Basic Grammar & Composition Review

Academic Success Center

School of Education

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The Eight Parts of Speech

- Nouns
- Verbs
- Pronouns
- Conjunctions

Adjectives

Adverbs

Prepositions

Interjections

Verbals

♦ Word that are formed from verbs but
do not function as a verb, i.e.

- Participles

- Gerunds

- Infinitives

Verbals: Participles

- Function as adjectives. Present participles end in *–ing (singing)*; past participles end in *–ed (excited), -t (built), -k (drunk)*, or *-en (eaten).*

  They usually appear next to the noun or pronoun they modify, *e.g. the **excited** child, the **singing** waiter, the player **wearing** the red shirt*

Verbals: Gerunds

◆ Function as nouns. Gerunds always end in
 –*ing, (e.g. swimming, studying, skiing).*

 As subject: *Swimming* is easy.
 As direct object: He enjoys *cooking*.
 As indirect object: He gave *skiing* his
                        total effort.

Verbals: Infinitives

- Infinitives begin with the word *to*, followed by the base form of the verb.
- Infinitives and infinitive phrases function as nouns, adjectives and adverbs.

As a noun: *To read* in bed is relaxing.

As adjective: The rent *to be paid* was late.

As adverb: You are right *to complain*.

Phrases

◆ A group of words that function as a single part of speech – a noun, verb, adjective or adverb. It does not contain both a subject and a verb.

One of the most common types of phrases begin with words called *prepositions*.

Clauses

Independent Clause: Contains a subject and a verb and can stand alone. It is a complete sentence.

e.g., Sam broke the window.

Clauses:

◆ **Dependent**: Cannot stand alone as a sentence because it is introduced by a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun.

Sentence: *Sam broke the window.*

Clause: *because Sam broke the window.*

Clause: *when Sam broke the window.*

The sentence

- A group of words that contains a subject and a verb, and expresses a complete thought.
  - 2 parts:
    - *SUBJECT: person, place, thing, or idea that is being talked about in a sentence*
    - *PREDICATE: action or descriptive part of the sentence that gives life to the subject*

The Four Types of Sentences:

- SIMPLE - sentence that expresses only one thought
- COMPOUND - sentence composed of two or more related sentences that uses punctuation to divide the separate thoughts being expressed
- COMPLEX - sentence containing an independent sentence and a fragmented sentence that complements it
- COMPOUND/COMPLEX - sentence composed of two independent sentences and one fragmented sentence separated by punctuation

Sentences

- SIMPLE - sentence that expresses only one thought

i.e.   Jack went up the hill again.

i.e.   Jack and Jill are characters in a WB television program.

Sentences

- COMPOUND - sentence composed of two or more related sentences that uses punctuation to divide the separate thoughts being expressed

    i.e.   Writing research papers can be a tedious process; the research phase is often an endless loop.

Sentences

◆ COMPOUND - sentence composed of two or more related sentences that uses the conjuntion "and" to join two separate thoughts being expressed

i.e. It's cold outside, <u>and</u> the weather is miserable today.

Sentences

◆ COMPLEX - sentence containing an independent sentence and a fragmented sentence that complements it

i.e. *When you begin a sentence with an adverb clause like this one, it is imperative to place a comma between the dependent clause and the main sentence.*

Sentences

- COMPOUND/COMPLEX - sentence composed of two independent sentences and one fragmented sentence separated by punctuation

i.e. If you are going to earn a passing grade in English 1200, you must do a lot of research; there's no getting around doing the research.

Sentences

◆ COMPOUND/COMPLEX - sentence composed of two independent sentences and one fragmented sentence separated by punctuation

i.e. When John and Mary saw the cockroach on the countertop, they screamed uncontrollably, <u>and</u> John collapsed on the floor laughing.

The Sentence Fragment:

◆ A sentence fragment is a nonsentence (any structure lacking a complete subject or a complete predicate) that is punctuated either as a sentence or as an independent clause.

i.e. Gone fishing in the morning.

i.e. As soon as the sun comes up.

Commas

♦ Commas are punctuation devices that help communicate meaning by marking the natural pauses in speech.

Following are some examples of the ways commas are used:

Commas

To separate words, phrases, or clauses in a list or series

i.e. Trudy, Doug, Pookie, Chris, and Susie left with their bags, ball caps, baseballs, books, and bouquets.

Commas

To set apart nouns of direct address and interjections.

i.e. Lisa, give me a piece of your Quarter Pounder, please.

Commas

To mark off introductory elements such as participial phrases, long prepositional phrases, and adverb clauses

i.e. After you sear the steak to seal in the juices, simmering it for an hour in country style gravy is a must.

Commas

To divide a compound sentence connected by a Coordinator--and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet

i.e. Babies are not very intelligent, yet they have a way of practicing total control over the helpless adult.

