

Grammar Review & Point of View in Essay Writing

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Grammar Review: SPC English Department Essay Grading Standards

- To evaluate essays, the SPC English department uses:
 - A Set of Uniform Standards to:
 - Demonstrate a basic level of competence in college-level writing
 - Teach an appropriate foundation for writing in academic and professional environments

Essay Grading Criteria

- Essays are evaluated on four bases:
 - Unity
 - Support
 - Coherence
 - Sentence skills
- The criteria considered in each base include:
 - characteristics essential to the success of an essay
- Depending on the assignment:
 - certain bases and criteria may be weighted more than others
 - and the instructor's assignment may establish additional, more specific criteria

Base 1: Unity

Thesis

The thesis statement:

- concisely expresses the main idea of the essay
- is appropriate for the assignment
- and establishes a sustained and consistent focus for the paper.
- The thesis may preview the supporting ideas

Body Paragraph Structure

A body paragraph includes:

- a main idea expressed in a topic sentence strongly tied to the stated thesis
- unified supporting details
- and clear connections among ideas

Purpose and Audience

- The content and style are tailored for a specific purpose and audience

Base 2: Support

- **Details/Development:**

- **A well-developed essay:**

- supports the thesis with ample evidence
- uses a variety of specific examples, facts, or other details
- and explains the evidence to show its connections to the thesis

- **Logic:**

- **The essay presents clear:**

- sophisticated, insightful ideas that recognize:
- the complexity of the topic without:
- inaccuracies or errors in reasoning

- **Use of Sources:**

- **If research is used, the essay:**

- accurately quotes and paraphrases credible sources
- effectively balances source material with the writer's own ideas
- and cites and documents as per the required standards of the style (MLA/APA)

Base 3: Coherence

- **Organization and Transitions**

- The essay demonstrates:
 - a logical progression of ideas
 - provides clear and smooth transitions among ideas
 - uses structure appropriate to an academic essay.

- **Title, Introduction, and Conclusion**

- An appropriate title is provided
 - An introduction captures the reader's attention
 - transitions to the topic by giving context or background information
 - and presents the thesis statement.
 - A conclusion reemphasizes the essay's thesis and main ideas and provides a sense of closure.

Base 4: Sentence Skills

- **Use of Standard American English without major errors, such as:**

- **Fragment**

Faulty Parallelism

- **Mechanics**

Dangling Modifiers

- **Wrong Word**

Comma-Splice Error

- **Punctuation**

Subject-Verb Agreement

- **Fused Sentences**

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

- **Point of View**

Incorrect Verb Usage

Base 4: Sentence Skills (Cont.)

Word Choice & Sentence Variety

- The student writes in a:
 - consistent, academic tone
 - using varied sentence structure
 - accurate and precise word choice

Format

- The essay is formatted according to:
 - the standards set forth in the assignment
 - in the syllabus
 - or in the required style guide (MLA, APA)

Grammar Review – Fragments

- **What are Sentence Fragments?**

- **Fragments are:**

- grammatically incomplete sentences
- phrases and dependent clauses.
- the grammatical structures that cannot stand on their own
- ones that need to be connected to an independent clause to work

- **Difference between a sentence and a sentence fragment:**

- a sentence missing one of its crucial elements: a subject, a verb, or a complete thought

- **Missing a subject:**

Slammed the door and left.

- **Missing a verb:**

The answer to our prayers.

- **Not expressing a complete thought:**

Since she never saw the movie.

- **Note: Length is not an indication of a sentence fragment:**

- *She ran.*

- *Which is why we believe the proposed amendments should be passed.*

Common Causes of Fragments

- Incorrect use of **Non-finite verbs** (gerunds, participles, and infinitives) can oftentimes lead to **fragments**
- **Non-finite verbs** don't act like verbs, and thus **not counted as verbs** while identifying **a phrase or a clause**
 - Let's look at a few examples of these:
 - *Running away from my mother.*
 - *To ensure your safety and security.*
 - *Beaten down since day one.*
 - Even though all of the above have **non-finite verbs**, they're **phrases**, not clauses
 - In order for these to be **clauses**, they would **need an additional verb** that **acts** as a **verb** in the sentence
- Words like "**since**," "**when**," and "**because**" turn an **independent** clause into a **dependent** clause.
 - For example:
 - *"I was a little girl in 1995"* is an **independent** clause.
 - *"Because I was a little girl in 1995"* is a **dependent** clause.

