following sentences has an **antecedent/ pronoun matching problem**. Read each sentence and think about the problem. Then check below each **example** for a *correction* and an explanation:

Number (Singular or Plural)

Original: The **singer** kept a bottle of water under **their** stool.

Revision: Angela, the singer, kept a bottle of water under *her* stool.

Explanation: Since "singer" is singular, the pronoun must be singular. In this situation, to say "his or her" sounds odd, so the best choice would be to revise the sentence to clarify the gender of the singer.

Original: Each **student** should complete **their** registration for next semester by October 5.

Revision: *Students* should complete *their* registration for next semester by October 5.

Explanation: Often, as in this situation, the best solution is to switch the subject from singular to plural so you can avoid having to use "his or her."

Original: Everyone should do what **they** think is best.

Revision: *Everyone* should do what *he or she* thinks is best.

OR

All *employees* should do what *they* think is best.

Explanation: Indefinite pronouns are treated as singular in the English language even when they have an intended plural meaning. You have to either use a singular pronoun or revise the sentence to eliminate the indefinite pronoun as the antecedent.

Original: To compete in the holiday tournament, the **team** took **their** first airline flight as a group.

Revision: To compete in the holiday tournament, the *team* took *its* first airline flight as a group.

Explanation: Collective nouns are singular since they represent, for example, one team, one crowd, or one family. Although the pronoun "it" is used for nonhuman reference, it can also be used to reference a singular collective noun that involves humans.

Original: Neither Cathy nor the Petersons wanted to give up **her** place in line.

Revision: *Neither Cathy nor the Petersons* wanted to give up *their* place in line.

Explanation: In situations involving "or" or "nor," the antecedent must match the noun closest to the pronoun, which in this case is Petersons. Since Petersons is plural, the pronoun must be plural.

Original: The **dogs and the cat** ate all **its** food immediately.

Revision: The *dogs and the cat* ate all *their* food immediately.

Explanation: When joined by "and," compound antecedents are plural and, therefore, take a plural pronoun.

Gender

Original: Each **member** is responsible for **his** own dues and registration.

Revision: Each *member* is responsible for *his or her* own dues and registration.

OR

Members are responsible for *their* own dues and registration.

Explanation: Using "he," "his," or "him" as a universal singular pronoun is no longer acceptable. Either use both a masculine and a feminine pronoun as in the first revision or change the noun to plural and use a plural pronoun as in the second revision. Stylistically, pluralizing is preferable.

Exercise 3

1. For each sentence, fill in the blank with an appropriate pronoun(s) and circle the antecedent.

- Everybody heard us sing _____ version.
- The pit crew did _____ job like clockwork.
- A small child should not be left to fend for _____.
- Beagles and Labradors often show off _____ natural hunting tendencies.
- Allie and Bethany are planning to help

_____ with their projects.

- Ask each student to upload _____ papers into the drop box.
- Anyone can get _____ transcripts by filling out the proper form.

2. Paying attention to the world around you, find at least five examples of pronoun/antecedent errors. Show the error and explain why it is a problem.

3. Use each of these pronouns in a sentence with an antecedent: their, they, he, her, and it.

4. Rewrite the following sentences to eliminate the pronoun/antecedent agreement problems:

- Ask any teacher and they will tell you that their students aren't thinking of anything but spring break.
- I don't know when this letter or the five letters I received last week were written since there is no date on it.
- Everyone should look at his own form and make sure they are completed correctly.

Exercise 4

1. Edit the following paragraph by correcting pronoun agreement errors in number and person. Then check your work by submitting to Grammarly.

Over spring break I visited my older cousin, Diana, and they took me to a butterfly exhibit at a museum. Diana and I have been close ever since she was young. Our mothers are twin sisters, and she is inseparable! Diana knows how much I love butterflies, so it was their special present to me. I have a soft spot for caterpillars too. I love them because something about the way it transforms is so interesting to me. One summer my grandmother gave me a butterfly growing kit, and you got to see the entire life cycle of five Painted Lady butterflies. I even got to set it free. So when my cousin said they wanted to take me to the butterfly exhibit, I was really excited!

2. Complete this online exercise.

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40. Checking Adjectives and Adverbs

DR. KAREN PALMER

Adverbs vs Adjectives

Many students get confused when it comes to adjectives and adverbs. Since many adverbs and adjectives are almost identical—with slight changes in spelling (usually adverbs are formed by adding *–ly* to the adjective)—it's no wonder students get confused! A few adverbs and adjectives even have the same spelling (like **best**, **fast**, **late**, **straight**, **low**, and **daily**)!

Adjectives	Adverbs
bad	badly
beautiful	beautifully
quick	quickly
quiet	quietly
slow	slowly
soft	softly
sudden	suddenly

You likely already use adjectives and adverbs correctly, but the best way to make sure you are using adjectives and adverbs correctly is to understand how they are used.

Adjectives Modify Nouns and Pronouns

Adjectives can be identified by knowing what job they accomplish in a sentence. Adjectives modify or describe nouns and pronouns. They answer the questions *what kind*? *how many*? and *which one*? If you find all the nouns and pronouns in a sentence and ask these questions of those nouns and pronouns, you'll find the adjectives! While you might not think of them as such, the articles *a*, *an*, and *the* are also adjectives.

In the following sentences, the adjectives are in **bold** font and the nouns and pronouns are in *italic* font.

1. It takes **crazy** *people* to go to **a** *cave* at 4:00 a.m. to wait for **the** *bats* to leave!

Adjective questions: What kind of people? Crazy ones. Which cave? A cave. Which bats? The bats. Remember, a, an, and the are article adjectives!

2. **A few** *bats* seemed to circle above as **the** *rest* flew off.

Adjective Questions: How many bats? Few. Which few? A few. Which rest? The rest.

3. **That** *one* almost got in **my** *hair*.

Adjective questions: Which one? That one. Which hair? My hair. Note that "my" is a possessive pronoun, which can also be used as an adjective.

Adverbs Modify Verbs, Adjectives, and Adverbs

Many adverbs end in -ly, but certainly not all them. This is why it's important to understand how to identify an adverb in a sentence. Once you've identified adverbs, you can make sure you are using them correctly.

Adverbs modify (or describe) verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. *Hint: You can remember what adverbs are used for is to note the "verb" in the adverb.* To identify an adverb in a sentence, you can ask the adverb questions about the verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in the sentence: *when*, *how*, *why*, *where*, *under what condition*, *to what degree*, *how often*, and *how much*.

In the following sentences, the adverbs are in **bold** font and the verbs and adjectives they modify are in *italic* font. Note that the adverb questions are asked of verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

1. About a quarter million bats *leave* Carlsbad Caverns **nightly**.

Adverb question: When do they leave? Nightly. Nightly is an adverb.

2. The bats *flew* **above** our heads.

Adverb question: Where did they fly? Above–above is an adverb.

3. The bats are **incredibly** *dense*.

Adverb question: To what degree are they dense? Incredibly–this is an adverb.

4. Each little bat can *change* directions **amazingly fast**!

How do they change directions? Fast–fast is an adverb.

AND **To what degree** do they change directions fast? Amazingly–amazingly is the adverb.

Using Comparatives and Superlatives

Most adjectives and adverbs have three levels of intensity. The lowest level is the base, or positive, level, such as *tall*. The second level is the comparative level (*taller*), and the top level is the superlative level (*tallest*). You use the base, or positive, level when you are talking about only one thing. You use the comparative level

when you are comparing two things. The superlative level allows you to compare three or more things.

With short adjectives, the comparative and superlative are typically formed by adding *–er* and *–est*, respectively. If an adjective has three or more syllables, use the words *more* or *less* (comparative) and *most* or *least* (superlative) in front of the adjectives instead of adding suffixes. When you are unsure whether to add the suffix or a word, look up the word.

Sample Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Formed with –*er* and –*est*		
big	bigger	biggest
old	older	oldest
wise	wiser	wisest
Formed by Using *More* or *Less* and *Most* or *Least*		
ambitious	more ambitious	least ambitious
generous	less generous	least generous
simplistic	more simplistic	most simplistic

In this table, the first column contains the adjective, the second is the comparative, and the third is the superlative.

With adverbs, only a few of the shorter words form superlatives by adding the –*er* or –*est* suffixes. Rather, most of them use the addition of *more* or *less* and *most* or *least*.

Sample Comparative

and Superlative Adverbs

Formed with –*er* and –*est*		
early	earlier	earliest
fast	faster	fastest
late	later	latest
Formed by Using *More* or *Less* and *Most* or *Least*		
happily	more happily	most happily
neatly	more neatly	most neatly
quickly	more quickly	most quickly

Some adjectives and adverbs form superlatives in irregular patterns instead of using the *–er* or *–est* suffixes or adding *more* or *less* and *most* or *least*.

Sample Adjectives That Form Superlatives Using Irregular Patterns

good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
far	farther	farthest
many	more	most

Sample Adverbs That Form Superlatives Using Irregular Patterns

badly	worse	worst
little	less	least
much	more	most
well	better	best

Avoiding Double Negatives

One negative word changes the meaning of a sentence to mean the opposite of what the sentence would mean without the negative word. Two negative words, on the other hand, cancel each other out, resulting in a double negative that returns the sentence to its

original meaning. Because of the potential for confusion, double negatives are discouraged.

Example of a sentence with one negative word: I have **never** been to Crater Lake National Park.

Meaning: Crater Lake is a place I have **not** visited.

Example of a sentence with two negative words: I have **not never** been to Crater Lake National Park.

Meaning: I have been to Crater Lake National Park.

Using *Good* and *Well* and *Bad* and *Badly* Correctly

Two sets of adverbs and adjectives that are often used erroneously are *good* and *well* and *bad* and *badly*. The problem people usually have with these two words is that the adverb forms (*well* and *badly*) are often used in place of the adjective forms (*good* and *bad*) or vice versa. In addition, *well* can be used as an adjective meaning "healthy." The following chart is a helpful way to remember when to use which word.

Situations	**Correct Examples**	**Explanation**
The word *well* is typically used as an adverb.	I wasn't feeling very **well** on the day we first drove through Theodore Roosevelt National Park.	The words *very* and *well* are both adverbs. The word *very* modifies *well*, and *well* modifies *feeling*.
Sometimes forms of the verbs *feel*, *be*, and *look* can be used to describe a person's health. In such cases, the word *well* can serve as an adjective that means "healthy" and refers back to the noun.	Watching buffalo roam always makes me feel strong and **well**.	The word *well* is used as an adjective just like *strong*. Both words modify *me*. The four sentences with *well* refer to physical health.
	I am **well**.	
	I feel **well**.	
	I'm feeling **well**.	
	The buffaloes looked **well**.	
	I am **good**.	The four sentences with *good* refer to emotional state but not physical health.
	I feel **good**.	
	I'm feeling **good**.	
	The buffalo looked **good** with the cliffs behind them.	
The word *good* is an adjective. It is never used as an adverb.	A trip through Theodore Roosevelt National Park is a **good** chance to see herds of buffalo in their natural state.	The word *good* is an adjective modifying *chance*.

Situations	**Correct Examples**	**Explanation**
People often make statements such as "I run real good." In reality, "real good" is never a really good combination of words!	I run really **well**.	In the first sentence, the word *really* is an adverb modifying another adverb. Since adjectives modify neither adverbs nor adjectives, you cannot use the combination *real well* or *real good*.
	My running is a really **good** example of my ability to dedicate myself to an activity.	In the second sentence, *really* is an adverb modifying *good*, which is an adjective that is modifying *example*.
The word *bad* is an adjective.	That's a **bad** picture of me with the buffalo since I look like I am afraid for my life.	The adjective *bad* modifies the noun *picture*.
Sometimes a sentence seems like it should take the adverb *badly* when it actually needs the adjective *bad*. The linking verbs *be*, *feel*, *look*, and *sound* can all be followed by the adjective *bad*.	I am **bad** when it comes to being on time.	Each of these sentences uses *bad* correctly since their verbs are linking verbs.
	I felt **bad** about missing the first herd of buffalo.	
	The land looks **bad**, but the buffalo seem to be able to find food.	
	Buffalo might sound **bad**, but they are really calm animals.	

Situations	Correct Examples	Explanation
The word *badly* is an adverb.	I chose **badly** when I walked between a mother buffalo and her baby.	The adverb *badly* modifies the verb *chose*. The adverb *badly* usually answers the question *how?*, as it does in this case—How did I choose? (badly)

Exercise 1

1. Use each of the following words in a sentence and identify the usage as *adjective* or *adverb*:

- beautiful
- quietly
- low
- luckily
- sweetly
- better
- finest
- never
- good
- well
- bad
- badly

Exercise 2

1. Take this quiz online to see if you can correctly identify adjectives and adverbs.

2. Edit the following paragraph by correcting the errors in comparative and superlative adjectives. Then check your work by submitting to Grammarly.

Our argument started on the most sunny afternoon that I have ever experienced. Max and I were sitting on my front stoop when I started it. I told him that my dog, Jacko, was more smart than his dog, Merlin. I could not help myself. Merlin never came when he was called, and he chased his tail and barked at rocks. I told Max that Merlin was the most dumbest dog on the block. I guess I was angrier about a bad grade that I received, so I decided to pick on poor little Merlin. Even though Max insulted Jacko too, I felt I had been more mean. The next day I apologized to Max and brought Merlin some of Jacko's treats. When Merlin placed his paw on my knee and licked my hand, I was the most sorry person on the block.

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41. Identifying Clarity Issues

DR. KAREN PALMER

Consider this sentence: "For her birthday, Megan received an attractive woman's briefcase." The modifier "attractive" is in an awkward position. The person who wrote this sentence most likely intended to suggest that the briefcase was attractive. However, people reading it or listening to it might easily assume that the briefcase was intended for (or already belonged to) an attractive woman. This is because the modifier, "attractive" is located in the wrong place in the sentence—it is misplaced.

A modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that clarifies or describes another word, phrase, or clause. Sometimes writers use modifiers incorrectly, leading to strange and unintentionally humorous sentences. If any of these errors occurs, readers can no longer read smoothly. Instead, they become stumped trying to figure out *what* the writer meant to say. A writer's goal must always be to communicate clearly and to avoid distracting the reader with strange sentences or awkward sentence constructions. The good news is that these errors can be easily overcome.

Three categories of modifier problems include misplaced modifiers, dangling modifiers, and split infinitives. These three categories, explained in the following subsections, are all similar because they all involve misplacing words or phrases. Understanding the differences between these categories should help you be on the lookout for such mistakes in your writing and that of your peers.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

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Misplaced Modifiers

A misplaced modifier is a modifier that is placed too far from the word or words it modifies. Misplaced modifiers make the sentence awkward and sometimes unintentionally humorous.

Incorrect: She wore a bicycle helmet on her head *that was too large*.

Correct: She wore a bicycle helmet *that was too large* on her head.

- Notice in the incorrect sentence it sounds as if her head was too large! Of course, the writer is referring to the helmet, not to the person's head. The corrected version of the sentence clarifies the writer's meaning.

The easiest way to clarify which word is being modified in a sentence is to place the modifier close to the word it modifies. Whenever possible, it is best to place a modifier immediately before or after the modified word.

Look at the following two examples:

Incorrect: They bought a kitten for my brother *they call Shadow*.

Correct: They bought a kitten *they call Shadow* for my brother.

- In the incorrect sentence, it seems that the brother's name is *Shadow*. That's because the modifier is too far from the word it modifies, which is *kitten*.

Incorrect: The patient was referred to the physician *with stomach pains*.

Correct: The patient *with stomach pains* was referred to the physician.

- The incorrect sentence reads as if it is the physician who has stomach pains! What the writer means is that the patient has stomach pains.

Tip

Simple modifiers like *only*, *almost*, *just*, *nearly*, and *barely* often get used incorrectly because writers often stick them in the wrong place.

Confusing: Tyler *almost* found fifty cents under the sofa cushions.

Repaired: Tyler found *almost* fifty cents under the sofa cushions.

- How do you *almost* find something? Either you find

it or you do not. The repaired sentence is much clearer.

Dangling Modifier

A dangling modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that describes something that has been left out of the sentence. When there is nothing that the word, phrase, or clause can modify, the modifier is said to dangle.

Incorrect: *Riding in the sports car*, the world whizzed by rapidly.

Correct: As Jane was *riding in the sports car*, the world whizzed by rapidly.

- In the incorrect sentence, *riding in the sports car* is dangling. The reader is left wondering who is riding in the sports car. The writer must tell the reader!

Often a dangling modifier modifies the subject of a sentence, but the placement of the modifier makes it seem as though it modifies another noun in the sentence. Other times, a dangling modifier actually modifies someone or something other than the subject of the sentence, but the wording makes it appear as though the dangling modifier modifies the subject. The resulting image

conveyed can often be rather confusing, humorous, or just embarrassing.

Incorrect: *Walking home at night*, the trees looked like spooky aliens.

Correct: As Jonas was *walking home at night*, the trees looked like spooky aliens.

Correct: The trees looked like spooky aliens as Jonas was *walking home at night*.

- In the incorrect sentence *walking home at night* is dangling. Who is walking home at night? Jonas. Note that there are two different ways the dangling modifier can be corrected.

Incorrect: To win the spelling bee, Luis and Gerard should join our team.

Correct: If we want to win the spelling bee this year, Luis and Gerard should join our team.

- In the incorrect sentence, *to win the spelling bee* is dangling. Who wants to win the spelling bee? We do!

Tip

The following three steps will help you quickly spot a dangling modifier:

1. Look for an *-ing* modifier at the beginning of your sentence or another modifying phrase:

Painting for three hours at night, the kitchen was finally finished by Maggie. (*Painting* is the *-ing* modifier.)

2. Underline the first noun that follows it:

Painting for three hours at night, the kitchen was finally finished by Maggie.

3. Make sure the modifier and noun go together logically. If they do not, it is very likely you have a dangling modifier.

After identifying the dangling modifier, rewrite the sentence.

Painting for three hours at night, *Maggie* finally finished the kitchen.

Split Infinitives

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=134#oembed-2

Splitting infinitives refers to placing a word between "to" and a verb, as in "Miss Clark set out to clearly define the problem." Technically, you should not place the word "clearly" between "to" and "define."

This grammar rule came about in the eighteenth century when people held Latin up as the language standard. Since Latin did not have two-word infinitives, such as "to define," grammarians wanted to preserve the unity of the two-word infinitives in an effort to make English more Latin-like.

The use of split infinitives, however, has become increasingly common over the decades (e.g., "*to boldly go* where no man has gone before"—*Star Trek*, 1966). In fact, split infinitives are gaining acceptance in professional and academic writing as well. For your purposes, knowing what split infinitives are will help you know your options as a writer.

Incorrect: I'm going **to quickly run** to the store so I'll be back when you get home.

Infinitive link: "to run"

Splitter link: "quickly"

Correct: *I'm going to run to the store quickly so I'll be back when you get home.*

Preventing Mixed Constructions

Switching grammatical direction midway through a sentence can result in writing mixed constructions, which make a sentence difficult to understand. Mixed constructions often take place when you start out a sentence with a thought, shift your thinking midway through it, and then fail to reread your completed or revised thought upon completing the sentence.

Another common cause of mixed constructions is the revision process itself, especially as it occurs in word processing. When you are proofreading and making changes, it is easy to change a part of a sentence without realizing that the change does not mesh with the rest of the construction. Sometimes mixed construction sentences can be fixed by moving words around, adding words to the sentence, or both. Other times, the best repair is to turn the sentence into two or more sentences.

Look at the following examples of mixed constructions, and consider the confusion that could result.

Stripping, sanding, and painting, I will turn this chest into a real treasure.

Correction

Stripping, sanding, and painting this chest will turn it into a real treasure.

OR

This chest will turn into a real treasure once I've stripped, sanded, and painted it.

Here's another example:

Although the swimmers practiced twice a day, lost their first six meets.

Correction

Although the swimmers practiced twice a day, the team still lost its first six meets.

OR

The swimmers practiced twice a day, but the team still lost its first six meets.

Exercise 1

1. Rewrite the following the sentences to correct the dangling modifiers.

1. Bent over backward, the posture was very challenging.
2. Making discoveries about new creatures, this is an interesting time to be a biologist.
3. Walking in the dark, the picture fell off the wall.
4. Playing a guitar in the bedroom, the cat was seen under the bed.
5. Packing for a trip, a cockroach scurried down the hallway.
6. While looking in the mirror, the towel swayed in the breeze.
7. While driving to the veterinarian's office, the dog nervously whined.
8. The priceless painting drew large crowds when walking into the museum.
9. Piled up next to the bookshelf, I chose a romance novel.
10. Chewing furiously, the gum fell out of my mouth.

Exercise 2

1. Correct the following sentences.

1. The young lady was walking the dog on the

telephone.

2. I heard that there was a robbery on the evening news.
3. Uncle Louie bought a running stroller for the baby that he called "Speed Racer."
4. Rolling down the mountain, the explorer stopped the boulder with his powerful foot.
5. We are looking for a babysitter for our precious six-year-old who doesn't drink or smoke and owns a car.
6. The teacher served cookies to the children wrapped in aluminum foil.
7. The mysterious woman walked toward the car holding an umbrella.
8. We returned the wine to the waiter that was sour.
9. Charlie spotted a stray puppy driving home from work.
10. I ate nothing but a cold bowl of noodles for dinner.