Commas

A non-essential phrase adds information, but is not necessary for the sentence to be complete.

To highlight a non-essential phrase:

i.e. *Franklin Roosevelt, <u>one of the most significant political figures in American history</u>, single-handedly drafted most of the controversial social programs of today.*

Commas

To highlight phrases in apposition---an appositive renames or clarifies a preceding noun

i.e. Angela, a good friend of mine, has just been promoted to chief accountant.

Commas

To separate a quotation from its source---he said or she said

i.e. "I don't think not turning in my assignment will affect my grade," mused the student.

i.e. In The Critical Theory of Forming Ideas About Things*, Dr. Enigma writes, "When thinking about any topic, you must think implicitly about how you are thinking about the topic."*

Commas

To separate ever day material, such as: numbers, dates, addresses, openings and closings of letters, etc.

i.e. *Dear Sir,*

Please note that on December 24, 2002, a Mr. Santa M. Clause will dropping in to see you.

Sincerely,

Mr. Easter A. Bunny

Semicolons

◆ A semicolon acts like a weak period and primarily joins independent ideas in appropriate cases. Semicolons take over where commas fall short, creating an extended pause that clearly alerts readers they are at the end of an idea. There are three main instances of semicolon use.

Semicolons

◆ 3 main uses:

  – To join a compound sentence where no coordinator is present

   i.e.   The problem with public education is its openness to the community; any average Joe can get an education.

Semicolons

– To work with conjunctions (conjunctive adverbs) combining independent clauses

Examples: therefore, however, moreover, thus

i.e.   It's hard to realize the value of what you've got until you don't have it anymore; <u>therefore</u>, you should treasure the thing while you have it.

Semicolons

– To act as a super-comma in separating items in a series that contains commas

i.e.   *His extensive travels took him to the plains of Conrad, Montana; to the snow-capped mountain resorts of Telluride, Colorado; and to the dry desert sands of El Paso, Texas.*

Common punctuation errors

◆ Run-ons - use of a coordinator but no comma between sentences

i.e.   The true sense of cohesion in Hemingway's piece is inevitably

lost yet the overall contribution is evident and readily identifiable.

Correction for common grammar mistakes

- Run-ons are easily corrected by adding a comma before the coordinator or by simply dropping the coordinator and adding a semicolon or a period.

  i.e.   The true sense of cohesion in Hemingway's piece is inevitably lost, yet the overall contribution is evident and readily identifiable.

Common punctuation errors

◆ Fragments - incomplete expression lacking a subject or verb

*i.e.	Proponents of the equation for determining the Gross National Product.*

(What about those "proponents"?)

Correction for common grammar mistakes

◆ Fragments are avoided and corrected by ensuring that every sentence of your paper has a distinct purpose and expresses an independent idea.

Proponents of the equation for determining the GNP argue its diversity and socioeconomic inclusiveness.

Common punctuation errors

- Comma Splices - use of a comma between two sentences with no coordinator

   i.e.   Exploring my chosen career field has truly enlightened <u>me, the</u> broad array of opportunities within the field have only served to peak my interests.

Correction for common grammar mistakes

◆ Comma Splices need only a coordinator or the comma replaced by a semicolon.

i.e.   Exploring my chosen career field has truly enlightened <u>me, and</u> the broad array of opportunities within the field have only served to peak my interests.

Correction for common grammar mistakes

◆ Inserting a "period" and creating a second sentence will correct the problem.

i.e. *Exploring my chosen career field has truly enlightened <u>me. The</u> broad array of opportunities within the field have only served to peak my interests.*

Correction for common grammar mistakes

OR

i.e. *Exploring my chosen career field has truly enlightened <u>me; the</u> broad array of opportunities within the field have only served to peak my interests.*

Common punctuation errors

- ◆ Fused Sentence - two sentences joined with no punctuation

  i.e.   He fell asleep at the <u>wheel he</u> crashed into the bridge.

Correction for common grammar mistakes

◆ Fused Sentences require punctuation to alert the reader that one thought has ended and another has begun.

He fell asleep at the <u>wheel; he</u> crashed into the bridge.

OR

He fell asleep at the <u>wheel, and</u> he crashed into the bridge.

The Essay

- An essay should be a cohesive group of paragraphs that prove or illustrate a point, such as an argument, a presentation or a critique/review.

- A basic essay should begin with an introductory paragraph containing a *thesis statement*, followed by supporting paragraphs and ending with a concluding paragraph.

Paragraphs

♦ Each paragraph should support the main thesis statement of an essay and should start with a ***topic sentence*** that signals to the reader what the paragraph will be about. The topic sentence will be followed by additional supporting sentences.

♦ The sentences within a paragraph should be cohesive, and may require transitions, such as the use of transitional adverbs at the beginning of the paragraph, *e.g. additionally, moreover, therefore, etc.*

This Concludes the Basic Grammar & Composition Review