Identifying Fragments

- Incorrect use of Relative pronouns, like “**that**” and “**which**,” can often lead to **fragment** errors:
 - *Which I prefer to keep secret.*
- **Coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS)** can also cause problems
 - A sentence starting with a **coordinating conjunction** should be followed by a **complete clause**, not just a phrase:
 - *Because the one I have isn't working too well.*
 - *As his girlfriend chased him down the hall screaming her head off.*
- Keep in mind that **command sentences** are **not fragments**, despite not having a **subject**
- **Commands** are the only grammatically correct sentences that **lack a subject**, because the subject is **implied**:
 - *Drop and give me fifty!*

Fixing Sentence Fragments

- **Example 1:** *Sue appeared at the committee meeting last week. And made a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.*
 - There is no **subject** in this phrase, so the best fix is to simply omit the **period** and **combine** the two statements:
 - *Sue appeared at the committee meeting last week **and made** a convincing presentation of her ideas about the new product.*
- **Example 2:** *The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful. The best ideas that they had heard in years.*
 - The part after the period, “**the best ideas they had heard in years,**” is simply a **phrase**— there is **no verb** contained in the phrase.
 - By adding “**they were**” to the beginning of this phrase, we have turned the **fragment** into an **independent clause**, which can now stand on its own:
 - *The committee considered her ideas for a new marketing strategy quite powerful; **they were** the best ideas that they had heard in years.*

Mechanics – Spelling Errors

- **Phonetic Errors:**

- Phonetics is a field that studies the sounds of a language

- **A word:**

- can sound like it could be spelled multiple ways
 - “**Concede**” and “**conceed**” sound the same phonetically, but only “**concede**” is the proper spelling
- has silent letters that the writer may forget to include
 - You cannot hear the “**a**” in “**realize**,” but you need it to spell the word correctly
- has double letters that the writer may forget to include
 - “**Accommodate**,” for example, is frequently misspelled as “**acommodate**” or “**accomodate**.”

- **The writer may use double letters when they are not needed:**

- The word “**amend**” has only one “**m**,” but it is commonly misspelled with **two**.

Mechanics – Homophones & Typographical Errors

- **Homophones:**

- Two words with different meanings but the same pronunciation are homophones

- “**Bread**” and “**bred**” sound the same, but they are spelled differently.

- Common homophones include:

- **right**, **rite**, **wright**, and **write**
- **read** (most tenses of the verb) and **reed**
- **read** (past, past participle) and **red**
- **rose** (flower) and **rose** (past tense of **rise**)

- **Typographical Errors:**

- Some spelling errors are caused by the writer accidentally typing the wrong thing

- Common typos include:

- **Omitting** letters from a word (typing “**brthday**” instead of “**birthday**,” for example)
- **Adding** extra letters (typing “**birthdayy**”)
- **Transposing** two letters in a word (typing “**brithday**”)
- **Spacing** words improperly (such as “**myb irthday**” instead of “**my birthday**”)

Mechanics – Capitalization & Proper Noun

- **Capitalize the first word when:**

- **Starting a Sentence:**

- **The Pronoun “I”**

- **Quoting Others:**

- **Directly quoted speech is capitalized if it is a full sentence.**

- *The head chef said to me, “**Anyone can become a good cook if they are willing to learn.**”*

- **Proper Nouns:**

- **Names and Nicknames**

- **People, Person’s Culture and Languages**

- **Geographical Names, the names of cities, states, countries, continents, etc.**