Exercise 3

1. Each of the following sentences has a misplaced modifier, dangling modifier, or split infinitive. Identify each occurrence and then rewrite the sentences to eliminate the modifier problems and the split infinitives.

1. While eating lunch, a mouse ran by my foot.
2. A kid ran by, leading a bulldog wearing a ball

uniform.

3. Alex decided to calmly ask for a raise.
4. Hopping around the backyard, I saw a tiny bunny.
5. While typing my paper, the computer froze.

2. Rewrite these sentences to eliminate the mixed constructions:

1. After the Bears won the basketball game, because they played their best ball of the season.
2. Whether in online or face-to-face classes, therefore college students can benefit from a teacher-free discussion area.
3. Police work requires an ability to handle difficult situations will probably do well in this type of work.

3. Rewrite the following paragraph correcting all the misplaced and dangling modifiers.

> I bought a fresh loaf of bread for my sandwich shopping in the grocery store. Wanting to make a delicious sandwich, the mayonnaise was thickly spread. Placing the cold cuts on the bread, the lettuce was placed on top. I cut the sandwich in half with a knife turning on the radio. Biting into the sandwich, my favorite song blared loudly in my ears. Humming and chewing, my sandwich went down smoothly. Smiling, my sandwich will be made again, but next time I will add cheese.

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42. Identifying Mechanics Problems

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It's likely that you have a fair sense of proper mechanics in written texts, but even the best writers can benefit from a quick brush up or a quick reference now and then. This chapter provides an overview of writing issues involving spelling, capitalizing, and abbreviating words; using symbols; writing numbers; and using italics.

Spelling Errors

Recognizing Your Common Spelling Mistakes

Regardless of how good a speller you are, knowing the type of spelling errors you are likely to make can help you correct the errors.

Common Causes of Spelling Errors	Examples	Ways to Deal with the Problems
Some words do not follow common spelling rules.	*i* before *e* except after *c*, so is it height or hieght?	Know the rules, know some of the exceptions, and use a dictionary or spell checker if you have the slightest hesitation.
You interchange homophones without realizing it.	I want to go **to**.	Be extra careful with each homophone you use; learn the commonly confused pairs of homophones.
You often do not recognize that a word has a homophone or you do not know which homophone to use.	The cat chased its **tale** for an hour.	Read through your work once (preferably aloud) looking (and listening) only for homophone issues. Ask someone to proofread your work.
You misspell some words almost every time you use them.	I can't make a **comittment** today.	Keep a list of your problem words where you can easily glance at them.
You find words from other languages confusing since they do not follow standard English spellings.	I'm going to make an **orderve** for the party.	Add foreign words you often use to your list of problem words. Look the others up each time you use them.

Can Spell Check Help?

The combination of extensive computer use and spell checkers have changed the way we look at spelling. Today's software programs often provide both manual and automatic spell checking. Manual spell checking lets you go through the entire document or selected text from it and checks for spellings not present in the dictionary of reference. Automatic spell checking underlines spelling errors for you (usually in red). By right-clicking on the misspelled word, you'll be given one or more correctly spelled alternatives. When you find the spelling you think is correct, clicking on that word will change the text automatically. Sometimes automatic spell checking underlines words that aren't misspelled, but it rarely misses words that are. So if you check all the marked words, you can "spell check as you write."

Just make sure you don't rely on spell check to have a human eye. Consider the following sentence: "It was sunny win I drove of this mourning, so I lift my umbrela in the car port." If you use a spell checker on this sentence, you will be alerted to fix the problem with "umbrela." You won't, however, be given any indication that "win," "mourning," "of," "lift," and "car port" are problems. Spell checkers have no way to tag misspelled words if the misspelling forms another word, incorrectly used homophones, or compound words that are presented as two words. So even though spell checkers are great tools, do not give them the sole responsibility of making sure your spelling is accurate.

Spell checkers can also suggest the wrong first choice to replace a misspelled word. Consider the following sentence: "My shert was wet cleer thrugh to my skin, and my shos sloshed with every step." A spell checker might list "though" as a first-choice for "thrugh" and "through" as the second choice, thus forcing you to know that

"though" is not right and to look on down the list and choose "through."

As a rule, only very common proper nouns are part of the dictionaries on which a spell checker is based. Consequently, you are left to check your spelling of those words. Many software programs allow users to add words to the dictionary. This permission lets you incorporate proper nouns you use often into the dictionary so you will not have to address them during a spell check. You might, for example, add your name or your workplace to the dictionary. Besides adding proper nouns, you can also add your list of other words you've commonly misspelled in the past.

Strategies for Spelling Success

1. Learn Common Spelling Rules

Although they all have exceptions, common spelling rules exist and have become known as common rules because they are true most of the time. It is in your best interest to know both the rules and the common exceptions to the rules.

- **Rule:** *i* before *e*

  Examples: belief, chief, friend, field, fiend, niece

  Exceptions: either, foreign, height, leisure

- **Rule:** ...except after *c*

  Examples: receive, ceiling

  Exceptions: conscience, financier, science, species

- **Rule:** ...and in long-*a* words like neighbor and weigh

  Examples: eight, feint, their, vein

- **Rule:** In short-vowel accented syllables that end in a single consonant, double the consonant before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel.

  Examples: beginning, mopped, runner, sitting, submitting

  Exceptions: boxing, buses ("busses" is also acceptable), circuses, taxes

- **Rule:** There is no doubling if the syllable ends in two consonants, the last syllable is not accented, or the syllable does not have a short vowel.

Examples: asking, curling; focused, opening; seated, waited

- **Rule:** With words or syllables that end in a silent *e*, drop the *e* before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel.

  Examples: achieving, baking, exciting, riding, surprising

- **Rule:** If the suffix doesn't start with a vowel, keep the silent *e*.

  Examples: achievement, lately

  Exceptions: hoeing, mileage, noticeable, judgment, ninth, truly

- **Rule:** With syllables that end in *y*, change the *y* to *i* before adding a suffix (including the plural *–es*).

  Examples: carries, cities, dries, enviable, ladies, luckiest, beautiful, bountiful

  Exceptions: annoyance, babyish

- **Rule:** Keep the final *y* when it is preceded by a vowel.

  Examples: keys, monkeys, plays

- **Rule:** ...and when the suffix begins with *i*, since English words do not typically have two *i*'s in a row.

  Examples: babyish, carrying, marrying

  Exceptions: skiing

- **Rule:** When forming the plural of a proper noun, just add –s unless the proper noun ends in *ch*, *s*, *sh*, *x*, or *z*.

  Examples: Bartons, Blairs, Hubbards, Murphys, Bushes, Collinses, Lynches, Martinezes, Wilcoxes

- **Rule:** When forming plurals of hyphenated nouns, use the plural form of the main word, regardless of where it falls within the word.

  Examples: brothers-in-law, clearing-houses, ex-wives, not-for-profits, runners-up, T-shirts

- **Rule:** Add –*es* to words ending in *s*, *sh*, *ch*, *x*, or *z*.

  Examples: classes, dishes, couches, quizzes, taxes

  Exceptions: epochs, monarchs (*ch* spelling makes *k* sound)

- **Rule:** For words ending in a consonant and an *o*, add *–es*.

  Examples: heroes, potatoes, tomatoes, zeroes

  Exceptions: memos, photos, zeros (also acceptable)

- **Rule:** For words ending in a vowel and an *o*, add *–s*.

  Examples: patios, radios, zoos

- **Rule:** For words ending in *f* or *fe*, either change the *f* to *v* and add *–s* or *–es* or just add *–s* with no changes.

  Examples: knives, leaves OR cuffs, roofs

- **Rule:** Some words have whole word changes for the plural forms.

  Examples: children, feet, geese, mice, women

- **Rule:** Some words have the same spellings for singular and plural forms.

  Examples: deer, fish, sheep

2. Beware of Homophones

Homophones are words that sound alike but have different spellings and different meanings. The best way to handle these words is to view them as completely separate words by connecting the spellings and the meanings rather than relying totally on the sounds. You can make mnemonics (memory clues) to use with words that are a problem for you. Here's a small sampling of the thousand or more homophones in the English language:

ad/add	him/hymn	rose/rows
ant/aunt	hole/whole	sail/sale
band/banned	hour/our	scene/seen
be/bee	in/inn	sew/so/sow
beat/beet	knead/need	sight/site
billed/build	knew/new	soar/sore
bold/bowled	knight/night	some/sum
bridal/bridle	lead/led	son/sun
ceiling/sealing	lessen/lesson	suite/sweet
cents/scents/sense	loan/lone	tail/tale
chews/choose	maid/made	tea/tee
clothes/close	might/mite	their/there/they're
creak/creek	miner/minor	throne/thrown
crews/cruise	none/nun	toe/tow
days/daze	pail/pale	time/thyme
dear/deer	pain/pane	to/too/two
die/dye	pair/pare/pear	undo/undue
ewe/yew/you	passed/past	vain/vane/vein
feat/feet	patience/patients	very/vary
fairy/ferry	peace/piece	wail/wale/whale
flour/flower	pedal/peddle/petal	ware/wear/where
for/fore/four	plain/plane	weather/whether
genes/jeans	poor/pore/pour	weak/week
groan/grown	principal/principle	which/witch
guessed/guest	rain/reign/rein	whine/wine
hair/hare	read/red	wood/would
heal/heel/he'll	ring/wring	yoke/yolk
hear/here	road/rode/rowed	your/you're

3. Use Mnemonics

The following list includes some English words that are commonly used and often misspelled. You, personally, might or might not have problems with many of the words in the list. The important issue is for you to identify your problem words and negate the problems. One trick for remembering the words that you have trouble with is to create mnemonics—mind tricks that help you remember how the word is spelled. When you were in elementary school, for example, you might have learned the difference between principle and principal by remembering that the principal is your pal.

- *calendar*: Remember that a calendar is made up of many *da*ys.
- *conscience*: If you *con* people about your *science* work, your conscience should bother you.
- *forty*: *For*ty people are hiding in the fort.
- *icicle*: "Icy Icy Ellie" ("*IC IC LE*") is a cold cold woman.
- *gauge*: You use a *ga*s *ga*uge.
- *judgment*: The *g*eneral *m*anager might pass judgment, but the lowly *e*mployee won't even be there.
- *ninth*: Nin*e*th…Take the *e* out so you can use it for the tenth.
- *quiet*: You need to be *qui*(*e*nd)(talking).
- *scissors*: She used some sharp s(*c*ut)iss(off)rs.
- *tomorrow*: There's only one *m*orning, but every day there are two *rr*ed skies (sunrise and sunset).
- *weird*: Halloween last year was *w*ild and *e*erie.

Of course, these mnemonics are not universal. Some of the suggestions on this list might seem corny or even incomprehensible to you. The point is to find some that work for you.

4. Dealing with Words from Other Languages

English is an ever-evolving language. Part of this ongoing evolution is the incorporation of words from other languages. These words often do not follow typical English spelling rules, and thus require extra attention. This chart shows a very small portion of such words that are used in English.

Borrowed Word	Source	Borrowed Word	Source
ad hoc	Latin	en route	French
adios	Spanish	et cetera (etc.)	Latin
armadillo	Spanish	faux pas	French
art deco	French	fiancé	French
attaché	French	frankfurter	German
ballet	French	garbanzo	Spanish
bon appétit	French	gourmet	French
bratwurst	German	homo sapiens	Latin
burrito	Spanish	hors d'oeuvre	French
café	French	incommunicado	Latin
chauffeur	French	jalapeño	Spanish
Chihuahua	Spanish	kaput	German
concierge	French	kindergarten	German
cul-de-sac	French	margarita	Spanish
curriculum vitae	Latin	megahertz	German

Borrowed Word	Source	Borrowed Word	Source
Dachshund	German	née	French
déjà vu	French	per capita	Latin
diesel	German	résumé	French

Many common words in British and American English are spelled differently. For example, American English words ending in *–er* are often spelled with *–re* in British English. American English tends to use *–yze* or *–ize* while British English prefers *–yse* or *–ise*. Words that include the letter *o* in American English are often spelled with an *ou* in British English. American English uses *–ck* or *–tion* as word endings, whereas British English often uses *–que* or *–xion*.

American English	British English	American English	British English
anemia	anaemia	fetus	foetus
analyze	analyse	humor	humour
anesthetic	anaesthetic	judgment	judgement
apologize	apologise	inflection	inflexion
canceled	cancelled	labor	labour
center	centre	licorice	liquorice
check	cheque	mold	mould
civilization	civilisation	mustache	moustache
color	colour	pajamas	pyjamas
connection	connexion	realize	realise
cozy	cosy	smolder	smoulder
criticize	criticise	theater	theatre
defense	defence	traveled	travelled

Some words from other languages have plural formations that appear unusual within the English language. A good approach is to simply memorize these plural formations. If you don't want to memorize them, remember that they are unusual and that you will need to look them up.

Singular Spelling	Plural Spelling	Singular Spelling	Plural Spelling
alumnus	alumni	datum	data
analysis	analyses	medium	media
antenna	antennae	memorandum	memoranda
appendix	appendices	phenomenon	phenomena
basis	bases	radius	radii
chateau	chateaux	stimulus	stimuli
criterion	criteria	syllabus	syllabi (Americanized: syllabuses)
crisis	crises	thesis	theses

Exercise 1

1. Using words from the lists in this section and other words you know you have trouble spelling, make a personal spelling checklist. Include only words that you find yourself having trouble spelling.

2. Choose ten words that you routinely use and struggle to spell correctly. Create clues to help you remember how to spell the words. Post your clues to a common site so that you can share them with your classmates.

Using Capital Letters

With the advent of new technology, such as text messaging, IM (instant messaging), and social media forums, the reliance on traditional standard capital letters has been relaxed in informal settings. This laxity got its start as a means of expediency since the use of capital letters required additional efforts for people using only a couple of fingers or thumbs for typing words. Rather quickly, the use of abbreviations and lack of capital letters became fashionable—almost like a status symbol indicating a person's social networking awareness. Despite this now common exclusion of

capital letters in personal situations, capital letters are still the proper choice in professional and academic settings. If you are someone who writes far more often on a cell phone than on a computer, you are likely to benefit from a brush up on capitalization rules for those occasions when you are composing more official documents.

Proper Nouns, Trade Names, I, and O

Some words are capitalized whenever they are used. Proper nouns, trade names, the pronoun "I," and "O" when used as an interjection make up this category of words.

Proper nouns include names of specific persons, places, or things. Words that are typically common nouns can become proper nouns when they are used as part of a name.

Common vs Proper Nouns

Common	Proper
teacher	Mrs. Fenora
president	Abraham Lincoln
state	Arizona
store	Wal-Mart
street	1432 W. Cherry Ave.
ship	USS *California*
day	Tuesday

Trade Names

Trade names include names of specific companies and products.

Common	Proper
cereal	Kellogg's
television	Panasonic
store	Starbucks
phone	iPhone
car	Chevrolet
company	Amazon

I and O

The letters “I” and “O” each represent words that are always capitalized.

- I (as a proper noun): If you have time, I will go with you.
- O (as a vocative in direct address): O you who are about to enter here, beware!

First Word in a Sentence

Capitalizing the first word in a sentence appears fairly straightforward at first glance. But there are actually some variations you should keep in mind.

Capitalize the first word of a standard, simple sentence.	**W**e usually start mowing our lawn in March.
Capitalize the first word in a sentence of dialogue.	Beth said, "**P**lease help me lift this box."
Do not capitalize the first word of dialogue that continues after the speaker's name when the sentence has not yet ended.	"Please," Beth said, "help me lift this box."
Capitalize the first word in a quoted sentence when it is written in dialogue formation.	Ellery Jones noted, "**O**nline education is here to stay."
Do not capitalize the first word in quoted text when it is imbedded in an existing sentence.	Ellery Jones agrees that online education is "here to stay."
Do not capitalize the first word of a sentence that follows a colon, unless the colon introduces two or more sentences.	Sports carry a lot of weight at our school: the football program is the only program that is funded at 100 percent each year.
Capitalize stand-alone sentences within parentheses.	Order your binders ahead of time. (**Y**ou'll need one for each course.)
Do not capitalize sentences within parentheses if they are included as part of another sentence.	Order your binders ahead of time (one for each course).
Capitalize the first word of continuation questions.	Are you attending on the eighth? **T**he ninth? **T**he tenth?
Do not capitalize the first letter of a noncapitalized proper noun even if it falls at the beginning of a sentence. (Generally try not to place such words at the beginning of sentences.)	**i**Phones took the market by storm. OR The iPhone took the market by storm.

Defer to the capitalization used in poetry or in other sources. (In some cases, the poem will not capitalize the first word of each line.)	**I** think that I shall never see **A** poem lovely as a tree **A** tree whose hungry mouth is prest **A**gainst the earth's sweet flowing breast… from "Trees" by Joyce Kilmer

Key Words in Titles and Subtitles

In titles and subtitles, capitalize key words, including first words, last words, nouns, verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and adjectives. Do not capitalize articles, conjunctions, or prepositions unless they are in the initial position (either at the beginning of the entire title or at the beginning of the phrase after a colon if there is one).

"Stretched: The Busy Days and Nights of Women Who Work Tirelessly from Home"

Stretched, Busy: adjectives

Days, Nights, Women, Home: nouns

Who: (relative) pronoun

Work: verb

The: article in initial position after colon

and, of , from: conjunction and two prepositions in medial positions

Abbreviations

Capitalize abbreviations of proper nouns, such as the following:

- Schools: UNL, ISU, U of I
- Government agencies: USDA, CIA, FBI
- Countries and states: USA, NY, TX
- Organizations: BSA, AFS
- Corporations: IBM, AT&T
- Television and radio stations: NBC, CBS, WLS

Bulleted Items

If the items in a bulleted list are sentences, capitalize the first word of each item, as follows:

Semester exam schedule:

- **S**emester exams for M-W-F classes will be given on December 12.
- **S**emester exams for T-Th classes will be given on December 13.
- **S**emester exams for once-a-week classes will be given as arranged by the professor.

If the items are not sentences and are not continuations of a sentence stem, capitalize the first word of each item, as follows:

Semester exam schedule:

- **C**lasses held on M-W-F: December 12
- **C**lasses held on T-Th: December 13
- **C**lasses held once-a-week: As arranged by instructor

If the items are continuations of a sentence stem, do not capitalize the first word unless it happens to be a proper noun.

Semester exams will be held on

- December 12 for M-W-F classes,
- December 13 for T-Th classes,
- a date arranged by the professors for once-a-week classes.

Common Misuse of Capital Letters

Avoid the unnecessary use of capital letters. As a rule, you can avoid capitalization errors by adhering to the rules for capitalization. But the following "don't capitalize" suggestions can help you to avoid making some common mistakes.

- Capitalize names of holidays and months but not seasons:

  winter, spring, summer, fall

- Do not capitalize words such as "mom" and "dad"

when they are used to talk about someone as opposed to when used as a name:

Capitalize: “What did you say, **M**om?”

Don’t capitalize: “My mom and dad came with me.”

- Do not capitalize words that are often used as part of a name when they are used in other ways:

  “My family tree includes a general, a US president, and a princess.”

- Only capitalize direction words that designate a specific location:

  Capitalize: “I live out **W**est.”

  Don’t capitalize: “I live west of Nebraska.”

- You can choose to capitalize a word for emphasis, but avoid overusing this technique since it will lessen the effect.

- Entire words and sentences written in capital letters are hard to read. Also, in online situations, this type of typing is referred to as shouting. So except in very rare situations, avoid typing in all capitals.

Abbreviating Words and Using Acronyms

Abbreviations are shortened forms of words that are used for convenience or to manage space. In its purest form, an abbreviation includes initial letters of a word followed by a period, such as "in." for "inches." However, many abbreviations skip over letters, such as "yd." for "yard," and are still written with a period. Some multiword terms are abbreviated by using the first letter of each word and are called acronyms rather than abbreviations. An example of an acronym is "FBI" for "Federal Bureau of Investigation."

Some abbreviations or acronyms require a period (etc.), but quite a few never take periods (IBM or FBI). You simply have to learn these differences through the experience of seeing specific examples in print.

You need to know two main things about abbreviations: when to use them and how to write them appropriately. The following sections will clarify these two points.

Common Abbreviations for Titles with Names

Titles that are used with names are often abbreviated—in fact, they

are almost always abbreviated. You should spell out religious, academic, and government titles in academic writing, but otherwise, use the standard abbreviations.

Common Abbreviations

Use these standard abbreviations before names: Mrs. Jones, Mr. Hernandez, Ms. Fieldston, Sen. Brown, Rev. Arles, Gen. Bradford, Dr. Borray, Rep. Anderson, Prof. Cruz, St. Francis, Sgt. Appleby

Use these standard abbreviations after names: Alex Jones, DDS; Arnold Wilson, PhD; George A. Ortiz, Jr.; George A. Ortiz, Sr.; Hannah Borray, MD; Phil Horace, BA; Millie Mance, MA; Gloria Wills, MBA; Fred Flores, CPA

Do not use an abbreviation both before and after a name: Write Dr. Joseph Pfeiffer or Joseph Pfeiffer, MD, but do *not* write Dr. Joseph Pfieffer, MD.

Spell out these titles in academic writing: Professor Robert Jones, Reverend Martin Luther King, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Senator John Smith

Do not use these title abbreviations if not attached to a name: Do not use any of these abbreviations on their own without a name. Instead spell the titles out, as in "I'm going to see the doctor after my meeting with my professor."