- **Organizations, Government agencies, institutions, and companies**

- **Days, Months, Holidays, Religions**

- **Titled Work**

Mechanics – Abbreviations and Acronyms

- An **abbreviation** is the shortened form of a word or phrase:
 - Most abbreviations are formed from a letter or group of letters taken from the original word
 - In academic papers, only commonly used but relatively minor words are abbreviated, such as “km” for “kilometer” or “Dr.” for “doctor.”
- **Style Conventions** for Abbreviations:
 - Abbreviations should be capitalized just like their expanded forms would be
 - If the original word or phrase is capitalized, then you should capitalize the abbreviation, and vice versa
 - Abbreviations usually end with a period, particularly if they were formed by dropping the end of a word
 - When a sentence ends with an abbreviation, use only one period for both the abbreviation and the sentence
 - *She lives in N.Y.* (New York is abbreviated as “N.Y.” In this example, it comes at the end of the sentence but there is only one period.)
 - *He got a ticket for going 70 mph when the speed limit was 55.* (Miles per hour is abbreviated “mph.” Note that it is not capitalized.)
- **Acronyms** are abbreviations that form another word:
 - acronyms act as shorthand for longer terms, particularly those a writer wants to reference frequently
 - Laser is so frequently used as a word that few people know it is an acronym
 - Laser stands for “**light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.**”
 - However, they do not always form another word
 - Oftentimes, acronyms are formed from the initial components of a series of words
 - These components are usually individual letters, but some may use the first syllables of words
- **Acronyms** in Academic Writing:
 - acronyms can be used to stand in for job titles (such as CEO), statistical categories (such as RBI) or the names of organizations (such as FBI)
 - Other instances may arise depending on the type of paper you are writing—a scientific essay, for example, might have acronyms for the names of chemical compounds or scientific terms
 - *Jonathan recently joined the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).*

Mechanics – Numbers & Numerals

- Numbers as **Words**:
- In academic writing, numbers of one or two words should be spelled out with letters
 - *Anthony was able to bike **five miles** in less than an hour.*
 - Notice that 5 is written out as “five” because it is one word
 - *Maria bought **five** bananas, **two** bunches of grapes, and **six** oranges. She needed **twenty-one** servings for the luncheon.*
 - Notice that each number is written out, including 21, because all of them are one or two words
- Numbers as **Numerals**:
 - Numbers that are more than two words long should be written as numerals.
 - *Our vacation to North Carolina ended up being **728 miles**, as a round trip.*
 - *Or, in the case of years: “Tony was born in the fall of **1966**.”*
- Also, the following numbers are written as **numerals**:

• Dates:	December 7, 1941, 32 BC, AD 1066
• Addresses:	119 Lakewood Lane, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
• Percentages:	45 percent or 45%
• Fractions and decimals:	1/3 and 0.25
• Scores:	20 to 13 or 15–18
• Statistics:	average age 25
• Surveys:	2 out of 5
• Exact amounts of money:	\$861.34 or \$0.67
• Divisions of books:	volume 6 or chapter 5
• Divisions of plays:	act 2, scene 4
• Time of day:	12:00 AM or 4:35 PM

Punctuations

What you'll learn to do: analyze the use of punctuation marks



Punctuation - Comma

- **Errors in punctuation can often have unintended meanings**
 - **For example, consider the difference the comma makes in the following sentences:**
 - *Let's eat, Grandpa*
 - *Let's eat Grandpa*
 - **The comma in the first sentence indicates that you are addressing Grandpa and telling him that you'd like to eat.**
 - **The lack of a comma in the second sentence makes this sentence sound like you are considering cannibalism.**
- **Common reasons for Comma Use:**
 - **While using a transition word or phrase that creates a natural pause**
 - **While writing a lengthy, complex sentence with multiple subjects and verbs**
 - **While providing a list of three or more related items or phrases in a row.**
- **Common Scenarios for Comma Use:**
 - **Comma after Introductory Element**
 - **Unnecessary Comma**
 - **Missing Comma**
 - **Joining Two Independent Clauses with Coordinating Conjunctions**
 - **Missing Comma in Compound Sentence**

Punctuation – Fixing Commas

- **Comma After Introductory Element:**

- Introductory words and phrases—any words or phrases that come before the main clause in a sentence—should be set off with a comma.
- Here is an example of a sentence that does not include the required comma and then the correction:

- **(Missing Comma)** *In case you were wondering I never allow myself to be exposed to direct sunlight unless I have my scarf, my sunglasses, and a large umbrella.*
- **Correction:** *In case you were wondering, I never allow myself to be exposed to direct sunlight unless I have my scarf, my sunglasses, and a large umbrella.*

- **Unnecessary Comma:**

- We all tend to forget that the comma rules all depend upon the situation.
- Avoid using a comma to join two independent clauses, using coordinating conjunctions, such as “**before**,” “**and**,” “**but**,” or “**so**” every time.