Commonly Used Stand-Alone Abbreviations and Acronyms

Many abbreviations and acronyms are widely used as stand-alone words. A small sampling of these abbreviations and acronyms is listed in the following tables.

Word	Abbreviation
Avenue	Ave.
Boulevard	Blvd.
chapter	ch.
company	co.
Incorporated	Inc.
January	Jan.
Katherine	Kathy
maximum	max.
miscellaneous	misc.
months	mos.
North	N.
Ohio	OH
package	pkg.
page	p.
pages	pp.

Word	Abbreviation
paid	pd.
Robert	Bob
September	Sept.
Southwest	SW
Tuesday	Tues.
University	Univ.

Phrase	Acronym
Alcoholics Anonymous	AA
Bachelor of Arts	BA
Central Intelligence Agency	CIA
digital video disk	DVD
Environmental Protection Association	EPA
Food and Drug Administration	FDA
Internal Revenue Service	IRS
Parent-Teacher Association	PTA
World Wide Web	www

Abbreviations with Numbers

Some abbreviations are used almost exclusively to describe or clarify numbers. These abbreviations should not be used as stand-alone abbreviations. In other words, you can use the dollar-sign abbreviation to write "$5.00" but not to write "I earned several $ last night." Some of these abbreviations can be used within text, such as BC, p.m., and CST. Measurement abbreviations, however, should be used only in tables, graphs, and figures and should be spelled out within continuous text. Some of these abbreviations will be addressed as symbols later in this section.

Abbreviation	Purpose/Meaning
300 BC	Before Christ
300 BCE	Before the Christian Era or Before the Common Era
1900 AD	Anno Domini (in the year of the lord)
34 m	meters
28 in.	inches
5¢	cents
6:00 p.m.	post meridiem (after noon)
1:00 a.m.	ante meridiem (before noon)
15 cm	centimeters
No. 8	number
85 lbs.	pounds
#5	number
11:30 a.m. EST	Eastern Standard Time
4 hr. 10 min. 30 sec.	hours, minutes, and seconds
4 + 3	plus

Abbreviation	Purpose/Meaning
½ = .5	equals
7 ft.	feet
7n < 21	is less than
432 ≠ 430	does not equal
44 cu. in.	cubic inches

Abbreviations in Academic Writing

Academic citations include their own set of common abbreviations. They vary somewhat depending on the citation style you're using, so always follow your specific style guidelines. Some typical academic citation abbreviations are provided here.

Abbreviation	Purpose/Meaning
anon.	anonymous
b.	born
c. or ca.	circa; about (used with dates)
ch. or chap.	chapter
d.	died
ed., eds.	editor, editors
et al.	et alia (Latin: “and others”)
illus.	illustrated
n.d.	no date available
n.p.	no publisher information available
p., pp.	page, pages
vol., vols.	volume, volumes

Topic- or Profession-Specific and Incident-Specific Abbreviations

If you are writing for an audience that is familiar with a specific vocabulary that incorporates abbreviations—for example, readers with a strong military base—you can use those abbreviations freely. But be aware when you are writing for readers who do not share that common knowledge base that you will have to spell out abbreviations.

Incident-specific abbreviations are created for use in one specific situation and thus require obvious references so the audience can understand their meaning. For example, say you are writing a story about a teacher named Mr. Nieweldowskilty. If you refer to him by his full name once and then note that students call him Mr. Niews for short and then refer to him as Mr. Niews the rest of the time, your audience can easily understand that Mr. Niews is short for Mr. Nieweldowskilty. But if you write a second story about him, you cannot assume that readers will know the abbreviated name, Mr. Niews.

Recognizing and Using

Symbols

Symbols are actually a form of abbreviating and are used widely in mathematics, on maps, and in some other situations. Here's a small sample:

75%	Percent sign
#5	Number sign
4 + 3	Plus sign
@	At sign
$5.00	Dollar sign
5¢	Cents sign
½ = .5	Equals sign
432 ≠ 430	Not equal to sign
>	Greater than
7n ≤ 21	Less than or equal sign
©	Copyright
98.6º	Degrees

Inserting Numbers into Text

Proper writing of numbers in text is rather simple as long as you are familiar with the general guidelines and the exceptions to those guidelines.

General Guidelines for Using Numbers in Text

APA Style calls for writing out numbers from one to nine in words and using numerals for all other numbers. MLA style, however, requires that all numbers that are composed of one or two words be written out in words (e.g., one hundred, thirty-six, five million), and all numbers with more than two words be written in numerals (137; 6,482; 3,500,000). There are two general exceptions in MLA:

1. If a number falls at the beginning of a sentence, it should be written out in words.
2. If both large and small numbers are used within a single sentence or passage, all should be written as numerals in order to be consistent.

Exceptions to the General Guidelines for Using Numbers in Text

Exceptions to the general guidelines are logical, and they help avoid awkward situations. These exceptions are in place in all citation formats and style sheets.

Numerals with Abbreviations

In a situation where abbreviations are used, use numerals, not number words, with the abbreviations.

- 6 in.
- 25 cm
- 125 lbs.
- 4 mos.

Numerals for Time of Day

Within text, you can use either words or numbers to write the time of day. Within a document, be consistent in your choice.

- 4:30 in the morning
- four thirty in the morning
- (but) 4:30 a.m.

Numerals in Dates

Use words to write months and numerals to write years. When the month, day, and year are all included, also use a numeral to write the day. If the year is not included, you can use either a numeral or a word to write the day. Express decades in numerals or words.

- July 23, 1985
- July 23 or July twenty-third
- the sixties or the 1960s

Numerals in Sports' Scores and Statistics

Use numerals to write sports' scores and sports' statistics.

- The Bulls have a 34–6 record.
- The score was 4 to 3.

Numerals Used Side by Side

To avoid confusion when using two numbers side by side, spell out one of the numbers and use a numeral for the other one. Generally, you should write out the number with fewer letters and leave the longer one as a numeral.

- Two 20-page papers
- 24 three-pound bags

Numerals in Addresses and Phone Numbers

Generally, you should use numerals in addresses and phone numbers. One exception is that, when a street is a numeral, you can either use the numeral or spell out the word.

- 3545 N. Willow
- Denver, CO 80202
- Fifth Street or 5th Street
- 210-555-7485

Numerals as Part of Proper Nouns

Numbers that are part of proper nouns should always be written as they appear.

- Psychology 101
- Room 222
- 7-Up
- Fifth Third Bank
- Second City

Numerals as Divisions of Books and Documents

Use numerals to indicate page, volume, chapter, unit, and section numbers as well as other divisions that are used to organize written text.

- Section 2, Chapter 4
- page 8
- Act 2, Scene 7
- Volume 2, Unit 7, Item 12

Numerals in Decimals and Percentages

As a rule, numerals are used to express decimals and percentages.

- 34.72
- 75 percent

Numerals Used for Identification

Use numerals when writing identification numbers, such as the serial number for a computer, a driver's license number, or a social security number.

- Serial: 25485359243642
- Driver's license: 245Y823

Numerals in Money Amounts

When a money amount is briefly mentioned in a piece of writing that is not necessarily about money, spell the money amount out. However, if you are writing about money or are writing text that will reference money amounts on multiple occasions, use numerals and symbols.

- Offhand reference: ten dollars
- Repeated reference: $10 or $10.00

Punctuating Numerals

When writing numerals, use a decimal point to separate dollars and cents and use a comma to divide numbers of one thousand or more into units of three digits. Do not use these punctuation marks when writing numbers in words.

45,329	forty-five thousand three hundred twenty-nine
$12.43	twelve dollars and forty-three cents

Using Italics

Traditionally, underlining was used as a means of emphasis in handwritten text. Since the advent of the personal computer, italics have replaced underlining. If you are creating text by hand or by some other means where italics are not available, use underlining instead of italics.

Italicize Titles of Published

Texts, Lengthy Works, and Legal Cases

As a rule, you should italicize the titles of published works, but you should not italicize parts of published works, such as a poem within a book, or unpublished works. Some exceptions that should be italicized include lengthy works, such as a very long poem within a book, and legal cases. Some exceptions that should not be italicized include titles of published short stories and titles of television shows. Works that are not italicized are typically placed in quotation marks. Some other exceptions that should not be italicized include long religious works, such as the Bible and the Koran, and easily recognizable texts, such as the US Constitution.

Italicize Titles of Books, Magazines, and Newspapers

- *The Runaway Jury*
- *People*
- *The New York Times*

Italicize Titles of Long Poems, Plays, and Television Series (but Not Individual Television Shows)

- *The Odyssey*
- *Billy Elliot the Musical*
- *The Mentalist*

Italicize Names of Spacecraft, Aircraft, and Ships

- *Apollo* 13
- *Boeing* 777
- the *Niña*, *Pinta*, and *Santa María*

Italicize Foreign Words Used in English Sentences

- We would like to develop a very positive *esprit de corps* within the company.
- His actions over the past month have made him *persona non grata* within my group of friends.

Italicize Words, Letters, and Numbers That Are Called Out or Emphasized

- She is, by the very definition, *irascible*.
- Make a list of words that begin with *hu*.
- The numbers 36, 84, and 300 are all divisible by 6.

Italicize Scientific Names

- *Homo sapiens* are members of the *Animalia* kingdom.

Do Not Over-italicize

You might be tempted to use italics to emphasize a key phrase, word, or idea even though it doesn't fall into any these categories. Fight off the temptation since an overuse of italics is distracting for readers.

Attribution

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43. Identifying Punctuation Problems

DR. KAREN PALMER

Almost everyone finds punctuation challenging at least occasionally. Although it might be unrealistic to know the correct punctuation in every situation, you can certainly learn to make the correct choice most of the time. When you are uncertain, don't guess. Handbooks such as this one, as well as a variety of websites, are close at hand. Take the time to look up a rule when you are not sure.

Exercise 1

1. How well do you know your punctuation? Try this test to find out!

Sometimes, as with many other features of grammar and mechanics, you may look up a rule and find more than one answer or even a raging debate about what is currently acceptable. That's because usage (the way people actually use a living language) changes over time, thus muddying the rules. But by doing your research, at least the choices you make will be within an accepted range of options.

Using Commas Properly

Commas are to readers as road signs are to drivers. Just as a driver might take a wrong turn if a sign is missing or misplaced, a reader cannot traverse a sentence meaningfully when commas are not properly in place.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=138#oembed-1

Using Commas with Introductory Words, Phrases, and Clauses

Commas set introductory words, phrases, and clauses apart from the rest of a sentence. This separation serves to signal a reader to pause and to give words a chance to have meaning without interference from other words.

Single-word example: Afterward, fans came backstage and surrounded the actors and actresses.

Phrase example: Without an invitation, fans swarmed backstage in excitement.

Clause example: After the fans began to head to their

cars, the actors and actresses took their first break in two hours.

Using Commas in a Series

A series is a list embedded in a sentence with a conjunction, typically the word "and," between the last two items in the list. Without the commas, a series can be quite confusing.

Series in a sentence without commas: Penny's costume included a long blue dress a red bonnet black lace-up shoes a heavy gold pendant on a chain and a very-full petticoat.

With a little work, a reader can possibly identify the five items that made up Penny's costume. But the sentence is confusing and requires too much work to read. Inserting commas makes reading this sentence very easy and clear.

Series in a sentence with commas: Penny's costume included a long blue dress, a red bonnet, black lace-up shoes, a heavy gold pendant on a chain, and a very-full petticoat.

Some usage experts promote the idea that the comma immediately before the conjunction is optional since it has fallen out of universal use. However, it is still wise to use it to avoid inadvertent confusion.

Using Commas in Compound Sentences

When a sentence is made up of two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *for*, *nor/or*, *so*, *yet*), a comma is needed between the two clauses. Remember that an independent clause must have both a subject and a verb and be able to serve as a stand-alone sentence.

Example of a compound sentence with two independent clauses: Mitch arrived an hour early for the first rehearsal, and he spent the time looking through the costume closets.

Example of a sentence with two clauses, one of which is not independent: Mitch arrived an hour early for the first rehearsal and spent the time looking through the costume closets.

Using Commas to Isolate Nonessential Words within a Sentence

To create interest and increase clarification, you may want to add words and phrases to basic sentences. These additional pieces often function as add-ons that are not essential to the core meaning of the sentence and do not change the meaning of the sentence. You should separate such words and phrases from the rest of the sentence. Some examples include adjective phrases and clauses, words of direct address, interjections, and appositives.

Adjective Phrases and Clauses

Some adjective phrases and clauses are essential to the meaning of a sentence and some are not. If they are essential, no comma is needed. If the meaning of the sentence would be intact if the phrase or clause were removed, a comma is needed. You can identify adjective clauses since they often begin with the relative pronouns *where*, *when*, *which*, *who*, *whom*, *whose*, or *that*.

Comma needed: *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which was Malik's first play, lasted almost two hours.

A comma is needed because, even without the adjective phrase, the reader would know that the play lasted for two hours.

Commas not needed: Actors who give constant effort can inspire others in the cast to do well.

A comma is not needed because the phrase "who give constant efforts" clarifies which actors are being referenced within the sentence. Since the sentence meaning would not be complete without the phrase, no comma is needed.

Words of Direct Address

Some sentences name the person being spoken to. A person's name that is used in this way is called a noun of direct address. Since naming the person does not change the meaning of the sentence, you should separate such a name from the rest of the sentence.

Your performance, Penny, was absolutely amazing!

Interjections

Some words interrupt the flow of a sentence but do not actually change the meaning of the sentence. Such words are known as interjections and should be set apart from the rest of the sentence with commas. Aside from "yes" and "no," most interjections express a sudden emotion.

- Yes, I am going to the Saturday matinee performance.
- I suppose you will think it is a problem if I don't arrive until a few minutes before the curtain goes up, huh?
- There is a chance, drat, that I might miss the first few minutes.

Appositives

Appostives are nouns or noun phrases that restate an immediately preceding noun or noun phrase.

> Malik's first play, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, had six performances.

Malik only has one "first" play, so the title of the play is a restatement of "Malik's first play." Since this sentence is complete with all meaning intact even if the words "*To Kill a Mockingbird*" were removed, the words need to be separated with commas.

> My husband, Kyle, has visited the *To Kill a Mockingbird* museum in Monroeville.

Since "my husband" identifies a single person, the name "Kyle" merely restates his identity and thus adds no new information. Therefore, "Kyle" should be set apart with commas.

Using Commas with Coordinate Adjectives

You should place a comma between coordinate adjectives that are not joined with the word "and." Coordinate adjectives are double adjectives and can be joined with the word "and," rearranged, or both and still work fine.

Sentence with coordinate adjectives: Atticus is a good role for Malik since Malik is a tall, stately guy.

This sentence requires commas since Malik could be "a stately, tall guy," or he could be "tall and stately," or he could be "stately and tall."

Do not use commas between cumulative adjectives. Cumulative adjectives build on each other, modify the next one in line, and do not make sense if rearranged.

Sentence with cumulative adjectives: Atticus Finch is a dedicated defense attorney.

This is a cumulative adjective situation because it would not work to rearrange the adjectives to say "defense dedicated attorney" or "dedicated and defense attorney." Therefore, no commas are needed in this example; the adjective "defense" modifies "attorney" and the adjective "dedicated" modifies "defense attorney."

Using Commas with Dialogue and Direct Quotations

You should use a comma prior to or just after the quotations in dialogue. Also, use a comma before a direct quotation when preceded by a verb such as declares, says, or writes.

Comma before dialogue: Jem said**,** "There goes the meanest man that ever took a breath of life."

Comma after dialogue: "The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience**,**" said Atticus Finch.

No comma needed before or after a direct quotation that is not preceded by a verb: According to Miss Maudie Atkinson, Atticus "can make somebody's will so airtight you can't break it."

No comma needed before or after an indirect quotation: Atticus told Jem that it was a sin to kill a mockingbird.

Using Commas When

Inserting Details into Text

Details such as dates, addresses, geographic names, company names, letter and e-mail components, titles that go with names, and numbers all require commas when used in text and sometimes when used alone.

Dates

When a date is written in month–day–year order in isolation, you need to use a comma between the day and year.

> December 25, 1962

When a date is written in month–day–year order within a sentence and does not fall at the end of the sentence, you need to use a comma between the day and year and between the year and the rest of the sentence.

> On December 25, 1962, the movie *To Kill a Mockingbird* opened in theaters.

Addresses

When an address is written in mailing format, commas are needed between the city and state.

Old Courthouse Museum

Courthouse Square

31 N. Alabama Ave.

Monroeville, AL 36460

When an address is written within running text, commas are needed between the city and state as well as between each of the "lines" of the address and between the address and the rest of the sentence if the address does not fall at the end of the sentence.

Annual performances of *To Kill a Mockingbird* are performed in the Old Courthouse Museum, Courthouse Square, 31 N. Alabama Ave., Monroeville, AL 36460, near where author Harper Lee grew up.

Geographic Names

Use a comma after each item within a place name when the place name is used in running text, even when it is not part of a complete address.

> Atticus Finch lived and worked in the fictitious city of Maycomb, Alabama, which many assume is patterned somewhat after Monroeville, Alabama, where the author grew up.

Company Names

Company names that include "incorporated" or "limited" (or the like) require a comma between the name and "Inc." or "Ltd." only when a comma is placed there as part of the official company name. Check for letterhead or the company's website for clarification on its preferred usage.

> Invesco Ltd.

Replacements, Ltd.

Citigroup, Inc.

Citizens Inc.

When “incorporated” or “limited” is part of a company name within a sentence, a comma is needed between the word and the rest of the sentence only when a comma precedes it.

Citigroup, Inc., is making some noise in the banking industry lately.

Invesco Ltd. started out slowly in that sector of the market.

Letter and E-mail Greetings and Closings

Commas are used to separate letter and e-mail components both in isolation and within running text.

- Dear Alice,

- Sincerely,
- Hi, Jerry,
- Later,

Titles That Go with Names

Use commas to set off descriptive titles that follow names. However, don't use a comma before "Jr." or "III" (or the like) unless you know the person prefers a comma.

- Atticus Finch, attorney-at-law
- John Hale Finch, MD
- Walter Cunningham Jr.

Within text, include a comma both before and after the descriptive title to set it off from the whole sentence.

> Atticus Finch, attorney-at-law, at your service.

Numbers

In numbers with more than four digits, begin at the right and add a comma after every third digit. In a four-digit number, a comma is omitted in page and line numbers, addresses, and years, and it is optional in other cases. No commas are used in numbers with less than four digits. Numbers are treated exactly the same when used in text.

- 335,353,235
- 8,302 (as number, comma is optional)
- as year, no comma)
- 38,231
- 200 (no comma)

In an Internet search for "reviews of *To Kill a Mockingbird*," 2,420,000 results surfaced.

Using Commas to Avoid Confusion

Sometimes you simply have to use a comma to avoid confusion.

For example, when a word is removed for effect, a comma can sometimes make up for the missing word.

> To perform is a skill; to transform, art.

When two like or nearly like words are placed side by side, a comma can sometimes help clarify the intended meaning.

> The whole cast came walking in, in full costume.

Sometimes you will need to use a comma so the reader understands how the words are to be grouped to attain the author's desired meaning. Read the following example without the comma and note the difference.

> Fans who can, come each year to see the annual *To Kill a Mockingbird* performance.

Avoiding Unnecessary Commas

To use or not to use? That is the question when it comes to commas. Just as you want to be sure to use commas in all the correct places, you also want to make sure to avoid using commas when you don't need them.

- Do not use commas before a conjunction when the sentence is not compound.

No comma: Scout thinks Calpurnia is harsh**X** and unfairly gets Atticus on her side.

- Do not use a comma before the first and after the last word in a series.

No comma: The actors**X** Gregory Peck, Phillip Alford, Estelle Evans, Robert Duvall, and Mary Badham**X** play some of the main characters in the *To Kill a Mockingbird* movie.

- Do not use commas around an appositive if it adds clarity, or new information, to the sentence. For example, in the following sentence, "Joey" identifies which cousin played the part.

No comma: My cousin**X** Joey**X** once played the part of Atticus Finch.

- Do not use a comma to set off an adverb clause that is essential to the sentence's meaning. Adverb clauses are usually essential when they begin with *after*, *as soon as*, *because*, *before*, *if*, *since*, *unless*, *until*, or *when*.

No comma: Scout was surprised when Calpurnia kissed her**X** because she didn't think Calpurnia liked her much.

- Do not use a comma around a word that could be viewed as an interjection if using the comma would cause confusion or interruption in the sentence.

No comma: Scout is**X** basically**X** a tomboy.

- Do not use a comma after **although**, **such as**, or **like**.

No comma: Mayella didn't seem believable because of her actions, such as**X** changing her mind on the stand.

- Do not use a comma after a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, and *yet*).

No comma: Jem called Atticus by his first name, so**X** it seemed natural for Jem to do it as well.

- Do not use a comma along with a period, question mark, or exclamation point inside of a quotation.

No comma: "Don't you remember me, Mr. Cunningham?**X**" asked Scout.

Exercise 2

1. Add commas as needed to write each of these sentences correctly.

1. If you are right Darcy you and I will have amazing front-row seats.
2. Tonight I am going with Allen Beth Daryl Salome and Tommy.
3. When Malik jumped off the stage I naturally jumped about forty-five thousand feet in the air.
4. I grew up in Stockton Illinois on a farm and my friend grew up in Fort Madison Iowa in town.
5. If you arrive before I do save me a seat.
6. When I called she said "Mark Lucster Jr. wants to come with us.

2. For each sentence, add and/or remove commas (replacing a comma with **X**) or indicate that no changes are needed.

1. I had lasagna for dinner and, it was absolutely great!

2. My friend Alice is coming over after work.
3. My mother is going to pick me up, because my father had to work late.
4. Tony bought a green skirt, some red shoes, a blue shirt, and a pink belt.
5. "The lake water is very cold!," said Megan through shivering teeth.
6. Carrie skated around the room repeatedly and acted like she had been skating her whole life.

Using Semicolons and Colons

By the time you were taught how to use semicolons and colons in eighth grade or so, you were likely already set in your ways regarding punctuation. Here's the good news: it isn't too late to add these marks to your commonly used list and to appreciate how much they can do for your writing.

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Using Semicolons

A semicolon is a punctuation mark that signals a pause that is stronger than a comma but weaker than a period. Appropriately, a semicolon (;) looks like a period on top of a comma. The standard uses for semicolons are to separate two independent clauses instead of using coordinating conjunctions, to separate two independent clauses along with a conjunctive adverb, or to clarify a series that includes other punctuation.

Compound Sentences without Coordinating Conjunctions or with Conjunctive Adverbs

Compound sentences with conjunctive adverbs or without coordinating conjunctions require a semicolon.

Compound sentence with a coordinating conjunction: Scout and Jem do not know much about Boo Radley, but they are afraid of him anyhow.

Compound sentence without a coordinating conjunction: Scout and Jem do not know much about Boo Radley; they are afraid of him anyhow.

Compound sentence with a conjunctive adverb: Scout and Jem do not know much about Boo Radley; nevertheless, they are afraid of him anyhow.

Items in a Series with Commas

Typically, commas separate items in a series. Sometimes multiple-word series items include commas. In these cases, the commas within the items would be easily confused with the commas that separate the items. To avoid this confusion, you should use semicolons between these series items. You should not use semicolons to separate items in a series when the items do not include commas.

Sentence with series that results in comma confusion: In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus Finch defends justice, the underprivileged, and his children, teaches his kids values, and stands up to the people of the town.

Sentence rewritten using semicolons to avoid comma confusion: In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus Finch defends justice, the underprivileged, and his children; teaches his kids values; and stands up to the people of the town.

Using Colons

A colon is used to separate parts or to signal that some related information or words are coming.

Introductions

Colons are used to introduce a variety of text components, including explanations and examples.

- *To Kill a Mockingbird* won three Oscars: Best Actor; Best Art Direction-Set Decoration, Black-and-White; and Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium.
- There is a good reason no one has ever visited Maycomb, Alabama: it is a fictitious city.

Independent Clauses Where One Restates or Supports the

Other

Most sets of independent clauses require a comma and a conjunction or a semicolon between them. An exception is when the second clause clearly restates or supports the first clause.

> The movie *To Kill a Mockingbird* was very well received in Hollywood: it was nominated for eight Academy Awards.

Salutations and Isolated Elements

A variety of elements call for colons to separate the details.

- Time: 5:30 p.m.
- Letter or e-mail openings: Dear Ms. Moore:
- Ratios: 4:7
- Chapters and verses: 7:2–3
- Titles: Spark Notes: *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Bibliographies: New York: Random House
- Arrangements of categories and examples (**such as this list**)

Quotations

When the lead-in to a quotation is a complete sentence, you can use a colon between the lead-in and the quotation.

> Scout spoke with her usual frankness and wisdom beyond her years: "Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing."

Exercise 3

1. Use a semicolon in each of these situations:

1. items in a series with commas
2. compound sentence without a coordinating conjunction
3. compound sentence with a conjunctive adverb

2. Use a colon in each of these situations:

1. to introduce a quotation
2. to write the current time
3. to write a ratio
4. to introduce a list

Using Apostrophes

Apostrophes are a tool for making English more streamlined. Instead of saying, "the book that belongs to Elizabeth," you can say, "Elizabeth's book." Instead of saying, "I cannot come," you can say, "I can't come." Although you could avoid using apostrophes, your writing will be more natural if you learn the rules for using possessives and contractions appropriately. Some people also opt to use apostrophes to form plurals in certain situations, but many usage experts continue to warn against this practice.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=138#oembed-3

Using Apostrophes with Nouns to Show Possession

You form a possessive when you want to show a noun or pronoun in a sentence has ownership of another noun or pronoun.

Standard Singular and Plural Nouns

As shown in the following table, most nouns follow standard patterns for forming plurals.

Situation	Rule	Example 1	Example 2
Singular noun	Add apostrophe + –s.	dog's collar	class's assignment
Plural noun ending in s	Add only an apostrophe.	dogs' collars	classes' assignments
Plural noun ending in any letter other than s	Add apostrophe + –s.	people's plans	women's plans
Proper nouns	Follow the regular noun rules.	Finches' family home	Atticus's glasses
Business names	Use the format the company has chosen whether or not it matches possessive formation guidelines.	McDonald's employees	Starbucks stores

Compound Nouns

When forming the possessive of a compound noun, form the possession only on the last word. Use standard guidelines for that word.

- sister-in-law's hair
- six-year-olds' growth patterns
- wallpapers' patterns
- courthouse's aura

Two or More Nouns

When two or more nouns both possess another noun, form the possession only with the second noun if you are noting joint ownership. Form a possession on both nouns if each possession is independent.

- Jem and Scout's escapades (the joint escapades of the two children)
- Jem's and Scout's escapades (the separate escapades of the two children)

Understanding Apostrophes and Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns (*his*, *her*, *hers*, *its*, *my*, *mine*, *our*, *ours*, *their*, *theirs*, *your*, *yours*) show possession without an apostrophe.

- Is this hat yours?
- Those are his shoes.
- The dress is hers.

Indefinite pronouns (*another*, *anybody*, *anyone*, *anything*, *each*, *everybody*, *everyone*, *everything*, *nobody*, *no one*, *nothing*, *one*, *other*, *others*, *somebody*, *someone*, *something*) require an apostrophe to show possession.

- another's problem
- everyone's problems

Using Apostrophes to Form Contractions

Contractions are shortened versions of two or more words where

an apostrophe marks the missing letters. English has a wide range of common contractions, including those in the following table.

Words in Contraction	Contraction	Words in Contraction	Contraction
I am	I'm	what will	what'll
we are	we're	they will	they'll
what is	what's	what has	what's
can not	can't	should not	shouldn't
does not	doesn't	do not	don't

In addition to the many standard contractions, people often create custom, on-the-spot contractions.

My husband's (husband is) also coming.

As a reader, you have to use context to know if the use of "husband's" is possessive or a contraction since the two are visually the same.

- My husband's also coming.
- My husband's watch is on the table.

Using Apostrophes to Form Plurals

Some people choose to form plurals of individual letters, numbers, and words referred to as terms. Many usage experts frown on this practice and instead choose to form the plurals by simply adding an –s. Here are some examples of the two options, as well as methods of avoiding having to choose either option.

Situation: more than one of the letter *t*

Plurals using apostrophes: There are two *t*'s in Atticus.

Plurals without using apostrophes: There are two *t*s in Atticus.

Avoiding the choice: The letter *t* shows up in Atticus twice.

Situation: more than one of the number 5

Plurals using apostrophes: If I remember right, the address has three 5's in it.

Plurals without using apostrophes: If I remember right, the address has three 5s in it.

Avoiding the choice: If I remember right, the number 5 shows up three times in the address.

Situation: more than one "there" in a sentence

Plurals using apostrophes: This sentence has five there's.

Plurals without using apostrophes: This sentence has five theres.

Avoiding the choice: The word "there" is used five times in this sentence.

Exercise 4

1. Use apostrophes to create contractions for these words:

1. we have
2. he will
3. could have

2. Use apostrophes to rewrite the following possessive situations:

1. a bag of apples that belong to Pete and Polly
2. a car that belongs to my sister-in-law
3. a soda that is being shared by two women
4. a pen that belongs to somebody in the room
5. a sock that belongs to him
6. the opinions of the students

Using Quotation Marks

Quotation marks are used to mark dialogue, to indicate words that are borrowed, to emphasize certain details, and to help when giving credit for written works.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=138#oembed-4

Using Quotation Marks to Signal Dialogue and Borrowed Words

Quotation marks are a key component of written dialogue. All words of a dialogue must be enclosed within quotation marks to indicate that these words are the exact words of the speaker.

> "The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience," Atticus said.

When you talk about or summarize spoken words rather than presenting them as dialogue, you should not put quotation marks around them since you are not necessarily saying that they are the exact words the person said.

Jem once said that Boo's dad was the meanest man alive.

As with dialogue, you also should use quotation marks to mark the exact words that you borrow from someone else.

About Harper Lee's first interview since 1964, Paul Harris writes, "Lee has regularly turned down every interview request for decades but now, aged 79, has been tempted out of her shell by the University of Alabama."[1]

An exception to using quotation marks around borrowed words is that lengthier quotations of others' work (those of more than four lines of text) are set in indented block format for the sake of easier readability. Also, if you paraphrase another's ideas in your words, you need to cite the source of the ideas, but you should not use quotation marks since the words are your own.

Use single quotation marks around a quotation within a quotation.

According to Paul Harris, Lee "did have warm words about the screenplay of her book, which was turned into the hit film starring Gregory Peck in the 1960s. 'I think it is one of the best translations of a book to film ever made,' she said."[2]

1. Paul Harris, "Mockingbird Author Steps out of Shadows," *The Observer*, Feb. 6, 2006.
2. Paul Harris, "Mockingbird Author Steps out of Shadows,"

Using Quotation Marks to Enclose Titles of Short Works

Italics indicate titles of full-length books and other lengthy, completed works. To separate short works from these longer works, short works are enclosed in quotation marks rather than being placed in italics. Some examples of short works that should be included in quotation marks are articles in periodicals, book chapters or sections, essays, newspaper and magazine articles and reviews, short poems and stories, song titles, titles of television episodes, and titles of unpublished works, such as dissertations, papers, and theses.

Treatment for full-length books: I first read *To Kill a Mockingbird* in eighth grade.

Treatment for short works: In "A Child Shall Lead Them," Michael Richardson suggests that Lee presents justice through the innocent eyes of a child in an effort to show its true form.

The Observer, Feb. 6, 2006.

Using Quotation Marks to Identify Definitions

Using quotation marks is the accepted technique for identifying definitions that are used in running text.

Characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird* visit the apothecary, which means "drugstore."

Using Quotation Marks to Draw Attention to Words Used in a Special or Original Way

Quotation marks can help clarify that a word is being used in an unusual rather than in a straightforward manner. Without the quotation marks, readers might get a totally different meaning from a sentence.

- That course was really challenging.
- That course was really "challenging." (Putting the word *challenging* in quotation marks lets us know that the sentence is probably using irony to say that the course was not challenging at all.)

If you create an original word to fit your specific needs, put the word in quotation marks to indicate to readers that the word is not a standard word.

> Many accounts suggest that Harper Lee was very "Scout-like."

Using Other Punctuation with Quotation Marks

It helps to know rules of using other punctuation marks in conjunction with quotation marks.

Rules

Rule: Put question marks and exclamation marks inside the quotation marks if the marks relate directly and only to the text within quotation marks. If, on the other hand, the marks relate to the whole sentence, put the marks outside the quotation marks.

Example 1: A girl in the back of the room asked, "What character did Robert Duvall play**?"**

Example 2: Did Mary Richards really "make it after all"**?**

Rule: Periods and commas always go inside the quotation marks, even if the quotation marks are only around the last word in the sentence.

Example 1: Scout asked Jem how old she was when their mother died, and Jem answered, "Two**.**"

Example 2: Even as an adult years later, Scout was likely to say that the summer of the trial lasted "forever**,**" due to the many life lessons she learned.

Rule: Place colons and semicolons outside quotation marks.

Example 1: I remember my first impression after reading Frost's "Death of a Hired Man"**:** confusion.

Example 2: We had tickets to see the one-act play "Masks"**;** however, the blizzard hit just as we were trying to leave.

Guarding against Using Unneeded Quotation Marks

Special word usage, such as irony and made-up words, are placed in quotation marks. But do not use quotation marks just to make regular-use words stand out.

When Jem met Dill, Jem said that Dill was awfully "puny." (The word *puny* should not be put in quotation marks since

it is a standard word being used with its straightforward meaning.)

If you choose to use slang or colloquialisms, do not give a sense that you are apologizing for the words by putting them inside quotation marks. Choose the slang words and colloquialisms you want to use and let them stand on their own.

Calpurnia was very "down-to-earth." (Do not put quotation marks around *down-to-earth*.)

Exercise 5

Read each sentence. If a sentence should have quotation marks, add them in the correct place. If a sentence does not need quotation marks, write "no quotation marks."

1. Oh, right, I forgot Shanda was too sick to go to work today. I saw her out shopping.

2. Doug asked, Were you in the gym when Ben broke his arm?

3. Ellen McPeek Glisan's dissertation was entitled The Effect of Classmate Photographs on Online Community and Connectedness.

4. I wasn't very happy when George said I was calm.

5. FDR showed his sense of humor when he said Be sincere; be brief; be seated.

6. You are very funny; remember that funny also means impertinent.

7. Annie said, I'll see you at 5:00 p.m.

8. Keep in mind that I'm a sew-happy girl!

Using Dashes and Parentheses

Dashes and parentheses are both used to give more importance to a word or group of words. The information enclosed by dashes and parentheses often supports the information directly before or after it.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=138#oembed-5

Using Dashes

Dashes separate emphasis-adding text from the rest of the words in a sentence. You can use one long dash to set apart text at the end of a sentence. You can use dashes before and after the text to set it apart in the middle of a sentence. Here are some uses for dashes:

- Creating a sudden change in tone, thought, or ideas
  Example: We had predicted that the storm would come soon—but not this soon!

- Suggesting hesitation in dialogue
  Example: The old lady said to the man working the register, "I've got an extra nickel for the little girl's candy—that is, if she'll take it."

- Providing a summary, an explanation, or an example
  Example: The book, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, is narrated by Scout Finch—a character who has much in common with the tomboy childhood of the author, Harper Lee.

Using Parentheses

Parentheses allow you to interrupt the flow of your text to give additional information. They can be used in the middle of a sentence or at the end. Some uses of parentheses include the following:

- Enclosing numbers in an in-text list.

  Example: My mother asked me to stop on the way to visit and pick a few things up at the store: **(**1**)** a half gallon of milk, **(**2**)** a dozen eggs, and **(**3**)** a loaf of bread.

- Setting apart citation components in in-text references and in reference lists.

  Example: "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it" **(**Lee, p. 34**)**.

- Separating nonessential but helpful information.

  Example: My dog **(**some sort of a terrier-spaniel mix**)** has a unique personality.

Specific rules guide using punctuation with parentheses. End punctuation can be placed inside parentheses if the content of the parentheses is a complete sentence. If the content inside the parentheses is part of a larger sentence, the end punctuation should go outside the parentheses. If a comma is needed, it should always be placed outside the closing parenthesis. A comma should not be used immediately before an opening parenthesis, except in the case of in-text lists (e.g., "We need to (1) go to the bank, (2) buy some cereal at the store, (3) pick up the tickets, and (4) get to the party by 7:00 p.m."

Exercise 6

1. Write a sentence that uses a dash to show a change in tone.

2. Write a sentence that uses a dash to show hesitation in dialogue.

3. Write a sentence that uses a dash to provide an example.

4. Write a sentence that uses parentheses to enclose numbers in an in-text list.

5. Write a sentence that uses parentheses to set apart citation components.

6. Write a sentence that uses parentheses to separate nonessential but helpful information.

Choosing Correct End Punctuation

You have three choices for end punctuation: periods, question marks, and exclamation points. End punctuation gives readers information about how to read a sentence and how to interpret the sentence.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded

from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=138#oembed-6

Using Periods

Periods have three main uses: punctuating many abbreviations, marking the end of many sentences, and separating components in reference citations.

Some abbreviations take periods all the time, while some never take periods. You simply have to learn the category of each abbreviation or look them up as you use them.

Examples of abbreviations that end in periods: approx., Ave., Dr., etc., Jr., Mrs., Univ.

Examples of abbreviations that do not include periods: LBJ, MLK, N/A, NV, TV, DVD, IBM, UK, USA, CEO, COD, RSVP

Periods end sentences that are not questions or exclamations, such as statements, commands, and requests.

- Statements

  To Kill a Mockingbird is set in the early 1930s.

- Commands

Over the weekend, read the first four chapters.

- Requests
  Please let me know at what parts of the book you get confused.

In reference citations, use periods to separate components.

MLA: Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. New York: HarperCollins, 2002. Print.

OR

APA: Lee, H. (2002). *To Kill a Mockingbird*. New York: HarperCollins.

CMS: Lee, Harper. 2002. *To Kill a Mockingbird*. **New York: HarperCollins.**

Using Question Marks

Question marks have one main use: to end sentences that ask direct questions. They are also sometimes used to indicate questions in a series.

- Question mark at the end of a sentence
  Do you think Atticus encouraged Scout to be mature beyond her years, or do you think it just came naturally to Scout?

- Question marks in a series
  We should go to the city council meeting with three basic questions: should the housing development be placed so close

to the wildlife preserve**?**, could a better location be found**?**, and how much time do we have to come up with alternatives**?**

When you choose to use a question mark at the end of a sentence, make sure the sentence is actually a sentence since some sentences give a sense of being a question when they are not. Such sentences are called indirect questions.

Jem asked Scout what she was thinking**?**

Correction: Jem asked Scout what she was thinking.

Using Exclamation Points

Exclamation points are a method of showing surprise or strong emotions in writing. To preserve the impact of an exclamation point, you should use them sparingly. Besides lessening their impact, the use of too many exclamation points is distracting for readers.

Overuse of exclamation points: This course has been very engaging! There's never been a dull moment! The instructor has always been very helpful! She's always there when you need her!

Proper use of exclamation points: The national debt stacked in dollar bills would be high enough to reach the moon—and back!

Exercise 7

Write two sentences in the following categories with different, but appropriate, end punctuation:

1. a declarative statement
2. a command
3. a request
4. a question
5. a statement showing surprise, emotion, or emphasis

Using Hyphens

Some hyphen usage rules are set requirements, such as in certain compound words and fractions and numbers. Other hyphen usage rules are subjective or situation-specific, such as with certain compound words, prefixes, confusing situations, and continuations to the next line of text.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=138#oembed-7

Using Hyphens with Compound Words

Some standing compound words are written with hyphens, some as one word without a hyphen, and some as two words without a hyphen.

Examples of compound words that are written with hyphens: merry-go-round, over-the-counter, six-year-old, son-in-law

Examples of compound words that are written as one word with no hyphen: drywall, firefly, softball, toothpaste

Examples of compound words that are written as two separate words without a hyphen: high school, middle class, peanut butter, post office

Other rules for hyphens in compound words include the following:

- Hyphenate compound words when they are used together to modify the same word (e.g., "Scout was a quick–witted child").

- Do not turn words into a hyphenated compound adjective if words are placed after the word they modify (e.g., "Scout was a child who was quick witted").
- Do not hyphenate –*ly* adverbs and adjectives (e.g., "Georgie has a highly coveted first-run copy," not "Georgie has a **highly-coveted** first-run copy").

Using Hyphens to Write Fractions and Numbers

Use hyphens to write all two-word numbers between twenty-one and ninety-nine. Also, use hyphens when writing those numbers within larger numbers. Hyphenate a fraction you are expressing as a single quantity, regardless of whether you are using it as a noun or as an adjective.

- twenty-one
- four hundred twenty-one
- two-thirds of the pie
- a one-quarter share of the profits

Using Hyphens with Prefixes and Suffixes

Use hyphens in certain situations to add prefixes and suffixes to words.

- To join a capitalized word to a prefix
  anti-American
  post-Renaissance

- To join a number to a prefix
  pre-1960

- To join a single capital letter to a word
  A-team
  T-shirt

- To join the prefixes *all-*, *ex-*, *quasi-*, and *self-* to words
  ex-neighbor
  self-aware

- To join the suffixes *–elect*, *–odd*, and *–something* to words
  president-elect
  fifty-odd

Using Hyphens to Avoid

Confusion

Sometimes a hyphen can separate two visually alike words from each other. Consider that the use of the hyphen in the first of the following two sentences helps to avoid confusion that would be generated without the hyphen.

- I think the assistant prosecutor should re-sign.
- I think the assistant prosecutor should resign.

Exercise 8

Try these exercises without using any words that were given as examples in this section.

1. Make a list of ten compound words that are always written with hyphens.

2. Write two sentences that include situational compound adjectives that modify nouns.

3. Write these numbers in words: 42, 89, 265, 1725.

4. Write these fractions in words: ¾, 7½.

5. Write three words that each use one of these prefixes and suffixes: *all-*, *ex-*, *quasi-*, *–self*, *–elect*, *–odd*, *–something*.

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PART X

SAMPLES

44. Essay Checklists

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

As you being to wrap-up your essay and submit it to your instructor, you will want to go through it several times to look for all the basics of what you learned make up a strong essay.

Following are some checklists you can you as you are revising/editing your essay:

Image by Wikipedia

Introduction

◇ My introduction is a minimum of 4-6 sentences.

◇ I start with an engaging sentence that relates to my main topic.

◇ I grab the reader's attention.

◇ I set the tone for the rest of the essay.