- *I have a wide variety of supernatural powers, but wish I had the power to go out in the daylight.*

- In this example, you don’t need a comma before the but because you aren’t combining two independent clauses

- Here is a corrected version of the sentence:

- *I have a wide variety of supernatural powers but wish I had the power to go out in the daylight.*

- Pay attention while using commas unnecessarily around information that is essential to the sentence.
 - The comma rule is that non-essential information should be set off with commas, but essential information should not

Punctuation – Missing Comma in Compound Sentences

- **Missing Comma:** Remember to put commas around information that is non-essential or nonrestrictive
 - Here is an example of a sentence without proper commas around the nonrestrictive element:
 - *Moving into a cave especially one that is already occupied is not a decision one should make without considerable forethought.*
 - *Moving into a cave, especially one that is already occupied, is not a decision one should make without considerable forethought.*
 - When you join two **independent clauses** (complete sentences) with a **coordinating conjunction** (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet—also known as the **FANBOYS**), you must place a **comma** before the **coordinating conjunction**
 - It is to help make a **proper boundary** between the **two independent clauses**
- **Missing Comma in Compound Sentences:**
 - *I understand that vampires need love but I don't think they really understand just how attached I am to my vital, bodily fluids.*
 - In this example, the sentence is missing the comma before the **“but”** because the **“but”** joins **two complete thoughts**
 - Leaving out this **necessary comma** creates an **error** because you have two sentences connected without a **proper boundary between those sentences**
 - *I understand that vampires need love, but I don't think they really understand just how attached I am to my vital, bodily fluids.*

Quick Guide to Commas

- Use commas to **separate independent clauses** when they are joined by any of these **seven coordinating conjunctions**: **and**, **but**, **for**, **or**, **nor**, **so**, **yet**
- Use commas after introductory a) **clauses**, b) **phrases**, or c) **words** that come before the main clause.
- Use **a pair of commas** in the middle of a sentence to set off **clauses**, **phrases**, and **words** that are **not essential** to the meaning of the sentence.
 - Use **one comma** before to indicate the **beginning of the pause** and one **at the end** to indicate **the end of the pause**.
- Do not use commas to set off essential elements of the sentence, such as clauses beginning with **that** (relative clauses).
 - **That** clauses after nouns are always essential.
 - **That** clauses following a verb expressing mental action are always essential.
- Use commas to separate three or more **words**, **phrases**, or **clauses** written in a series.
- Use commas to separate two or more **coordinate adjectives** that describe the **same noun**.
 - Be sure never to add an **extra comma** between the **final adjective** and the **noun** itself or to use commas with **non-coordinate adjectives**.
- Use a comma near the **end of a sentence** to separate **contrasted coordinate elements** or to indicate a **distinct pause or shift**.
- Use commas to **set off phrases** at the end of the sentence that refer back to the **beginning or middle of the sentence**.
 - Such phrases are free modifiers that can be placed anywhere in the sentence without causing confusion.
- Use commas to set off all **geographical names**, items in **dates (except the month and day)**, addresses (**except the street number and name**), and **titles in names**.
- Use a comma to shift between the **main discourse** and a **quotation**.
- Use commas wherever necessary to prevent **possible confusion** or **misreading**

Punctuation – Semi-Colon

- The semicolon is one of the most misunderstood and misused punctuation marks; in fact, it is often mistaken for the colon.
- However, these two punctuation marks are not interchangeable.
- A semicolon connects two complete ideas (a complete idea has a subject and a verb) that are connected to each other.
- - *Anika's statue is presently displayed in the center of **the exhibit**; **this location** makes it a focal point and allows it to direct the flow of visitors to the museum.*
- **The first idea** tells us where Anika's statue is, and **the second idea** tells us more about the **location** and **it's importance**.
- Each of these ideas could be its own sentence, but by using a **semicolon**, the author is telling the reader that **the two ideas are connected**.
- Often, you may find yourself putting a **comma** in the place of the **semicolon**; this is incorrect.
- Using a comma here would create a **run-on sentence**
- **Remember**: a comma can join a complete idea to other items while a semicolon needs a complete idea on either side.
- The semicolon can also be used **to separate items** in a list when those items have **internal commas**.
 - For example, say you're listing a series of cities and their states, or you're listing duties for a resume:
 - *As a photographer for National Geographic, Renato had been to a lot of different places including **São Paulo, Brazil; Kobe, Japan; Kyiv, Ukraine; and Barcelona, Spain.***
 - *As an engineering assistant, I had a variety of duties: participating in pressure **ventilation surveys**; completing *daily drafting, surveying, and* **data compilation**; and acting *as a company representative during a roof-bolt pull test.**