◇ I move from general to specific, with the thesis as the last sentence in the intro.

◇ My thesis is an argument and is written in a sophisticated way.

conclusion

◇ My conclusion is brief but powerful.

◇ My conclusion wraps up the argument successfully.

◇ My conclusion moves from specific to broad.

◇ I have re-stated the thesis, then related it back to my topic.

◇ If I'm writing a proposal or similar type of essay, my conclusion includes a call to action.

◇ My conclusion leaves the readers feeling that the time they spent reading the essay was worth their time because they learned something new or were presented information in a way that they hadn't considered previously.

◇ My last line is memorable and/or gives the reader something to think about.

Body Paragraphs

◇ Each body paragraph opens with a topic sentence.

◇ Sources are used as support in each body paragraph in the form of quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing, but not too much as to overwhelm the paper.

◇ I have used supporting evidence and the correct number of sources required by my instructor.

◇ My writing uses critical-thinking and higher-level thinking such as analysis and evaluation.

◇ There is strong organization and paragraph development.

◇ The body paragraphs connect directly to the thesis.

◇ The body paragraphs have proper in-text citations in MLA format.

◇ There are transitions or signal phrases into all quotes.

◇ There are clear transitions from one paragraph to another.

Paper Formatting

◇ The paper is laid out properly with MLA or APA:

- Times New Roman
- 12-point font
- double-spaced
- 1-inch margins around the paper
- ½ inch paragraph indentations

◇ My header with my name, my instructor's name, and the date are correct (check MLA or APA).

◇ I have a centered, interesting title.

◇ The in-text citations, whether in MLA or APA, match to the Works Cited or References at the end of the paper.

◇ My paper meets the word count as set out by my instructor (usually does NOT include your Works Cited).

writing, Grammar, and MISC.

Style

My voice…

◇ is compelling

◇ is persuasive

◇ engages the reader

◇ uses formal and appropriate tone (academic)

◇ doesn't use slang, jargon, or sexist language

◇ uses mature vocabulary words

◇ uses a variety of sentence patterns

◇ uses clear arguments and sentences that are understandable

Grammar

The grammar…

◇ includes full sentences with a subject and predicate

◇ does not include fragments

◇ has verb agreement

◇ uses the same verb tense

◇ does not use first or second person

◇ uses a variety of adjectives, nouns, verbs, and adverbs to describe

Mechanics

The paper…

◇ includes properly punctuated sentences

◇ uses commas, semicolons, apostrophes, and other punctuation marks properly

◇ sentences and proper nouns are capitalized

◇ the period goes after an in-text citations (parenthesis)

Misc.

◇ I have run Microsoft spelling/grammar check and/or Grammarly.

◇ I have met all of the requirements as set forth by my instructor in the essay directions.

literary Analysis Essay

◇ Essay is written in PRESENT tense, not past.

◇ In the introduction, the name of the story is in quotation marks and the full name of the author is there.

◇ I analyze (break down) or evaluate the text well.

◇ There is minimal summary of the story.

◇ I use descriptive language and describe the scenes effectively.

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45. Student Essay Example 1 (Argument) in MLA and APA Format

DR. KAREN PALMER

Sample Argument Essay in MLA Format

Note that the first page of the argument should have a heading on the left hand side (not in the header) with the student's name, the instructor's name, the course, and the date. The title should be centered on the page with no special formatting. On subsequent pages, the author's last name and the page number should be in the header justified to the right. (ie Doe, 2). In-text citations should reference the author's last name (or the first word of the Works Cited listing) and a page number, if applicable. If there is no page number, only include the author's last name. Note that the entire paper should be double spaced.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=144#h5p-1

Works Cited Page

Note that the Works Cited page should be on a NEW page. (Use the Insert Page function in Word!). Works Cited should be centered at the top of the page in regular font. Sources should be listed in alphabetical order. Sources should use a hanging indent. The student's last name and page number are in the header and should be justified to the right margin. The entire Works Cited page should be double spaced, with no extra spaces.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=144#h5p-2

Sample Argument Paper in APA Format

This is an example of a student essay in APA format. For annotated examples, please visit the APA Style Blog or download a PDF file with a sample paper here.

Title Page

Note that the content of the title page should be centered both vertically and horizontally on the page. The title should be in bold. The Title Page should include the title of the paper, the student's name, the institution, the course, the instructor, and the date. Page numbers are in the Header of the page and justified to the right margin.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=144#h5p-3

Main Body of the Paper

Note that the title is centered on the first page of the body of the paper and in bold font. Page numbers go in the header and should be justified to the right margin. In text citations should include the author's last name and the date of publication.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=144#h5p-4

References Page

Note that the References page should be on a NEW page. (Use the Insert Page function in Word!). References should be centered at the top of the page in bold font. Sources should be listed in alphabetical order. Sources should use a hanging indent. Page numbers are in the header and should be justified to the right margin.

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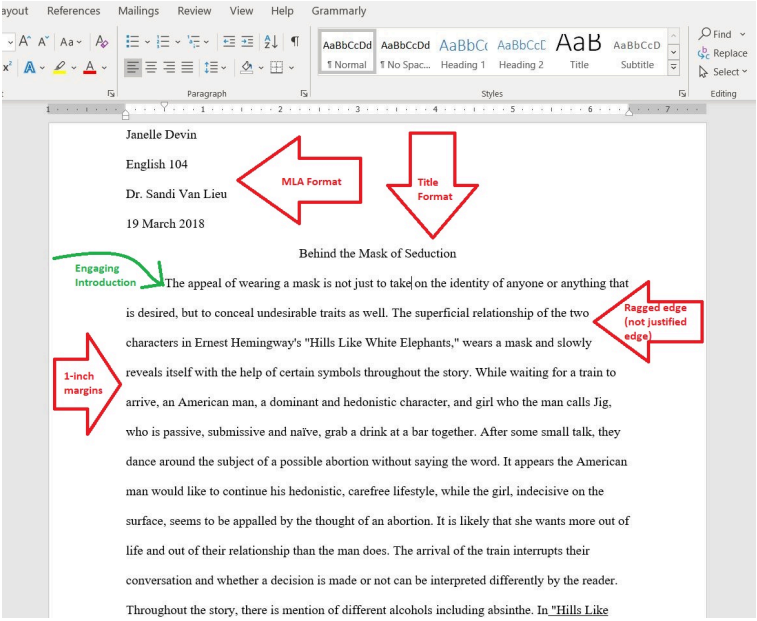
46. Student Essay Example 2 (Literary Analysis) in MLA

DR. SANDI VAN LIEU

For a **video overview of this essay, see further down on this page.



Throughout the story, there is mention of different alcohols including absinthe. In "Hills Like White Elephants," Hemingway uses absinthe as a symbol for the nature of the relationship between the main characters because it is alluring, can lead to recklessness, but can become monotonous.

Story title and Author's last name

Argumentative thesis

Both the couple's relationship and the absinthe in the story are alluring and intoxicating from the start. A hedonistic lifestyle promises good times, pleasure, and low responsibility just as imbibing in absinthe promises similar things. Doris Lanier, an associate professor emerita of English and philosophy at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro and author of the book, *Absinthe, the Cocaine of the Nineteenth Century: A History of the Hallucinogenic Drug and its Effect on Artists and Writers in Europe and the United States*, compares the alcohol to the couple's relationship. She observes, "The destructive potential of absinthe also suggests the destructive nature of the couple's relationship. Innocent-looking, seductive, and intoxicating, absinthe promises joy, excitement, heady delight, its tantalizing color and taste concealing the destructive power that is lurking in its green opulence" (Lanier 50). There is an undeniable appeal to absinthe; on the surface it is attractive and promotes a good time. The dangers of it are both enticing and overlooked. The same can be said of the beginning of the couple's relationship.

Introduces author to give credibility to the quote

Transition into quote

MLA in-text citation

The relationship is based on having a "fine time" and does not seem to go much deeper than that (Hemingway 689). The uncomfortable dialog between the couple when they begin to talk about having an abortion suggests it is the first time they have had any meaningful conversation that digs below the surface. The American man even seems irked at the beginning of the conversation – still wanting to keep it light and begs, "Let's try and have a fine time" (Hemingway 689). These "fine times" may have been thrilling in the beginning of their relationship but now may not be enough to keep them together. The absinthe and the superficial relationship in the story are not only alluring, but lead to recklessness as well.

Absinthe can easily lead to recklessness and so does the couple's relationship. The effects of overindulging in any alcohol are dangerous, but because of the added wormwood oil in absinthe, it is more destructive than most alcohols. During the rise of absinthe in the early 1900s, many writers warned the public, "Overindulgence in absinthe [will] cause insomnia, nervousness, nightmares, hallucinations, delirium, and profound mental problems" (Lanier 49). While there are many consequences to overindulging in this drink, similarly, the consequences of the reckless behavior of the couple's relationship are heavy as well; the potential loss of a baby is the most significant consequence of this reckless and superficial relationship. The relationship would not be able to go on the way it is with the added responsibility of a baby; the relationship

Transition or signal phrase into the quote

Punctuation goes after the parenthesis

that is built on "fine times" would be changed forever. It is made clear through what is not being said that the pregnancy has already begun to change the relationship when the American man says, "It's the only thing that's made us unhappy" (Hemingway 690). Jig is also aware of this as she considers the possibility of having an abortion and asks the man, "If I do it you'll be happy and things will be like they were and you'll love me?" (Hemingway 690). The decision of terminating a baby to have a carefree life is overindulgent and reckless the same way absinthe leads to recklessness when overindulged in. Although, both alluring and leading to recklessness, absinthe and superficial relationships can become quite dull.

The allure and power of absinthe as well as a relationship that is going nowhere can become monotonous over time. Referring to the dullness of absinthe, Jig comments on everything tasting like licorice; in a way, she hints at the monotony of their relationship. She bemoans, "That's all we do, isn't it – look at things and try new drinks?" (Hemingway 689). The couple's relationship has a pattern of staying the same – tasting the same and it gets old. David Wyche of the *Hemingway Review* notes "critics...tend to agree that Jig and the American will not remain a couple" because a relationship like theirs is not strong enough to withstand the addition of a new baby or the loss of an unborn child; either way, the relationship would be dramatically altered (90). The relationship that is based on having a good time is going nowhere. It likely

Transition or signal phrase into quote can use the author's name. When doing it this way, only a page number is needed in the parenthesis

begins in a bar and will end in a bar without ever growing into something deeper and more meaningful. After a while, a superficial relationship, like the licorice taste of absinthe, can become dull and tiresome.

The absinthe in "Hills Like White Elephants" is a symbol for the superficial nature of the relationship between the two main characters due to its allure and its tendency to lead to recklessness and monotony. It attracts one with its promise of a good time, while concealing its inevitable consequences. One can grow tired and uninterested after experiencing what lies behind the mask of seduction.

Conclusion should wrap up the essay, including the overall argument.

Insert a page break between here and the Works Cited page.

Works Cited list should be in alphabetical order.

Works Cited

Works Cited centered

Hemingway, Ernest. "Hills Like White Elephants." *Exploring Literature Writing and Arguing About Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and the Essay*, edited by Frank Madden, Longman, 2016, pp. 688-692.

Lanier, Doris. "The Bittersweet Taste of Absinthe in Hemingway's 'Hills Like White Elephants'." Short Story Criticism, edited by Lawrence J. Trudeau, vol. 168, Gale, 2012. Originally published in *Studies in Short Fiction*, vol. 26, no. 3, 1989, pp. 279-288.

Hanging Indent

Wyche, David. "Letting the Air into a Relationship: Metaphorical Abortion in 'Hills Like White Elephants'." Short Story Criticism, edited by Lawrence J. Trudeau, vol. 168, Gale, 2012. Originally published in *Hemingway Review*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2002, pp. 58-73.

Video Overview:

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YC Writing Resources

DR. KAREN PALMER

Yavapai College offers several resources for students who need additional help with their writing.

The Academic Learning Center

The Yavapai College Learning Center supports students by offering tutoring in many different areas, as well as other services. 15-20 minute drop in tutoring sessions are available, as well as an online tutoring service where students can submit papers for tutor feedback. This service has a 48 hour turnaround time.

Visit the Learning Center

The Writing Lab

The Yavapai College Writing Lab was created in 2019 by Dr. Karen Palmer and Dr. Sandi Van Lieu to meet the needs of students at Yavapai College. The Writing Lab is staffed by peer tutors who have completed both ENG 101 and 102 and have demonstrated an excellent ability to write well and to provide strong feedback to their peers.

The Writing Lab offers 30 and 60 minute tutoring sessions, in which our tutors will assist students with any stage of the writing process, including editing.

Make an Appointment at the Lab

Grammarly

Grammarly is an online writing assistant. You can upload your papers directly to Grammarly or install it on your browsers or in Word. Grammarly then checks your writing for you, giving you explanations for errors so that you can make good choices about your corrections.

YC offers the Premium version of Grammarly FREE for all students.

Sign up for grammarly. Make sure to use your YC email and create a new password – *don't use your YC account password!* Check your YC inbox for instructions once you create your account.

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The YC Library

The YC Library is often the best place to begin your research. Not only does the library have many physical texts, but the digital resources in the Library Databases give students access to thousands of credible sources with just a few clicks. In addition, the library offers many services for students, including lessons on using the databases. The librarians are available to assist students with their research via e-mail, chat, and in person.

Presenting Your Work

DR. KAREN PALMER

Developing Digital Presentations

As technology advances, the options for presenting work digitally continue to grow. Digital presentations refer to methods of presenting your work in the virtual world without using paper. These options take advantage of links to other parts of the document as well as links to related locations on the Internet. Using such links is one way to take advantage of the capabilities available in digital work. The internal links allow readers to instantly access other sections of your paper. External links lead to related text, videos, or audio pieces that are located on the Internet. Most of these digital options also allow you to embed video or audio segments so that the reader can simply click on a button or arrow to activate the segments.

Creating PowerPoint Slides

PowerPoint is Microsoft Office software that has nearly become a standard presentation software. When you create PowerPoint slides to present your paper, you should use a small number of slides, typically less than ten. The slides should cover the most important aspects of your paper and should be at least somewhat visual in nature. PowerPoint also presents the option of textual and visual animation as well as audio components. In an effort to keep your slides as visual as possible, place bullets next to sentences whenever possible. Also, use fonts that are large enough for a group to read from a screen: 28 points or larger for base text and at least 36 points for headings.

Allow for ample white space on each slide. Without making the pages overwhelming, use color and visuals to add interest to the slides. If you do not have value-adding images, tables, or graphs that you can use, you can add color to the background, to text, or to text boxes.

You can add your voice and other audio to your slides. And you can create a slideshow that you can turn on and run automatically, presenting visuals and sound simultaneously. These capabilities allow you to create your entire presentation and run it without actually saying a word during the presentation. If you intend to run an automatic presentation, make sure you go through practice runs until the entire presentation works as you intend it to work.

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Filming a Digital Presentation

Using video filming equipment, you could film yourself presenting your work and capture both audio and video. You could then upload your presentation to the Internet (via a common video sharing site like *YouTube*). If you want your digital films to include a variety of multimedia options, you would have to learn how to incorporate such features using the equipment available to you.

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Presenting Online

Writing in the Digital World

The digital world has permanently altered written communication. Copying and pasting ease the sharing and transferring of large blocks of text. Independent and joint editing of text is much easier and much less time consuming. Searching for specific parts of a long text is quick and easy. Checking for plagiarism takes only a few seconds. Multimodal compositions can be created by incorporating visual and auditory material into written texts.

Both as a student and in other aspects of your life, you are likely to write information and publish it on the Internet. Like every other kind of written communication, how you write on the web depends on the purpose of the specific situation. In reality, you've probably developed a pretty good system for running your web-based communication. If you have an unlimited text plan and maintain at least one profile on a social networking site, you concern yourself with matters of voice, message, audience, tone, attitude, and reception hundreds of times a day. At the very least, students and teachers ought to be trying to learn together how to apply or translate the sophisticated rhetorical strategies you use in your casual communication to your

more serious academic and professional endeavors.

Because you are often multitasking while texting or using the web and because of the speed and convenience of electronic communication, this realm is prone to carelessness. In casual situations, rules are minimal and you can use very casual language that includes abbreviations, slang, and shortcuts. Your use of a casual tone depends solely on whether your audience will understand what you are saying. Writing for school or work does not fall into the casual category. In these situations, you cannot use abbreviations, slang, and shortcuts. In fact, you need to use proper punctuation, grammar, and capitalization. You should also use traditional writing rules and a more formal tone when responding to diverse populations and serious situations.

Whether writing in a casual or formal situation, always be aware of the population that has access to your content. Also keep in mind that even if you are writing on a semiprivate venue like a class-wide course management system or on an invitation-only wiki, your digital text can easily be copied by someone with access and forwarded to someone without access. So don't write anything that could embarrass or cause problems for you or others.

Due to the non-private nature of the Internet, you should not provide full contact information. Depending on the situation, you might choose to use your full name (such as in an online class or on a memorial condolence site) or you might choose to use a pseudonym (such as in a response to a blog or to an online newspaper article). Only give your phone number and address when you are on very secure sites. Never post your social security number online. If you have a legitimate request for your social security number, call and give it over the telephone.

Using Web Links Effectively

Links are placed within digital texts to reroute readers to other locations. They have a wide range of purposes based on where and why they are used. You can use links to organize a page, to save space on a page, to add interest to your text, to incorporate someone else's ideas into your work, to provide conveniences for your reader, and to complement text in other creative ways. Most often, links are in blue font that is underlined once or twice. You can, however, choose to present links in other ways, such as by using buttons, images, or non-underlined text. Your main consideration when making a style choice for a link is that it be immediately recognizable as a link. Keep the following tips in mind:

- Links are used in digital text to reroute readers to other locations. You should make links very obvious so readers see them easily. Links are typically blue, underlined text but can be text in other formats, buttons, images, and other options.
- You can create many links simply by copying and pasting a web address or an e-mail address into your text. Within a software application, you will sometimes have to use the software's method of link formation.
- You should do your best to make sure you are not using dead links. Try to choose links that will last as long as you need to use them. Check that a link works when you initially use it. Then, in long-term-use situations such as a website, periodically check that your links are still good.

Working on a Wiki

Because course management systems are not really designed for collaborative composition courses, they're not really ideal for group writing projects. Wikis, another type of collaborative technology tool, are beginning to replace course management systems for certain kinds of collaboration because they can make group work much more convenient, visible, and meaningful. Professors can set up a wiki as a free online collaborative platform that offers workspace for class-wide group or individual projects. Within a site, individuals can have private workspaces to which other students do not have access unless the site "owner" invites them. Students can use a wiki to gather notes and compile a writing project from beginning to end. Within a wiki, students can save all versions of a draft allowing for retrieval of previous information. Being able to save different versions also allows multiple students to edit, for example, Pete's draft so that Pete can then access all the edits and choose the changes he wishes to make.

Since each student has a private log-in and password, wikis can easily keep track of who made what changes and when the changes were made. You can even use the settings on your wiki account to have it send you an e-mail whenever someone adds something to your space. Students and teachers can also upload files and place links on the wiki to relevant materials elsewhere on the Internet, such as to an American Psychological Association (APA) or Modern Language Association (MLA) citation builder. Wikis also offer a platform for publishing the final version of a project for viewing by the instructor, other classmates, and even the general public, if desired.

Working in a Group Online

Both education and business regularly take advantage of online collaboration. In education, students are often asked to collaborate online to discuss course readings, to work on group projects, or to edit each other's work. In business, employees often work together online to brainstorm and develop ideas and projects. The online environment allows people who are in different physical locations to work together virtually. In addition, online collaboration sites allow everyone to keep track of each participant's contributions.

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Some basic etiquette rules apply to all online collaboration situations. You will notice that many of the rules hold true for any group work situation. Group work is often lopsided and unfair—a few tend to do most of the work. The following guidelines will help make working in a group less stressful for all involved:

1. **Do your fair share.** You would be ill advised to try shirking your part of the work in an online situation since the collaboration program will keep track of each participant's contributions.

2. Most sites will maintain all versions of a document or file being drafted collaboratively. As a rule, you should **always work in the most current version** unless the group mutually decides to revert to a previous version.
3. Determine which group member is best able to complete different technology aspects of the project, such as scanning, uploading, and creating diagrams. If all members of the group are expected to perform certain technological tasks, make sure the learning curve is not too steep by **writing explicit directions**. Discussing such aspects up front will make the project go more smoothly.

Social Aspects of Working in an Online Group Situation

If the group seems to be going around in circles, consider a conference call (over the computer or by telephone). With an in-person (or at least synchonous) conversation, you can often straighten out issues that are difficult to handle through chains of e-mails.

On the other hand, if you need to talk to only one member of the group, do so through e-mail. Save the group site for communication intended for the whole group.

Keep in mind that written words do not include voice intonations or facial expressions and are thus more easily misunderstood than are in-person spoken words. If a group member's comment strikes

you the wrong way, give the person the benefit of the doubt instead of being defensive.

Creating an E-portfolio

Just a few years ago, a portfolio, or collection of your work, would most likely have been a collection of printed papers arranged in a file folder or hand-bound into a booklet. Today you are just as likely to create an e-portfolio, a digital collection of your work that is usually accessible to others online. Whether paper or digital, the purpose of a portfolio remains for you to showcase and reflect upon your skills.

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General Portfolio Guidelines

As with any other kind of communication, base your portfolio planning on your reasons for building one. For example, you might design a portfolio to apply for admission or scholarships to colleges, to apply for a job, to network with other professionals in your field, to complete a school assignment, to collect your artistic work, or to explore a personal interest. The following guidelines are useful for all portfolios, regardless of whether they are designed to meet an academic, professional, aesthetic, or social purpose:

- Consider carefully your choices of what to include (known as artifacts) and choose those that showcase the most impressive variety of your skills. If you are a writer, showcase different writing skills or a progression in the development of your writing skills (showing "before" and "after" drafts). If you are a salesperson, showcase different types of sales accomplishments.
- Keep the number of choices under ten in an employment portfolio so that a prospective employer could reasonably look at all the options. If you have multiple categories, such as writing samples, work accomplishments, and volunteer experiences, you could consider having up to ten items within each category.
- Read through all the choices to make sure you are 100-percent pleased about the content. Do not rely on memory to tell you that an item is OK to use.
- Label and date each selection.
- Create an explanation of each chosen item.
- Make sure all your selected items are free of errors.
- Arrange your selections from most to least impressive unless you have a reason to arrange them differently, such as in chronological order, keeping in mind that someone might start

through your portfolio and not finish it.

Electronic Portfolio Guidelines

Follow these guidelines to take better advantage of the forms, functions, and features an online environment can bring to portfolios:

- Create an introductory page with links to the other pages. Make sure the introductory page is short enough to minimize scrolling.
- Consider establishing or incorporating some kind of social presence (perhaps with an appropriate photo or with an audio or video greeting) on the introductory page. Make sure your tone (the relationship between your portfolio's voice and your audience) achieves an appropriate level of formality, depending on the working relationship you already have with your audience.
- Include a one-line description of each link as a pre-introduction to the portfolio item when you list the links on the introductory page.
- Choose whether to include multimedia pieces, such as video and audio clips, depending on the capabilities of the site where you are posting your portfolio.
- Convert each page or file to a PDF or a JPEG so that you can be assured that the formatting will remain fixed. After you create

each PDF file or JPEG, open it to make sure it converted properly.
- Traverse your e-portfolio thoroughly when you're finished building it to check out all the links and make sure everything is working and looks OK. Then ask a friend to do the same on a different computer. Ideally you should road test the portfolio from both a PC and a Mac platform. By road testing, you are effectively anticipating your portfolio's reception (the relationship between your audience and the message you are conveying).
- Include a link to a self-profile as well as a link to your résumé.
- Keep your e-portfolio up to date. This task is especially important if your e-portfolio is posted where others can access it without your knowledge.

Creating Websites

You could present your work on your personal website using web features, such as homepages, navigation buttons, links to other sites, buttons that activate audio and video segments, and overall visual presentations. As a college student, you should only present your work this way when instructed to do so by your instructor. Since not all students have a personal website, this option is still not widely used as a means of presenting college work; however, some instructors are moving in this direction, especially as digital portfolios become an increasingly common expectation.

Whether you create a site to supplement a résumé, to serve as a common, virtual family meeting place, or to showcase individual or

collaborative work you've done for a class, you should follow some basic guidelines to make sure your website is aesthetically pleasing and well organized, so that it functions well and accomplishes its purpose.

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Making a Website Aesthetically Pleasing

Use relevant photos, graphics, and font variations to give your site interest. Leave plenty of white space. A crowded web page is not inviting. Use an easily readable font and font size with ample leading. Small tight text is hard to read and many Internet searchers will skip such a site and move on to the abundance of other choices. Take care when choosing background and font colors. Make sure your background does not engulf the text making it hard to read. As a rule, make your background light and your text dark. Take care when choosing background effects. A very busy background can detract from your content.

Making a Website Well Organized

Plan for little or no scrolling. Instead include clearly marked navigation links to move to different parts of the information. Include navigation links to all parts of the website from all pages so a person never feels stuck on a page. Design an overall look that holds from page to page to give your website consistency. Use an easily recognizable format for navigation links so that they clearly stand out.

Making a Website Work Well

Use images that are between forty and one hundred kilobytes to ensure clear images that are easily and quickly loaded on most people's computers. Since one hundred kilobytes is the maximum suggested size, you will have your best luck if you stay well below that level. Match your level of use of technology tools to your needs. Don't add features just to try to make your site impressive. Remember that the more features you add, the more likely it is that someone will have trouble with your site. Some people's computers will have trouble with very involved opening pages that include audio and video. If you choose such an opening page, also include an override button for people who can't or don't want to view the

opening page. Make sure all the links and paths are very obvious and that they all work smoothly.

Making a Website Accomplish Its Purpose

Make sure the home page is uncluttered and clearly states the purpose of the website. This is the main chance you have of attracting attention. Make the website as visual as possible. The more quickly a person can glance through web content, the more likely the person is to take in the information. You can make a site visual by including subheadings that stand out, relevant images, short blocks of text, white space between blocks of text, and numbered or bulleted lists. Keep the website up to date. Depending on the content and purpose of the website, keeping it up to date could be a daily, weekly, or monthly chore. Consider that a site that is out of date ceases to be visited. Include a contact link so viewers can reach you. Remember that anyone with Internet can access your site. Take care with the information you post. Always assume that your instructors, employers, parents, or friends will see it.

developing an oral presentation

In public speaking, keep in mind that you are trying to achieve the golden middle ground between impromptu (off-the-cuff) speaking that can lead to a chaotic and unorganized mess versus completely robotic reading from a large body of text, which will put your audience to sleep. That middle ground is called extemporaneous speaking, based on the technique of speaking from notes.

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You can present orally in person or online. If you present orally online, you can do so with just sound or with the use of a camera that allows your listeners to see you. Many laptops include built-in cameras and microphones that make it surprisingly easy for you to create a social, visual presence.

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Whether you are presenting in person or online, you need to set yourself up to present without having to remember everything you want to say. One way to create prompters that you can use very smoothly is to use PowerPoint slides that you can show as you talk and that can prompt your memory about what you want to say. When you use a PowerPoint in this way, you only see information your audience is looking at so you never have a problem with trying to look at your notes too much. One grave pitfall to this method is the tendency to read from the PowerPoint slides, which can be very boring for your audience, who also presumably can read. A good oral presentation from PowerPoint should be just as extemporaneous as one delivered from note cards.

If using a PowerPoint is not an option, you can present orally using note cards. When using cards, number them to assure they are in the proper order. Since you don't want to read your cards, don't write out your entire speech on the cards. Instead use only cues and place one idea per card so that you can turn to the next card as you transition to the next idea. On your note cards, use text that is large enough for you to easily read at a glance. On the back of the card, add additional details in a smaller font in case you must check out information beyond the basic cue.

When you use a PowerPoint, you can have built-in visuals, but when you use cards, you need to consider adding visuals in the form of items, posters, images on a computer screen (local file or one found on the Internet), handouts, and so on. Display visuals or pass out handouts when you want your audience to look at them, otherwise they are likely to be checking out your visuals when you want them to be listening to you.

Keep your audience members in mind when you plan your presentation. Based on their knowledge of your topic, interest in your topic, and attitudes about your topic, decide how basic, how long, and how in-depth your presentation will be.

The amount of preparation you put into the speech in advance will make all the difference. Allow ample time to practice your oral presentation several times. If you are presenting in person or with a

computer camera, you might want to record it or practice it in front of a mirror so you can visually see how your presentation comes across and can make desired adjustments. If you have a tendency to talk quickly all the time or when you are nervous, practice talking at a slower pace so your audience will have an easier time following you. Make sure you can consistently talk loudly enough for the whole audience to hear you. If your voice isn't loud enough, consider using a microphone since an audience that cannot hear quickly becomes unhappy.

While you are practicing, keep track of the amount of time your presentation takes so you can lengthen it or shorten it as needed to meet requirements. If feasible, stand while you present so you will make the strongest possible impression. If you are presenting in person, face your audience and make eye contact with your audience members.

Plan to open your presentation with an attention-grabbing comment, visual, activity, joke, story, or situation. If you capture your audience's attention at the very beginning, you have a chance of keeping it throughout your presentation. On the other hand, if you lose the audience's attention at the beginning, it will be very difficult to regain it.

Keep in mind that you do not have to share every detail of your essay in an oral presentation based on it. Choose a few highlights and focus on them in an effort to give a general idea about your work. Speak directly and personally to your audience, using first-person and second-person pronouns like "I," "you," and "we." Use simple sentences that are easy to follow and include visuals of unfamiliar terms. Stay in tune with your audience so you know when they are keenly interested and would appreciate additional elaboration as well as when they are losing interest, which signals that it would be wise to move onto the next topic.

Conclude your presentation by referring back to the interest-grabbing opener or offering another appropriate anecdote or memorable quotation, phrase, comment, or image. When you finish presenting, ask your audience members if they have any questions.

If possible, allow as much time as needed to address all questions. Then thank your audience for their attention to your presentation.

If you are nervous about your presentation, keep in mind that nervousness is normal and that it can help bring energy to your presentation. And implement the following ideas to help you remain calm and in control:

- Know your material thoroughly so you can easily immerse yourself in talking about it. Then remind yourself that you know the materials and will easily be able to share what you know.
- Write out your opening sentence or two so you get started on track even if you plan to speak extemporaneously for the balance of the speech.
- Stay with your plan. If you nervously start talking aimlessly, you can easily find yourself beginning with points that belong in different parts of your presentation and have a difficult time getting back on track to present your information in the intended order.
- Get all ready and then sit down and relax. Do not start immediately following a frenzied setup period.

When you are presenting online, keep the following tips in mind:

- Practice so that your timing is smooth, you know for sure how to use the technology, and your presentation appears polished. If you are using a PowerPoint, make sure each point matches up with the PowerPoint slide that is showing.
- Do not read PowerPoint slides. Your audience can read for themselves. Use your slides to enhance what you are saying.
- Make sure that you have everything you need right by your computer so that you do not have to leave the computer (or the camera) at any time. You can write a script for each slide and read the script while also adding related commentary as it makes sense.

- Keep in mind that your audience cannot benefit from any of your facial expressions or body movements if they cannot see you. And even if you are using a camera, they might not be able to see you clearly enough to get information sent through expressions or movements. So be very careful to use words vividly to convey your complete message.
- Talk slowly and enunciate clearly to give your audience the best possible chance of understanding you. People often have trouble understanding speech over the Internet.
- Make sure your audience members know how to get your attention during the presentation if you are planning to allow them to ask questions.
- Look directly at the camera to give the effect of eye contact with your audience members in video presentations.
- Keep in mind that everything you say and every noise you make, such as the screech of a scooting chair, can be heard or seen by the audience. Also, if you have a camera, remember that every facial expression and other things you do can possibly be seen.
- Be relaxed and professional, and most of all, be yourself. You're not filming a major motion picture or putting on a Broadway show. Think about the kind of voice and image you would want to listen to online or in person.

Attributions

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Writing Beyond Academia

DR. KAREN PALMER

You probably know someone who has said, “I’m a lousy writer, but it doesn’t matter since I don’t write for a living and I’m not an English teacher.” You might have even made such a comment yourself. In reality, good writing can help you from the moment you apply for a job throughout your time in the workforce. And regardless of whether you are writing in academic or professional settings, good writing involves an awareness of voice, audience, and message.

As with other types of writing, purpose,

message, audience, voice, attitude, reception, and tone are key factors to consider when you compose newsletters, flyers, brochures, ads, and personal letters. You will also discover that each of these types of writing has developed certain formatting standards over the years, regardless of whether they are produced in digital or print form.

Writing Newsletters

Newsletters are used by companies, schools, families, and other groups. It may well be that we are witnessing the tail end or the last gasp of the traditional newsletter now that they are increasingly being produced with word processing templates and distributed electronically via e-mail and websites. But even if that's true, the processes of designing and distributing electronic newsletters are much the same as those used by website designers using more sophisticated templates and technology. And even if they are

someday completely replaced by other means of getting out information about an organization, whatever replaces newsletters will borrow many of the same rhetorical techniques.

When you are designing a newsletter, give serious thought to the amount of content and amount of researched articles you want to include. Keep in mind that unless you can sustain the level of the first few issues of your newsletter, subsequent issues will appear to have declined in quality. You need to be able to maintain your initial newsletter plan in order to protect your organization's image. On the other hand, you should always be open to feedback from your audience to help keep your newsletter on track and evolving with your audience's needs. Announcing that you are making changes and improvements based on audience feedback is an excellent way to build trust and rapport with your readership.

Each newsletter is unique based on its purpose and the needs of its intended audience, but regardless of whether they appear in hard-copy or electronic form, they have some general features in common (shown in the following lists).

Typical Purposes for Newsletters

- to develop and maintain a network
- to inform
- to promote a group

Typical Formats for Newsletters

- text in columns
- large blocks of text broken up by graphics
- inviting visual layout
- integrated color
- digital or paper media
- ample margins of varying widths
- active voice

Typical Audience Expectations for Newsletters

- current information
- publication on an ongoing, timely basis
- information relevant to core topic
- short articles
- contributions by members
- ads for topic-related products
- consistent look across pages and issues
- most important information on front page
- easily readable and error-free text

Typical Components of Newsletters

- title on front page, possibly in a banner
- group identification
- date
- volume and issue
- headings and subheadings
- news about members
- schedule of relevant events
- photos
- developer contact information (phone number, web address, e-mail address)
- repeated features from issue to issue

Creating Flyers and Brochures

Flyers and brochures are both used to attract attention and to promote or persuade based on their content. Despite their common purpose, flyers and brochures have many differences. A brochure tends to be a more formal piece that is used on a long-term basis. A flyer is more casual and tends to be used for a single event at a

single point in time. Also, a flyer requires fonts large enough to be read at a distance when the flyer is posted. Since brochures usually have a longer shelf life, more care, expertise, and meticulous editing typically go into their creation. Brochures have more standard features than flyers, as shown in the following lists.

Like newsletters, brochures and flyers may be dying a slow but steady death, first by the move away from ink and paper and now by more compelling electronic means of getting out time-sensitive information. But interestingly, in all these cases, the first generation of electronic, replacement versions of the print genre still copy many of its features, and certainly, proper and effective use of rhetorical technique is still of paramount importance.

In some cases, especially when the identity of the targeted audience is not predetermined, the hard-copy form of a brochure or flyer is still preferable. Sometimes a brochure includes a full-size flyer on the inside panels resulting in a combination of brochure and flyer. Such flyers typically do not use the larger flyer fonts since they are not designed to post or to be read from a distance. Decide how your folds will fall before you start so you can create your layout as two full-size sheets of paper to use for front and back. When you choose paper for a brochure, make sure it folds nicely.

The following lists present some typical features of brochures and flyers:

Typical Purposes for Brochures

- to promote sales
- to promote interest
- to inform
- to announce something

Typical Formats for Brochures

- inviting visual layout (the content is most important, but first the reader's attention must be captured)
- bulleted lists instead of dense text
- color strategically placed to draw reader's eye
- ample white space, but no wasted space
- folded format (trifold is standard)
- small margins on each folded face
- two or three small chunks of text per fold
- two or three plain, simple sentences per chunk of text
- a maximum of three fonts
- standard font sizes—headings: 14–16, text: 12, captions: 10
- publication on high-quality paper or distribution electronically as an attached file

Typical Audience Expectations for Brochures

- one-time publication with possible updates at a later time
- information can be years old
- short text pieces on each face
- easily readable text
- consistent look across folds
- enough information for easy follow-up

Typical Components of Brochures

- attention-drawing front panel including main point and call to action (the top third is the most critical if the brochure will be in a rack)
- most important information on inside front panel
- headings and subheadings (use these liberally but strategically; they will serve as guides to the deeper content, but they will also be the only part some readers will read)
- meaningful graphics with good printing resolution
- hours of operation (if applicable)
- phone number and web address for more information

Developing Ads

Advertising is an ever-changing form of persuasion that reaches us through every conceivable medium: print, radio, television, cinema, public space, and the Internet. Regardless of how they reach us, ads use rhetorical techniques to catch our attention. As consumers we are well aware of the power of effective advertising. You don't have to be a professional advertising copywriter to have the need or occasion to make ads. The guidelines shown in the following lists can apply to any medium:

Typical Purposes for Ads

- to sell
- to persuade
- to inform

Typical Formats for Ads

- inviting visual layout
- brief main headings
- subheadings if needed (often not used in ads)
- color used for interest without being overwhelming
- ample white space to avoid a cluttered look
- font sizes based on audience needs
- a maximum of two fonts
- digital, paper, or other media

Typical Audience Expectations for Ads

- ads that require little or no work to view
- ads that load quickly
- ads that can be read in no more than a couple of seconds
- font that can easily be read at typical distance
- message that is apparent at a glance
- message that tests personal logic or challenges conventional wisdom
- enough information for easy follow-up

Typical Components of Ads

- main slogan or position presented in about seven words or fewer (often using only key words, not complete sentences)
- power words that draw emotions, such as *free*, *easy*, *exciting*, and *delicious*
- terms not used in similar ads
- relevant images that can carry a message with only a few accompanying words
- images that will load quickly in digital ads
- explanation of value of featured product, service, or idea
- information about purchasing or learning more
- company or institution name

Writing Personal Letters

Personal letters might seem to be a quaint form in the twenty-first century, and there's no question they have an old-fashioned feel to them. But it's precisely their unusual, almost rare nature that can make them so powerful. The very act of taking the trouble to find a stamp, envelope, and postal address elevates the importance of your message as the sender. As the recipient, when you open your mailbox and find a personal letter from someone, you tend to honor the care that person has taken to communicate with you in this medium. Imagine being the only job applicant who writes a personal

letter of thanks for an interview, or the only former student who writes a personal letter of thanks for a letter of recommendation. Yes, it's quaint and old-fashioned, but it can also be a very effective way of distinguishing yourself from the crowd. And sending a personal letter to a close friend in a time of need or celebration can still be just the right thing to do.

Personal letters are just that—personal. Hence you can create them in any way you like. You should, however, keep in mind that once you write and send a personal letter, it becomes a permanent, tangible written record, even more so than an e-mail or a post on a friend's social networking site. So make sure you write information and use a written format with which you want to be permanently associated.

The following lists present some typical features of personal letters:

Typical Purposes for Personal Letters

- to inform
- to keep in touch
- to share
- to persuade

Typical Formats for Personal Letters

- casual, conversational wording
- correct spelling
- casual use of punctuation, capitalization, and grammar
- personal and interesting details
- handwritten or typed format
- traditional or electronic distribution
- indented paragraphs

Typical Audience Expectations for Personal Letters

- typing or handwriting is easy to read
- messages is easy to understand
- references are familiar

Typical Components of Personal Letters

- date
- salutation
- introduction
- body
- conclusion
- closing
- signature

Writing Business Letters

You might think that people living in the age of technology do not need to learn business letter skills. After all, in today's professional world, e-mails have replaced business letters as the primary mode of communication. However, many formal situations are still best handled with business letters, whether they are sent on paper or as an attachment to an e-mail.

When writing a business letter, if you use business letterhead that includes the company address and other contact information, you do not need to incorporate that information within the letter. The most common format of business letters, the block format, uses one-inch margins with all content flush against the left margin, including the body paragraphs. Some less common forms do use indentation. Business letters include the following parts, as shown in this sample:

Your street address, city, and zip (if letterhead is not used)	16 Broadway Denver, CO 80002
Space	
Date	July 8, 2011
Space	
Name, position, and address of person to whom the letter is being written	Ms. Kelly Jones Vice President Wilmington Plastic Company Reno, NV 89501
Space	
Greeting (name followed by a colon)	Dear Ms. Jones:
Space	
Body of letter (paragraphs not indented; space between paragraphs)	I'm glad we were able to meet in Denver and discuss the points of our pending agreement. I hope you were already on your way before the storm hit and caused the Denver airport to close. As we discussed, in this letter I am summarizing the changes we agreed on. The completion date will move from March 5 to July 8. The quantity of XV89 parts will increase from 450 to 600. The reimbursement schedule will be monthly instead of bimonthly. Progress meetings will be held each Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. The formal contract will follow in a couple of weeks once legal is finished formatting it. I have attached the proposed work schedule. Bender Bottles looks forward to a mutually beneficial partnership with Wilmington Plastic.
Space	
Closing	Sincerely,
Triple or Quadruple Space	
Signature (in the space provided)	*Allison P. Sherry*
Typed Name	Allison P. Sherry
Position	Senior Vice President, Bender Bottles, Inc.
Space	
Enc.	Proposed Work Schedule for Wilmington/Bender Partnership

When writing a business letter, keep these tips in mind:

- Do not use slang.
- Be professional.
- Be concise and to the point.
- Mention a personal connection, if you have one, briefly at the beginning of the letter to create a personalized introduction.
- Use the abbreviation "Enc." or the word "Enclosed" prior to a list of papers that are included with the business letter.
- Proofread for grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Make sure that a letter attached to an e-mail is in a document format that your recipient also uses.
- Use a person's name in the greeting whenever possible. If you have no way of acquiring a name, use "Dear Sir or Madam" or similar generic, but professional, wording.

Composing Memos

A memo is less formal than a business letter but more formal than an e-mail. Memos are usually sent within a company addressing a single issue or meeting and are typically short. A common feature of memos is the heading followed by a colon. Memos typically include the following set components:

Name of person(s) or group to whom the memo is being sent	To: Department B Employees
Name of person(s) sending the memo	From: Kyle Wilson
Topic of the memo	Subject: Break Room Problem
Date the memo is being sent	Date: September 26, 2010
Names of others receiving the same memo	CC: Clark Buford, Sally Willer
Body of the memo	Due to a water leak, the fourth-floor break room will be closed for repairs. Until it reopens, use the fifth-floor break room.