Punctuation - Colon

- **The colon:** well-loved but, oh, so misunderstood
- The colon is not just used **to introduce a list**; it is far more **flexible**
- The colon can be used after the **first word of a sentence** or just before the **final word of a sentence**
- The colon can also be used to introduce a **grammatically independent sentence**
- The colon is like a sign on the highway, announcing that **something important is coming**
- It acts as an arrow pointing forward, telling you to read on **for important information**
 - Use the colon when you wish to provide pithy emphasis.
 - *To address this problem, we must turn to one of the biologist's most fundamental **tools**: **the** Petri dish.*
 - Use the colon to introduce material that explains, amplifies, or summarizes what has preceded it.
 - *The **Petri dish**: **one** of the biologist's most fundamental tools.*
 - *In low carbon steels, banding tends to affect two properties **in particular**: **tensile ductility and yield strength**.*
 - The colon is also commonly used to present a list or series, which comes in handy when there is a lot of similar material to join:
 - *A compost facility may not be located **as follows**: **within** 300 feet of an exceptional-value wetland; within 100 feet of a perennial stream; within 50 feet of a property line.*

Run-on or Fused Sentences

- Run-on sentences occur when two or more independent clauses are improperly joined.
 - One type of run-on that you've probably heard of is the *comma splice*, in which two independent clauses are joined by a comma without a coordinating conjunction (*and, or, but*, etc.)
 - *Often, choosing a topic for a paper is the hardest part it's a lot easier after that.*
 - *Sometimes, books do not have the most complete information, it is a good idea then to look for articles in specialized periodicals.*
 - *She loves skiing but he doesn't.*
- Common Causes of Run-on Sentences
 - We often write run-on sentences because we sense that the sentences involved are closely related, and dividing them with a period just doesn't seem right.
 - We may also write them because the parts seem too short to need any division, as in "**She loves skiing but he doesn't.**"
 - However, "**She loves skiing**" and "**he doesn't**" are both independent clauses, so they need to be divided by a comma and a coordinating conjunction—not just a coordinating conjunction by itself.
 - Another common cause of run-on sentences is **mistaking adverbial conjunctions** for coordinating conjunctions.
 - For example if we were to write, "**She loved skiing, however he didn't,**" we would have produced a comma splice.
 - The correct sentence would be "**She loved skiing; however, he didn't.**"
- Fixing Run-on Sentences
 - Before you can fix a **run-on sentence**, you'll need to **identify the problem**
 - Are the parts of the sentence independent clauses, or are they dependent clauses or phrases?
 - Remember, only independent clauses can stand on their own
 - This also means they have to stand on their own; they can't run together without correct punctuation
 - *Most of the hours I've earned toward my associate's degree do not transfer, however, I do have at least some hours the university will accept.*
 - *The opposite is true of stronger types of stainless steel they tend to be more susceptible to rust.*

Comma-Splice Error

- A comma splice is particular kind of **comma mistake** that happens when you use a comma to join two independent clauses.
 - When you join two independent clauses with a comma and no conjunction, it's called a comma splice.
 - Some people consider this a type of run-on sentence, while other people think of it as a punctuation error.
 - A comma splice occurs when you use a comma to separate two independent clauses.
 - A comma is not strong enough to perform this function, which causes the problem.
- It's important to remember to use proper punctuation to separate your independent clauses; otherwise, you end up with a sentence like this:
 - *He promised me, if I didn't report him, he would never do it **again, however,** the next night, he was back, playing his bagpipes under my balcony.*
- Here, you should notice the only comma error is the one between again and however.
 - *He promised me, if I didn't report him, he would never do it **again; however,** the next night, he was back, playing his bagpipes under my balcony.*
- Add a Conjunction
- One way to fix a comma splice is to add a **conjunction** immediately after the comma. With most comma splices, the conjunction you'll want to add is probably and, but, or so.
 - *I am not angry with **you, I am** not happy with you, either.*
 - *I am not angry with **you, but** I am not happy with you, either.*