Companies often have blank memo forms in digital and hard-copy formats.

Example of a Blank Memo Form

Wilmington Plastic Company

MEMO

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT:

DATE:

CC:

Writing a Résumé

As part of the process of applying for any job in any profession beyond the entry level, you are likely to have to produce two main written documents: a résumé and a cover letter or letter of application. Writing these documents well is often a key determiner in whether you get the job. To illustrate, we'll follow a student, Joey Williams, through these two key professional writing challenges. Joey is a recent graduate of a master's degree program in public relations who is seeking a position at a graphic design firm.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://oer.pressbooks.pub/roughwritersguide/?p=159#oembed-1

Creating Solid Résumés

Common résumé formats vary with types of jobs and with the times, but regardless of the type of position you are seeking, your résumé should include some key features and some key information.

Key Résumé Features

Effective résumés have the following features:

- They are meticulously edited (absolutely no errors).
- The subheadings stand out and are short enough to be read at a glance (one or two words).
- Ample white space is used.
- Lists are parallel.
- Bolding is used sparingly.
- One easy-to-read font is uniformly used throughout.
- The font is size 12.
- The résumé is available both in digital and hard-copy form.
- Formatting on a digital résumé holds when it is opened in others' computers. This formatting should be straight type without tabbing, tables, italics, bolding, columns, or indenting. If it's included as an attachment, it should be in a Microsoft Word file. A second option is to visually create the résumé as desired and then capture it in a PDF file.
- The résumé is confined to one page unless you are in a profession that requires additional pages or unless you are at a more advanced professional level that requires a more extensive résumé.
- The most recent information is presented first within each category.
- Standard résumé paper is used unless the specific profession calls for something different.
- Accomplishments are presented in non-wordy formats.
- Action verbs are used to describe accomplishments.
- Contact information is clearly visible at the top of the résumé.
- Key words that searchers in your professional field are likely to use are included in résumés that are posted online. (After your contact information, include a "key words" section or weave

the keywords into your accomplishments.)

Key Résumé Information

Every résumé should include the following information:

- professional name
- address
- phone number
- e-mail address
- work experience (i.e., places of employment)
- accomplishments at each place of employment
- education

These résumé components are optional:

- personal interests
- references
- dates of education and work experience
- address for personal website
- employment objective (a good strategy if you want to tailor your résumé for a certain job description)
- fax number
- awards and honors

To ensure that your résumé is both current and appropriate for the position, you should search online for similar sample résumés. You should also run your résumé past the career placement services at

your college and any people you know who are working in your field of interest. Here's Joey's generic résumé:

Writing Targeted Cover Letters

Along with sending a résumé when applying for a job, you will almost always want to send a cover letter. This suggestion holds true in both hard-copy and digital situations. A hard-copy cover letter should be formatted as a standard, typed business letter. A digital cover letter should be either typed directly into a given window or copied and pasted into the window. If you copy and paste, check to make sure that the formatting holds.

When the job market is tight, just getting an interview is a major hurdle. Facing dozens and sometimes even hundreds of applicants, employers are looking for reasons to cut down their pool of potential interviewees. Don't give them a reason **not** to interview you by writing a vaguely worded, overly general letter of application or résumé, especially when you can easily revise and tailor your approach to each position for which you are applying.

To *target* a cover letter means to write it specifically for an identified job. You can gather information to target your cover letter by looking carefully at the job description and by studying the company's website. Let's look at an example of an online job description that has caught Joey's attention:

Example

Video Game PR—Assistant Account Executive

About the Job

GolinHarris is a leading international public relations firm and winner of *PRWeek*'s Large PR Agency of the Year 2010, 2010 Best Places to Work by the *Los Angeles Business Journal*, and numerous industry awards.

Our western region headquarters, based in **Los Angeles**, is currently seeking an ambitious and motivated PR professional to join our team as an **Assistant Account Executive**. The successful candidate will play an integral role and receive valuable hands-on experience by working on our **Nintendo** account. We are launching exciting programs in the next few weeks and this opportunity will not last long. Avid gamers are encouraged to apply now.

The candidate we seek will perform fundamental PR tasks such as aiding in production of media-related materials, pitching program highlights to the media, monitoring for quality and quantity of media coverage and managing client publications and resources materials.

What Do You Need to Be Considered?

- 2 years of work experience in PR required, agency and video game background is preferred
- Applicants with only internship experience will not be considered
- A passion for communications and consumer issues
- Stellar AP-style writing abilities
- A Bachelor's degree
- Social media experience
- Local applicants preferred

About Us

As a member of the Interpublic Group (IPG), GolinHarris partners with a network of the communication industry's best strategists across a variety of disciplines, including sports marketing, consumer research, branding, special events and advertising. We collaborate with these partners to continually advance our clients' businesses.

At GolinHarris we recognize that there is much more to life than just work. Our benefits program has been designed to help GolinHarris employees and their families stay healthy, balance personal and career priorities, and build a solid and secure future. We offer a great workplace, culture, competitive salary, health care benefits (medical, dental and vision insurance), 401k and more.

GolinHarris is an Equal Opportunity Employer. EEO/AA.M/F/D/V.

Source: GolinHarris

As Joey prepares his cover letter, he'll need to include, in three or four paragraphs, information about himself and his fitness for the position that complement what his résumé already reveals. Typical contents of the paragraphs of his cover letter might include the following:

Cover Letter Outline

First Paragraph

- The job for which he is applying
- How he learned of the job
- A statement clearly and succinctly indicating why he is well suited for the job

Second Paragraph

- Some current, relevant experiences that show he has a good background for the job. This should be where he places the most significant points he has to offer.

Third Paragraph

- Other relevant job experiences or education. This is where he puts what might be considered his “second level” of important points.

Fourth Paragraph

- A statement about wanting to have an opportunity to discuss the job
- An offer to send references as needed
- Request to be contacted and a reiteration of his main contact information (most likely a phone number or an e-mail address or both)

Keep in mind that your cover letter is the first chance to present yourself and often the only chance. Besides being sure to include the most pertinent and valuable information you have to offer, be very careful that your letter is grammatically correct with no punctuation or spelling errors. Proofread it carefully yourself, and then, even if you think the letter is perfect, ask a trusted acquaintance to proofread it. Errors in this kind of high-stakes writing situation can be fatal to your chances of achieving your desired goal: getting your foot in the door professionally.

As he is planning his cover letter, Joey decides to apply what he has learned in his academic writing career to this all-important professional challenge. Thus, before writing, he fills out the statement of purpose he used six years before when he was a first-year college student:

Voice	**I am writing as** a young, eager, well-educated, and flexible individual who wants to be a part of the GolinHarris team.
Message	**I want to convey the message that** I will bring extensive gaming, graphic design, and public relations experience and credentials to the position.
Audience	**I want to write to** the human resources department or hiring manager at GolinHarris.
Attitude	**My attitude toward the subject is** positive and confident, but also somewhat deferential, humble, and respectful of authority.
Reception	**I want my audience to** give me an interview because they realize they've got a hot local prospect who's perfect for the job.
Tone	**My tone toward my readers is** professional, but creative, enthusiastic, and cutting-edge.

Armed with his statement of purpose, Joey writes the following cover letter:

703 Azalea Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90001

July 8, 2012

Judy Johnson
Regional Managing Director
GolinHarris
601 West Fifth Street, 4th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071

Dear Ms. Johnson:

I am responding to your recent job announcement for a public relations specialist and am applying to join your West Coast team in that role. I recently graduated with a master's degree in public relations from the University of Southern California, and I reside here in Los Angeles. I bring several years of experience in public relations and graphic design, an exemplary academic record, and a lifelong passion for gaming. For these reasons and more, I believe I am an ideal candidate for this position.

My enclosed resume details my skills, education, and experience, but I want to take an extra moment here to give you a more complete picture of the person you would be hiring as an employee. I am extremely responsible and responsive to clients' and coworkers' needs, as my references will attest. I have a sense of loyalty to the institutions with which I have been associated. I believe in leaving a culture better off than I found it. I am young, but I am eager to contribute and to apply my academic training and prior work experience to a company and to a product line I believe in.

Like many in my generation, I have been playing video games since I could hold a Nintendo controller in my hands. My appreciation for the culture of gaming goes well beyond the usual addiction to it as a pastime. I believe I can help GolinHarris to take the lead in bringing Nintendo's product line to a new level of prominence in popular culture rivaling that currently enjoyed by other media like film, television, and music. I have fresh ideas to contribute about how gaming fits the entertainment needs of audiences and consumers here and now.

I look forward to speaking with you further about this excellent opportunity to forge a working partnership together. I can be reached by email at joeywilliams@zmail.com or by phone locally at 213-555-3018.

Sincerely,

Joey Williams

Joseph A. Williams, B.A., M.A.

Enc. Resume

E-mail and Online Networking

Online networking refers to a variety of methods of talking to others over the Internet, including e-mailing. Since e-mailing is so common and has been around longer than the other methods, it will be dealt with as a separate entity here.

Using E-mail in the Workplace

E-mailing started small in the 1960s and became more widespread by the 1990s. Today the idea of going a day without e-mails is incomprehensible to many people, both professionally and personally. Even though most working people in the United States have both personal and work e-mail, workplace e-mail guidelines make the two quite different. Failing to follow these guidelines for workplace e-mails can have a range of ramifications from mild embarrassment to termination from your job. The following guidelines are general and most of them will apply in most workplaces. You are likely to find, however, that your workplace has its own guidelines that you will need to learn and follow.

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Here are some general workplace e-mail guidelines:

- Make sure your writing has no grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors and no typos. Any e-mail, whether it is sent internally or externally, reflects not only on the person sending it but also on the organization employing that person.
- Use standard wording, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Do not use any of the abbreviated, casual text that is common in personal online communications.
- Use a subject line that targets the key point of the e-mail so that the subject line can be a helpful sorting or searching tool.
- Be concise.
- Be courteous.
- Use jokes sparingly since they are often misunderstood.
- Use short paragraphs. Large blocks of digital text are difficult to read.
- Type in upper- and lowercase letters. Writing in all capital letters is perceived as shouting and writing in all lowercase letters is difficult to read.
- Keep in mind that electronic text is very easy to share with few or many. Don't put anything in an e-mail that would be problematic if shared beyond your intended recipient.
- Most e-mail systems allow you to design and include a signature at the end of your e-mails, with the company name, your title, your e-mail address, and your phone number. Unless you are writing to a colleague with whom you have daily contact, plan to include your signature.

- When e-mailing a business acquaintance you do not know well, use a standard business letter greeting ("Dear Jack" or "Dear Mr. Wichel") and closing ("Sincerely"). When you do know the person well, you can relax the greeting and closing a little if doing so would mesh with the culture of your company.
- Keep in mind that different computers and e-mail programs receive e-mail text differently. Do not rely on text features, such as bolding, italicizing, color, and underlining, to carry meaning.
- Clean up forwarded e-mails so that old e-mail components are not included unnecessarily or unintentionally.
- Take great care with your tone. A good way to check that your tone comes off accurately is to reread your e-mail aloud once you are finished writing it. If you sense that you are sending or replying to an e-mail out of anger or frustration, enforce an overnight cooling-off period before clicking the send button.
- If you make changes in your e-mail, reread the whole e-mail when you are finished to make sure you made any needed adjustments to accommodate the changes.
- Avoid using your work e-mail for personal messages, and especially avoid sending any messages or attachments that could be considered vulgar, offensive, or inappropriate. Keep in mind that all work e-mail might be monitored.
- Try not to send unusually large attachments that might clog the in-boxes of colleagues and coworkers, and keep your mailbox clean, so you don't overtax the server space of your organization.

Using Other Online

Networking

The e-mail guidelines also apply to other online networking situations. Whether you use other online networking tools will depend on your company. Having a general awareness of some of the other options is helpful when you join a company.

Some Other Online Networking Options

Networking Tool	Description
Blogs	Short for weblog, a blog is a personal online journal. Since blog content can show up in Internet searches, many businesses now maintain blogs as a means of sharing information with customers.
Niche networking sites	Specialty networking sites, such as for quilters, surfers, or vegans, serve as a hub for sharing ideas.
Podcasts	You can record and post audio files for others to download by subscription through a Real Simple Syndication (RSS) feed.
Professional networking sites	Pay sites or sites with ad content can be used by job seekers to post their skills, by employers to find employees with needed skills, or by employees to network with others in the same field.
Social networking sites	Initially used only for personal interchanges, these are now also used by many businesses as a means of reaching out to customers.
Video sites	You can create video files and upload them onto the Internet for others to view.

Networking Tool	Description
Wikis	You can use these websites to collaborate on projects with invited group members. On such sites, group members at many different physical locations can work together by adding their input on a single document.
White space social networking sites	These company networking sites are meant for internal communication and are not open to the public.

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Writing for Non-Native Speakers

DR. KAREN PALMER

If you learned English as a second language and you regularly speak a language other than English, this appendix is for you. It also provides a refresher course on many of the elements in the rest of this handbook.

Parts of Speech

In English, words are used in one of eight parts of speech: noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb, conjunction, preposition, and interjection. This table includes an explanation and examples of each of the eight parts of speech:

Noun	Person, place, or thing	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	Iowa	book	arm
			horse	idea	month
Pronoun	Takes the place of a noun	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	he	it	I
			her	my	theirs
Adjective	Describes a noun or pronoun	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	sticky	funny	crazy
			long	cold	round
Verb	Shows action or state of being	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	run	jump	felt
			think	is	gone
Adverb	Describes a verb, another adverb, or an adjective and tells how, where, or when something is done	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	slowly	easily	very
			often	heavily	sharply
Conjunction	Joins words, phrases, and clauses	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	and	because	but
			since	or	so
Preposition	First word in a phrase that indicates the relationship of the phrase to other words in the sentence	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	in	on	to
			after	at	over
Interjection	A word that shows emotion and is not related to the rest of the sentence	Wow! After the game, silly Mary ate her apples and carrots quickly.	Hey	Wow	Look
			Super	Oh	Yuck

English Word Order

The simplest level of English word order within a sentence is that subjects come first followed by verbs and then direct objects.

When you have more complicated sentences, use the following general order.

When an English sentence includes more than one adjective modifying a given noun, the adjectives have a hierarchy you should follow. You should, however, keep a string of adjectives to two or three. The example includes a longer string of adjectives simply to clarify the word order. Using this table, you can see that "the small thin Methodist girl…" would be correct but "the young French small girl…" would be incorrect.

Some languages, such as Spanish, insert "no" before a verb to create a negative sentence. In English, the negative is often indicated by placing "not" after the verb or in a contraction with the verb.

Example

I can't make it before 1:00 p.m.

Incorrect example: I no can make it before 1:00 p.m.

Count and Noncount Nouns

Nouns that name separate things or people that you can count are called count nouns. Nouns that name things that cannot be counted unless additional words are added are called noncount nouns. You need to understand count and noncount nouns in order to use the nouns correctly with articles, in singular and plural formations, and in other situations. Some nouns can serve as either count or noncount nouns.

Examples of Count Nouns

- box(es)
- dog(s)
- house(s)
- leaf (leaves)
- moon(s)
- peach(es)
- sheep
- women

Examples of Noncount Nouns

- advice
- cheese
- equipment
- furniture
- information
- Internet
- mail
- weather

Examples of Nouns That Can Be Either Count or Noncount Nouns

- baseball (play baseball vs. throw a baseball)
- love (He is my love! vs. two loves: poetry and basketball)
- marble (play with a marble vs. a floor made of marble)

Articles

In English, nouns are identified or quantified by determiners. Articles, such as *a*, *an*, and *the*, are one type of determiner. Use the following guidelines to alleviate confusion regarding whether to use an article or which article to use.

- Use *a* and *an* with nonspecific or indefinite singular count nouns and some proper nouns where you do not have enough information to be more specific. Use *a* before nouns beginning with a consonant sound and *an* before nouns beginning with a vowel sound.

Example 1

I have *a dog* at home, also. (The word “dog” is a nonspecific noun since it doesn’t refer to any certain dog.)

Example 2

(before a vowel): Carrie gave everyone *an apple* at lunch.

Example 3

(before a consonant; with proper noun): He was wearing *a Texas* shirt.

- Use *every* and *each* with singular count nouns and some proper nouns.

Examples

Example 1

I heard every noise all night long.

Example 2

I tried each Jell-O flavor and liked them all.

- Use *this* and *that* with singular count and noncount nouns.

Examples

Example 1

(with count noun): I am going to eat *that apple*.

Example 2

(with noncount noun): I am not too excited about *this weather*.

- Use *any*, *enough*, and *some* with nonspecific or indefinite plural nouns (count or noncount).

Examples

Example 1

I didn't have *any donuts* at the meeting because he ate them all.

Example 2

Do you have *enough donuts* for everyone?

Example 3

He ate *some* donuts at the meeting.

- Use *(a) little* and *much* with noncount nouns.

Examples

Example 1

I'd like *a little meatloaf*, please.

Example 2

There's not *much spaghetti* left.

- Use *the* with noncount nouns and singular and plural count nouns.

Examples

Example 1

(with noncount noun): *The weather is beautiful today.*

Example 2

(with singular count noun): Who opened *the door*?

Example 3

(with plural count noun): All *the houses* had brick fronts.

- Use *both*, *(a) few*, *many*, *several*, *these*, and *those* with plural count nouns.

Examples

Example 1

I have *a few books* you might like to borrow.

Example 2

Daryl and Louise have been traveling for *several days*.

Example 3

Are *those shoes* yours?

Singulars and Plurals

English count nouns have singular and plural forms. Typically, these nouns are formed by adding –*s* or –*es*. Words that end in –*ch*, –*sh*, or –*s* usually require the addition of –*es* to form the plural. Atypical plurals are formed in various ways, such as those shown in the following table.

Singular Nouns	**Plural Nouns**
dog	dogs (-s added)
table	tables (-s added)
peach	peaches (-*es* added)
wish	wishes (-*es* added)
kiss	kisses (-*es* added)
man	men (atypical)
sheep	sheep (atypical)
tooth	teeth (atypical)
child	children (atypical)
alumnus	alumni (atypical)
leaf	leaves (atypical)

Proper nouns are typically either singular or plural. Plural proper nouns usually have no singular form, and singular proper nouns usually have no plural form.

Singular Proper Nouns	**Plural Proper Nouns**
Kentucky	Sawtooth Mountains
Alex	*The Everglades*

Noncount nouns typically have only one form that is basically a singular form. To quantify them, you can add a preceding phrase.

Noncount Nouns	Sentences with Noncount Nouns and Quantifying Phrases
gas	We put twelve gallons of gas in the car this morning.
anguish	After years of anguish, he finally found happiness.

Verb Tenses

You can practice conjugating many English verbs to increase your awareness of verb tenses. Use this format for the basic conjugation:

- I laugh at Millie.
- You laugh at Millie.
- He/She/It laughs at Millie.
- We laugh at Millie.
- You laugh at Millie.
- They laugh at Millie.

You can also practice completing these five forms of English. A mixture of tenses is used to show that you can practice the different forms with any tense.

Affirmative Usage

- I play ball.
- You play ball.
- She plays ball.
- We play ball.
- You play ball.

- They play ball.

Negative Usage

- I do not play ball.
- You do not play ball.
- She does not play ball.
- We do not play ball.
- You do not play ball.
- They do not play ball.

Yes/No Questions

- Do you play ball?
- Does she play ball?
- Do we play ball?
- Do they play ball?

Short Answers

- Yes, I do.
- Yes, she does.
- No, they do not.
- No, you do not.

Wh- Questions

- Who is she?
- Where did you find it?
- When are you coming?
- Why won't it work?
- What are you going to do?

Correct Verbs

People who are new to English often experience confusion about which verb forms can serve as the verb in a sentence. An English sentence must include at least one verb or verb phrase and a tense that relays the time during which the action is taking place. Verbals (such as gerunds and infinitives) should not be confused with verbs.

- A sentence with a gerund must also have another verb.

Example

Correct example: Roger enjoys driving the RV.

Incorrect example: Roger driving the RV.

- A sentence with an infinitive must have another verb.

Example

Correct example: Kyle decided to write a long message.

Incorrect example: Kyle to write a long message.

- Verbs must match the timing indicated by the other words in a sentence.

Examples

Past tense correct example: Yesterday, I called you at 5:00 p.m.

Past tense incorrect example: Yesterday, I call you at 5:00 p.m.

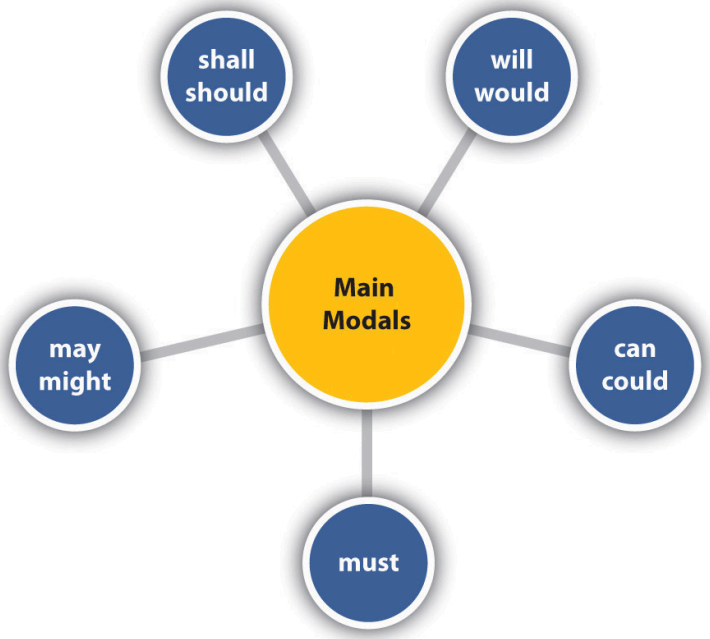
Future tense correct example: The next time it rains, I will bring my umbrella.