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

- **Antecedent Clarity:** An **antecedent** is the noun (or phrase) that a pronoun is replacing
- The phrase “**antecedent clarity**” means that it should be clear who or what the pronoun is referring to
- In this section we’ll examine some common sources of antecedent confusion and ways of addressing them
 - *Rafael told Matt to stop eating his cereal.*
 - *Since both Rafael and Matt are singular, third person, and masculine, it’s impossible to tell whose cereal is being eaten*
 - *Katerina was really excited to try French cuisine during her semester abroad. They make all sorts of delicious things.*
- Make sure your pronouns always have antecedents.
- Make sure that it’s clear what their antecedents are.
- **Antecedent Agreement**
- When a pronoun matches the person and number of its antecedent, it agrees with its antecedent
 - *I hate it when Zacharias tells me what to do. He’s so full of himself.*
 - *The Finnegans are shouting again. I swear you could hear them from across town!*
- When you choose a pronoun, you also need to make sure that you use the correct case.
- The three cases: subject, object, and possessive.
- The case of your pronoun should match its role in the sentence.
- For example, if your pronoun is doing an action, it should be a subject:
 - *He runs every morning.*
- However, when something is being done to your pronoun, it should be an object:
 - *Dogs have always hated me.*

Indefinite Pronouns – Person & Number

- **Person and Number:** Some of the trickiest agreements are with **indefinite pronouns**:
 - *Every student should do **his or her** best on this assignment*
 - *If **nobody** lost **his or her** scarf, then where did this come from?*
- As we learned earlier in this outcome, words like **every** and **nobody** are **singular**, and demand **singular pronouns**.
- Here are some of the words that fall into this category: **anybody**, **each**, **someone**, **anyone**, **one**, etc.
- Using “**he or she**” is correct (while **they** is incorrect)
 - ***Anyone** going on this hike should plan on being in the canyon for at least seven hours; **he or she** should prepare accordingly.*
 - *I know **somebody** has been throwing **his or her** trash away in my dumpster, and I want **him or her** to stop.*
- However, as you may have noticed, the phrase “**he or she**” (and its other forms) can often make your sentences clunky
- When this happens, it may be best to revise your sentences to have **plural antecedents**.
- Because “**he or she**” is clunky, you’ll often see incorrect workarounds like this:
 - *The way **each** individual speaks can tell us so much about **him or her**.*
 - *It tells us what groups **they** associate **themselves** with, both ethnically and socially.*
- As you can see, in the first sentence, **him or her** agrees with the indefinite pronoun **each**.
- However, in the second sentence, the writer has shifted to the plural **they**, even though the writer is talking about the same group of people.

Pronoun Case

- **Case: *You and I* versus *You and Me***
- Some of the most common pronoun mistakes occur with the decision between “**you and I**” and “**you and me.**”
 - People will often say things like “**You and me should go out for drinks.**”
 - Or—thinking back on the rule that it should be “**you and I**”—they will say “**Susan assigned the task to both you and I.**”
- Remember that every time you use a pronoun you need to make sure that you’re using the correct case.
 - In the **first example**, both pronouns are the subject of the sentence, so they should be in subject case: “**You and I should go out for drinks.**”
 - In the **second example**, both pronouns are the object of the sentence, so they should be in object case: “**Susan assigned the task to both you and me.**”
- Singular ***They or One***
 - One attribute of indefinite pronouns is that the person’s gender is unspecified—they are by definition indefinite.
- Consider the following statements in which the indefinite pronoun **someone** in the **first** sentence is also the **antecedent** for the pronouns in the **second** sentence:
 - *I hear someone coughing.*
 - *I wish he or she would stop.*
- “**He or she**” is grammatically correct here because it takes into account that the “**someone**” could be **either gender**.
- However, some use the **masculine pronoun** as the **generic singular pronoun**:
 - *To each his own.*
 - *Everyone should get himself a new car at least once*

Subject-Verb Agreement

- **Tense Agreement:** The basic idea behind **sentence agreement** is pretty simple:
- All the **parts** of your sentence should **match** (or **agree**)
- Verbs need to **agree with** their **subjects** in **number** (singular or plural) and in **person** (first, second, or third)
- In order to check **agreement**, you simply need to **find the verb** and ask **who** or **what** is **doing the action** of that verb
 - *I really **am** (first-person singular) vs. We really **are** (first-person plural)*
 - *The boys **sings** (third-person singular) vs. The boys **sing** (third-person plural)*
- **Compound subjects** are plural, and their **verbs should agree**
 - *A pencil, a backpack, and a notebook **were** issued to each student.*
- **Verbs will never agree with nouns** that are in **phrases**. To make verbs agree with their **subjects**, follow this example:
 - *The **direction** of the three plays is the focus of **my talk**.*
- When double checking for tense agreement, ask yourself, “**Who** (or **what**) is **doing the action** of the **verb**?”.
- The subject of “**my talk**” is the **direction**, not **plays**, so the **verb** should be **singular**
- In the English language, **verbs usually come after subjects**
- But **when** this order is **reversed**, make the **verb agree** with the **subject**, not with a **noun** that happens to **precede** it.
 - *Beside the house **stand** sheds filled with tools.*
- The subject is “**sheds**”; it is plural, so the **verb** must be “**stand**”

Verb-Tense Consistency – Incorrect Verb Usage

Verb Tense: Always be **consistent** with your **verb tense**

- If you're writing in **the present tense**, be sure you **stay** in **the present tense**, and vice versa.
- The exception would be if you need to shift tenses to tell a story, but that would be purposeful shifting

*She **grabs** my hand then **flipped** me like I **weighed** nothing.*

- It's important to check **verbs** both for **consistency** and **context**

Verb Forms: These forms are created with different forms of **to be** and **to have**:

*He **had eaten** everything by the time we **got** there.*

*She **is waiting** for us to **get** there*

- When you combine a form of **to be** with the **present participle**, you create a **continuous tense**; these tenses indicate a sense of continuity
The **subject** of the **sentence was** (or **is**, or **will be**) doing that thing for awhile.

Present: is working

Past: was working

Future: will be working (You can also say "is going to be working.")

- When you combine a form of **to have** with the **past participle** of a **verb**, you create a **perfect tense**; these tenses indicate a sense of completion

This thing **had been** done **for a while** (or **has been**, or **will have been**).

Present: has worked

Past: had worked

Future: will have worked

- **To have** must always appear **first**, followed by the past participle **been**. The present participle of any verb can then follow

These **perfect continuous tenses** indicate that the **verb** started in the **past**, and is **still continuing**:

Present: has been working

Past: had been working

Future: will have been working

Apostrophes

With possessives, the **apostrophe** is used in combination with an **s** to indicate that a word possesses what follows it.

- **Singular words**, whether or not they end in **s**, are made possessive by adding an **apostrophe + s**.

A student's paper one hour's passing

For **plural words**, we typically **indicate possessions** implied by **adding the apostrophe**.

- However, for a plural that does not end in an **s** (e.g., **bacteria**), we would add an **apostrophe + s**.

Illinois's law or Illinois' law interviewees'

- *Her professors' office* (an office shared by two of her professors; if it were just one professor, we would write her **professor's office**)
- We sometimes **mistakenly** add **apostrophes** to make words **plural**; the **apostrophe** is used to **show possession** or ownership

- **Plural Possessives**

- Making **plural** words **possessive** can be confusing at times because we so often add an **s** to a **noun** to make it plural.

- All of those **s's** can be a little overwhelming, but the rules are pretty simple:

- To make plural nouns that do not end in **s** possessive, add **'s**.

- *The children's scary books the mice's tiny tails*

- To make plural nouns that end in **s** possessive, add just the **apostrophe**.