Future tense incorrect example: The next time it rains, I bring my umbrella.

Present tense correct example: Come in and get warm.

Present tense incorrect example: Come in and got warm.

MODAL AUXILIARY VERBS



The English language includes nine main modal auxiliary verbs that are used with other verbs. These modals, shown in the wheel in four pairs and a single, can refer to past, present, or future tense based on the verbs that are used with them. The modals themselves do not change form to change tense. As shown in the following table, you can use modals to express an attitude in regard to the action or general situation of the sentence.

Modal Function	Format for Present or Future Tense	Format for Past Tense
Advisability	*should* or *ought to* + base verb	*should* or *ought to* + *have* + past participle
	You *should take* the time to visit Yellowstone.	You *ought to have taken* the time to visit Yellowstone.
Capability	*can*, *am able to*, *is able to*, or *are able to* + base verb	*could*, *was able to*, *were able to* + base verb or past participle
	Aisha *can tell* you who was at the party.	Saul *was able to walk* on the beam without falling off.
Deduction	*must*, *has to* + base verb	*must* + *have* + *past participle*
	Hank *must know* Spanish and French.	Lucy *must have driven* through the night.
Forbiddance	*must* + not + base verb	N/A
	You *must not take* his food.	
Expectation	*should* + base verb	*should* + have + past participle
	The sun *should set* about 7:15 today.	The boys *should have finished* their ball game by now.
Intention	*will* or *shall* + base verb	*would* + base verb
	I *will meet* you at the theater.	I said I *would finish* sometime today.
Necessity	*must* or *have to* + base verb	*had to*+ base verb
	I *must finish* cleaning before they arrive.	Greg *had to get* gas before we started the trip.
Past habit	N/A	*would* or *used to* + base verb

Modal Function	Format for Present or Future Tense	Format for Past Tense
		When I worked there, I *used to eat* at Marvy's every day.
Permission request	*can*, *could*, *may*, or *might* + base verb (in question format)	*might* or *could* + base verb
	Could I *go* with you?	My parents said I *could use* their car next week.
Polite request	*could* or *would* + base verb (in question format)	N/A
	Would you please *hand* me page 45?	
Possibility/ uncertainty	*may* or *might* + base verb	*might* + *have* + past participle
	Alice *might be* at work by 6:00 a.m.	I don't remember, but I *might have been* the one sitting next to him that night.
Speculation	*could*, *might*, or *would* + base verb	*could*, *might*, or *would* + *have* + past participle
	If he conditions enough, he *could win* his race.	There *could have been* some real money in that deal we almost made.

Gerunds and Infinitives

Gerunds are nouns formed by adding *–ing* to a verb, such as *running*. Infinitives are nouns formed from the "to" form of a verb, such as *to run*. These two noun forms are called verbals, because they are formed from verbs. Experience with English will teach you which form to use in which situation. In the meantime, the following lists provide a brief overview.

Verbs That Should Be Followed Only by Gerunds and *Not* by Infinitives

Example

These Verbs Could Fill This Blank: _____ Walking

- admit
- avoid
- complete
- consider
- delay
- deny
- dislike
- finish
- imagine
- miss
- postpone
- quit
- recommend
- resist
- stop
- suggest
- understand

Verbs That Should Be Followed Only by Infinitives and *Not* by Gerunds

Example

These Verbs Could Fill This Blank: _____ to Walk

- agree
- appear
- ask
- beg
- claim
- decide
- demand

- desire
- fail
- happen
- hesitate
- intend
- manage
- offer
- plan
- pretend
- struggle

Verbs That Can Be Followed by Either Gerunds or Infinitives

Examples

These Verbs Could Fill Either of These Blanks: _____ Walking or _____ to Walk

- begin
- can(’t) afford
- can(’t) bear
- cease
- commence
- continue
- dread
- hate
- intend
- like
- loathe
- love
- neglect
- prefer
- start
- try
- undertake

Forming Participles

Participles are verb forms that combine with auxiliary verbs to create different tenses.

- To form **perfect tenses**, use *had*, *has*, or *have* with the past participle.
  Example: My dog has eaten twice today.

- To form **progressive tenses**, use a form of the verb *to be* with the present participle, or gerund.
  Example: My dog is eating a treat.

- To write in **passive voice**, use a form of the verb *to be* with the past participle.
  Example: The treat was eaten by my dog.

Adverbs and Adjectives

Adverbs often end in *–ly* and modify verbs, other adverbs, and adjectives. As a rule, you should place an adverb next to or close to

the word it modifies, although adverbs can be placed in different positions within a sentence without affecting its meaning.

Examples

Before the verb: "He **slowly** walked to the store."

After the verb: "He walked **slowly** to the store."

At the beginning of the sentence: "**Slowly**, he walked to the store."

At the end of the sentence: "He walked to the store **slowly**."

Between an auxiliary and main verb: "He was **slowly** walking to the store."

Some adverbs, however, have a different meaning based on where they are placed. You should check to make sure that your placement carries the intended meaning.

Examples

"She **only** loved him."

Translation: "The only emotion she felt toward him was love."

"**Only** she loved him."

Translation: "The only person who loved him was her."

"She loved **only** him." or "She loved him **only**."

Translation: "The only person she loved was him."

Some adverbs simply do not work between the verb and the direct object in a sentence.

Example

Acceptable adverb placement: She **barely** heard the noise.

Unacceptable adverb placement: She heard **barely** the noise.

Adjectives modify nouns and in some more heavily inflected languages, the endings of adjectives change to agree with the number and gender of the noun. In English, adjectives do not change in this way. For example, within the following sentences, note how the spelling of the adjective "eager" remains the same, regardless of the number or the gender of the noun it modifies.

Examples

The eager boy jumped the starting gun.

The eager boys lined up.

The eager girls eyed the starter.

As in these sentences, adjectives usually are placed before a noun. The noun can be the subject, as in the preceding example, or a direct object, as in the following sentence.

Example

Harold admired his shiny red car.

Adjectives can also be placed after a linking verb. The adjective still modifies a noun but is not placed next to the noun, as in the following example.

The weather was miserable.

When two or more adjectives are used to modify a single noun, they should be used in a set order. Even though the table shows ten levels within the hierarchy, you should limit your adjectives per noun to two or three.

Hierarchical Order of Adjectives

Determiner	Opinion or Assessment	Physical Description				Nationality	Religion	Material	Noun
		Size	Shape	Age	Color				
The	pretty	small	thin	young	white	French	Methodist	plastic	girl

When using an adverb and adjective together with a noun, you should typically place the adverb first, followed by the adjective, and then the noun.

Example

the strikingly golden tree

Irregular Adjectives

In English, adjectives have comparative and superlative forms that are used to more exactly describe nouns.

Example

Joey is **tall**, Pete is **taller** than Joey, and Malik is the **tallest** of the three boys.

One common way to form the comparative and superlative forms

is to add *–er* and *–est*, respectively, as shown in the preceding example. A second common method is to use the words *more* and *most* or *less* and *least*, as shown in the following example.

Example

Lucy is **eager** to start, Callie is **more eager**, and Shannon is **the most eager**.

Some adjectives do not follow these two common methods of forming comparatives and superlatives. You will simply have to learn these irregular adjectives by heart. Notice that some are irregular when used with a certain meaning and not when used with a different meaning.

Sample Adjectives That Form Superlatives Using Irregular Patterns

much (noncount nouns)	more	most
many (count nouns)	more	most
little (size)	littler	littlest
little (number)	less	least
old (people and things)	older	oldest
old (family members)	elder	eldest

Some adjectives' comparatives and superlatives can be formed with either *–er* and *–est* or with *more* and *most* (or *less* and *least*). In these cases, choose the version that works best within a given sentence.

Sample Adjectives That Can Form Superlatives Using *–er* and *–est* or *More* and *Most*

clever	cleverer	cleverest
clever	more clever	most clever
gentle	gentler	gentlest
gentle	more gentle	most gentle
friendly	friendlier	friendliest
friendly	more friendly	most friendly
quiet	quieter	quietest
quiet	more quiet	most quiet
simple	simpler	simplest
simple	more simple	most simple

Some adjectives do not have comparative and superlative forms since the simplest form expresses the only possible form.

Sample Adjectives That Do Not Have Comparative and Superlative Forms

- blind
- dead
- fatal
- final
- left
- right
- unique
- universal
- vertical
- wrong

Indefinite Adjectives

Indefinite adjectives give nonspecific information about a noun. For example, the indefinite article *few* indicates some, but not an exact amount. Indefinite adjectives are easily confused with indefinite pronouns since they are the same words used differently. An indefinite pronoun replaces a noun. An indefinite adjective precedes a noun or pronoun and modifies it. It is important for you to

understand the difference between indefinite adjectives and pronouns to assure you are saying what you mean. Some common indefinite adjectives include *all*, *any*, *anything*, *each*, *every*, *few*, *many*, *one*, *several*, *some*, *somebody*, and *someone*.

Examples

Indefinite adjective: We are having *some* cake for dessert.

Indefinite pronoun: I like cake. I'll have *some*, please.

Indefinite adjective: You can find a state name on *each* quarter.

Indefinite pronoun: I have four Illinois quarters, and *each* is brand new.

Predicate Adjectives

Since linking verbs express a state of being instead of an action, adjectives are used after them instead of adverbs. An adjective that follows a linking verb is referred to as a *predicate adjective*. Be careful not to use an adverb simply because of the proximity to the verb.

Examples

Correct (adjective follows linking verb): Kelly is selfish.

Incorrect (adverb follows linking verb): Kelly is selfishly.

Correct (adjective follows linking verb): Beth seems eager.

Incorrect (adverb follows linking verb): Beth seems eagerly.

Linking Verbs That Can Be Followed by Adjectives

- appear
- be
- become
- feel
- get
- grow
- keep
- look

- prove
- remain
- seem
- smell
- sound
- stay
- taste
- turn

Clauses and Phrases

Clauses include both subjects and verbs that work together as a single unit. When they form stand-alone sentences, they're called independent clauses. An independent clause can stand alone or can be used with other clauses and phrases. A dependent clause also includes both a subject and a verb, but it must combine with an independent clause to form a complete sentence.

Types of Dependent Clauses	**Descriptions**	**Examples**
Adverb clause	Serves as an adverb; tells when, how, why, where, under what condition, to what degree, how often, or how much	**To avoid sunburn**, she plastered her body with sunscreen.
Noun clause	Serves as a noun when attached to a verb	**That she would win the race** seemed quite likely.
		She thought **that she would win the race**.
Adjective clause (also called a relative clause)	Begins with a relative pronoun (*that*, *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*) or a relative adverb (*when*, *where*, *why*); functions as an adjective; attaches to a noun; has both a subject and a verb; tells what kind, how many, or which one	The day **that he lost his watch** was an unlucky day.*
		The house **where they lived** is gone.
Appositive clause	Functions as an appositive by restating a noun or noun-related verb in clause form; begins with *that*; typical nouns involved include possibilities such as assumption, belief, conviction, idea, knowledge, and theory	The idea **that Josie will someday be taller than me** is crazy.
***In some instances, the relative pronoun or adverb can be implied (e.g., "The day he lost his watch was an unlucky day").**		

Phrases are groups of words that work together as a single unit but do not have a subject or a verb. English includes five basic kinds of phrases.

Types of Phrases	Descriptions	Examples
Noun phrase	Multiple words serving as a noun	Darcy ate **a ham sandwich**.
Verb phrase	Used as the verb in sentences that are in the progressive and perfect tenses	The class **should have started** a half-hour earlier.
Prepositional phrase	Begins with a preposition	Work will be easier **after the holiday rush**.
Adjective phrase	Functions as an adjective; might include prepositional phrases and/or nouns	My brother is **very tall and handsome**.
Adverb phrase	Functions as an adverb; might include prepositional phrases and/or multiple adverbs	Let's go walking **after dinner**.
		Ignacia walked **wearily and unsteadily**.

Relative Pronouns and Clauses

An adjective clause gives information about a preceding noun in a sentence. Look at the following examples.

Examples

The car that Richie was driving was yellow.

Des Moines, **where I live**, is in Iowa.

Mr. Creeter, **whose brother I know**, is the new math teacher.

Like many other adjective clauses, these begin with a relative adjective (*which*, *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *that*) or a relative adverb (*when* or *where*). When you use a relative clause to describe a noun, make sure to begin it with one of the seven relative adjectives and adverbs listed in the previous sentence.

Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

Prepositions are words that show the relationships between two or more other words. Choosing correct prepositions can be challenging, but the following examples will help clarify how to use some of the most common prepositions.

Types of Prepositions	Examples of Prepositions	How to Use	Prepositions Used in Sentences
Time	at	Use with hours of the day and these words that indicate time of day: *dawn*, *midnight*, *night*, and *noon*	We will eat *at* 11:30.
			We will eat *at noon*.
	by	Use with time words to indicate a particular time	I'll be there *by* 5:00.
			I'll be finished *by October*.
	in	Use with *the* and these time-of-day words: *afternoon*, *evening*, and *morning*	We'll start *in the morning*.
		Use on its own with months, seasons, and years	The rainy season starts *in June*.
	on	Use with days of the week	I'll see you *on Friday*.
Location	at	Use to indicate a particular place	I'll stop *at the dry cleaners*.
	in	Use when indicating that an item or person is within given boundaries	My ticket is *in my pocket*.
	by	Use to mean "near a particular place"	My desk is *by the back door*.
	on	Use when indicating a surface or site on which something rests or is located	Place it *on the table*, please.

Types of Prepositions	Examples of Prepositions	How to Use	Prepositions Used in Sentences
			My office is *on Lincoln Boulevard.*
Logical relationships	of	Use to indicate part of a whole	I ate half *of the sandwich.*
		Use to indicate contents or makeup	I brought a bag *of chips.*
	for	Use to show purpose	Jake uses his apron *for grilling.*
State of being	in	Use to indicate a state of being	I am afraid that I'm *in trouble.*

Omitted Words

Some languages, especially those that make greater use of inflection, do not include all the sentence parts that English includes. Take special care to include those English parts that you might not be used to including in your native language. The following table shows some of these words that are needed in English but not in other languages.

Sentence Parts	**Language Issues**
Articles	Neither Chinese nor Arabic includes articles, such as *a* and *an*, so people with Chinese or Arabic as a first language have to take great care to learn to use articles correctly.
Verbs	Many languages have verb tense setups that vary from English, so most new English learners have to be very careful to include auxiliary verbs properly. For example, Arabic does not include the verb "to be," so native speakers of Arabic who learn English have to take special care to learn the usage of "to be." An Arabic speaker might say, "The girl happy," instead of, "The girl is happy."
Subjects	Spanish and Japanese do not include a subject in every sentence, but every English sentence requires a subject (except in commands where the subject *you* is understood: "Go get the box").
Expletives	Inverted English sentences can cause problems for many new English speakers. For example, you could say, "An apple is in the refrigerator." But in typical English, you would more likely say, "There is an apple in the refrigerator." This version is an inverted sentence, and "there" is an expletive. Many new English learners might invert the sentence without adding the expletive and say, "Is an apple in the refrigerator."
Plurals	Neither Chinese nor Thai includes plurals, but English does. So many new English learners have to take great care to differentiate between singular and plural forms and to use them at the appropriate times.
Subject pronouns	In Spanish, the subject pronoun is often not used, so Spanish speakers learning English will often omit the subject pronoun, saying, "Am hungry," instead of, "I am hungry."

Not and Other Negative Words

Negative Words:

barely
hardly
neither
never
no
nobody
none
not
nothing
nowhere
rarely
scarcely

To form a negative in English, you have to add a negative word to the sentence. Some of the negative words in English are shown in the blue arrow. Typically, you should place the negative word before the main verb.

Examples

I was *barely* awake when I heard you come home.

Kurt is *not* going with us.

In casual English, it is common to form contractions, or shortened combined words, with the auxiliary or linking verb and the word *not*. Contractions are typically not acceptable in very formal writing but are becoming more and more common in certain academic and public contexts.

Examples

I haven't heard that before.

Jill isn't my cousin.

Using two negative words in the same sentence changes the meaning of the negative words to positive, thus supporting the common saying "Two negatives make a positive." Think of it as being similar to multiplying two negative numbers and getting a positive

number. Double negatives are often used in extremely casual talk but never in professional or academic settings.

Examples

Correct: I didn't hear anything.

Incorrect: I didn't hear nothing. (The two negatives change to a positive, so the sentence technically means "I heard something.")

Idioms

Idioms are informal, colorful language. Although their intent is to add interest to the English language, they also add a lot of confusion since their intended meanings are not aligned with their literal meanings. In time, you will learn the idioms that your acquaintances use. Until then, reading lists of idioms, such as the following, might prove helpful. Just remember that when a person says something that seems to make no sense at all, an idiom might be involved. Also, keep in mind that this list is just a very small sampling of the thousands of idiomatic expressions that occur in English, as happens with any language.

Idiom	Intended Meaning
A little bird told me.	I know some information, and I'd rather not say where I heard it.
Don't count your chickens before they hatch.	Don't decide before you have all the facts.
Don't jump out of your skin.	Don't get overly excited.
Go fly a kite.	What you are saying doesn't make sense.
Hank's got some major-league problems.	Hank has some serious problems.
Nothing ventured, nothing gained.	You can't succeed if you don't try.
People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.	You should not criticize others for faults that you also have, or since you aren't perfect, you should not criticize others.
They are joined at the hip.	They are always together and/or think alike.
We've got it made in the shade.	Everything is working out just right.
What does John Q. Public say?	What does the average person think?
You're crazy.	Your words do not make sense.

Spelling Tips

Spelling is a vital part of your written English skills. Your spelling needs to include both an understanding of general spelling rules and a mastery of common words that you will use often. The following are some of the most common words you will need to spell listed in categories.

Days and Months		Time	Directions
• Monday • Tuesday • Wednesday • Thursday • Friday • Saturday • Sunday	• January • February • March • April • May • June • July • August • September • October • November • December	• second • minute • hour • day • week • month • year • decade • century • millennium • moment	• left • right • straight • east • west • north • south • far • near • next to • up • down

Grocery Lists		General Shopping Lists	Family Words
• apples • asparagus • bananas • beans • bread • butter • cabbage • carrots • celery • cheese • chicken • cucumber	• eggs • ham • hamburger • fish • lamb • lettuce • milk • pork chops • roast • soda • tortillas	• bath soap • deodorant • dish soap • floss • shampoo • toilet bowl cleaner • toothpaste • window cleaner	• aunt • brother • father/dad • grandfather • grandmother • husband • mother/mom • sister • uncle • wife

Services	Words for Packing to Move	Math Words	Measurement
• barber • dentist • doctor • hair dresser • lawyer • nurse • pharmacist • teacher	• bathroom • bedroom • dining room • family room • garage • kitchen • laundry room • living room	• add • subtract • multiply • divide • more • less • sum • difference • equals • plus • total	• inch (in.) • foot (ft.) • yard (yd.) • mile (mi.) • millimeter (mm) • centimeter (cm) • kilometer (km) • cup • quart (qu.) • gallon (gal.) • teaspoon (tsp.) • tablespoon (tb.)

Holidays	Common Names	
• New Year's Day • Martin Luther King Jr. Day • Valentine's Day • St. Patrick's Day • Mother's Day • Memorial Day • Flag Day • Father's Day • Fourth of July • Labor Day • Halloween • Columbus Day • Thanksgiving • Christmas	• Barbara • Elizabeth • Jennifer • Linda • Maria • Mary • Patricia • Susan • Adam • David • James • John • Michael • Richard • Robert • William	• Anderson • Brown • Davis • Garcia • Harris • Jackson • Johnson • Jones • Martin • Miller • Moore • Smith • Taylor • Thomas • White • Wilson

American Writing Styles, Argument, and Structure

Your original language has its own structures, formats, and cultural assumptions that are likely natural to you but perhaps different from those of English. The following broad guidelines underlie basic American English and US academic writing.

- Citing sources: Some languages and cultures do not consider citing sources of ideas to be of paramount importance. In US academic situations, however, failing to cite sources of ideas and text is referred to as plagiarism and can result in serious ramifications, including failing grades, damaged reputations, school expulsions, and job loss.
- Introducing the topic early: Unlike some languages, American English typically presents the topic early in a paper.
- Staying on topic: Although some languages view diversions from the topic as adding interest and depth, American English is focused and on topic.
- Writing concisely: Some languages hold eloquent, flowing language in high esteem. Consequently, texts in these languages are often long and elaborate. American English, on the other hand, prefers concise, to-the-point wording.
- Constructing arguments: US academic writing often involves argument building. To this end, writers use transitions to link ideas, evidence to support claims, and relatively formal writing to ensure clarity.

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