- *My cats' treasures our zombie fortresses' weaknesses*

- **Possessive pronouns vs. contractions**

- **your vs. you're**
- **its vs. it's**
- **their vs. they're**

Parallelism

- Parallelism is when elements of a sentence “**echo**” each other because they have similar form or structure.
 - **Repeating** key words can contribute to **unity** within an essay.
 - Parallelism can be useful in many situations, but often we know that it will come in handy when we use **words** that **link or contrast** items, such as **and**, **or**, and **but**.
- **Basic Form of Parallelism**
 - Nonparallel: *Students spend their time going to classes, studying, working, and they wish they had time for a social life.*
 - Parallel: *Students spend their time going to classes, studying, working, and wishing for a social life.*
 - Nonparallel: *High-school students hope for short school days, or four-day weeks would be great, too.*
 - Parallel: *High-school students hope for short school days or four-day weeks.*
- **Using Articles with Parallelism**
 - Parallelism requires that an article (**a**, **an**, or **the**) or a preposition applying to all items in a list either appear before the first item only or be repeated before each item. Here are a few examples of the rule in action:
 - Nonparallel: *We can pay with a mark, a yen, buck, or pound.*
 - Parallel: *We can pay with a mark, a yen, a buck, or a pound.*
 - Nonparallel: *I went to the store on Monday, Wednesday, and on Friday.*
 - Parallel: *I went to the store on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.*
- **Prepositions in Parallelism**
 - Some words require that certain **prepositions** precede them. When such words appear in **parallel structure**, it is important to include all of the appropriate prepositions, since the first one may not apply to the whole series of items:
 - Nonparallel: *His speech was marked by disagreement and scorn for his opponent’s position.*
 - Parallel: *His speech was marked by disagreement with and scorn for his opponent’s position.*
 - Nonparallel: *This is a time not for words but action.*
 - Parallel: *This is a time not for words but for action.*

Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers

- A **modifier** is a word, phrase, or clause that clarifies or describes another **word**, **phrase**, or **clause**
- The two common types of modifier errors are called **misplaced modifiers** and **dangling modifiers**
- **Misplaced Modifiers**
 - A **misplaced modifier** is a modifier that is **placed too far** from the word or **words it modifies**.
 - **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!
 - **Incorrect:** *They bought a kitten for my brother they call Shadow.*
 - **Correct:** *They bought a kitten they call Shadow for my brother.*
 - Simple modifiers like **only**, **almost**, **just**, **nearly**, and **barely** often get used incorrectly.
 - **Confusing:** *Tyler almost found fifty cents under the sofa cushions.*
 - **Repaired:** *Tyler found almost fifty cents under the sofa cushions.*
- **Dangling Modifiers**
 - 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.*

 - **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.*

Questions

Point of View in Essay Writing

- A writer's **tone** can differ from genre to genre, and from topic to topic: formal, informal, subjective, objective, critical, etc.
- **First person point-of-view**
 - It refers to using the **first-person** pronouns *I or We*.
 - If you co-author your paper with others, you might use **we** while referring to actions that you and your co-authors have taken.
 - In the **first person point-of-view**, you usually **write your paper** from your **own experience or perspective**.
 - Usually avoided in academic writing, you are allowed to use it when explaining your own data or primary resources.
- **Second person point-of-view**
 - It means that you use the second-person pronoun **you** in your writing.
 - Often avoided in academic writing, you may use it in process writing, or in casual or creative writing
- **Third person point-of-view**
 - It refers to the use of **third-person pronouns**: *he, she, they, and it*.
 - The third person point-of-view has a wide range of uses in both creative and academic contexts.
- **Context**
 - It refers to the surroundings of certain **words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs**.
 - The meanings of words, phrases, sentences may change based on a **given context**.
- **Conventions**
 - Conventions refer to certain traditions or **rules of a context or genre**
 - They are generally **agreed-on practices** or **rules** that writers should pay attention to **when they compose a text**

Point of View – Genre in Essay Writing

- **Critical Writing**

- If your assignment tells you to write a **critical review** or **critical analysis** about a **specific topic**, it means:
 - You will carefully **examine** and **analyze** whatever you are reviewing
 - You need to lay out and **explain** your **analysis**, providing both **strengths** and **weaknesses** of it
 - It is important to think about **your own** critical **analysis** of **others' opinions**, rather than just **summarizing** them

- **Argumentative Writing**

- If your assignment tells you to write an **argumentative paper**, you will:
 - Choose **your stance** on certain topics, and **create a statement** that **clearly reflects** your **position or opinion**
 - You will **elaborate** on **your arguments**, by **explaining** further, **providing** examples, and **referencing** relevant literature
 - In an **argumentative** paper, it is **important** to have a **good understanding** of a topic, and to **develop** your **opinion**.

- **Expository Writing**

- If your assignment tells you to write an **expository paper**, you will **explain** and **illustrate**:
 - Something in a way that your readers can **clearly understand** what you are saying in your texts
 - In an **expository paper**, you **will not** be expected to write **your own opinions**, or positions on **certain topics**
 - Instead, you will **mostly explain**, **review**, and **describe** certain **concepts or facts**

Questions

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