

All Megablunders 8

Megablunders 8

Each of the following sentences is correct or exemplifies a megablunder. Possible megablunders include ROS, FRAG, AGREE, PR, CASE, PAR, MM, and DM. In the space to the left of the sentence, write either C for correct or the abbreviation for the megablunder. For sentences containing an error, write a complete corrected sentence version in the space below.

CORRECTED VERSIONS ARE SUGGESTIONS ONLY; OTHER ANSWERS ARE POSSIBLE

1.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: Give the book to Hermione or I; I do not know whom it belongs to, but one of us will find out.

ERROR: CASE

CORRECTED VERSION: Give the book to Hermione or me: I do not know whom it belongs to, but one of us will find out.

EXPLANATION: *The first-person pronoun in the first clause is the object of the preposition "to"; it must be in the object case ("me"), not the subject case ("I").*

2.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: Charlemagne, the head monitor and captain of the speech team, is both skillful and she is articulate.

ERROR: PAR

CORRECTED VERSION: Charlemagne, the head monitor and captain of the speech team, is both skillful and articulate

EXPLANATION: *The correlative conjunctions "both...and" require parallel structure. In the original sentence, "both" is followed by an adjective, but "and" is followed by an entire clause. The corrected version parallels adjective with adjective.*

3.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: At first, I was shocked by the tone of the editorial; however, after examining the context, the angry words seemed justified.

ERROR: DM

CORRECTED VERSION: At first, I was shocked by the tone of the editorial; however, after examining the context, I felt the angry words seemed justified.

EXPLANATION: *In the original sentence, the gerund "examining" dangles because its implied subject ("I") is not the same as the subject of main clause ("angry words"). The corrected version solves the problem by making "I" the subject.*

4.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: Bill is one of the boys who are constantly late. Even though he usually has a plausible excuse.

ERROR: FRAG

CORRECTED VERSION: Bill is one of the boys who are constantly late, even though he usually has a plausible excuse.

EXPLANATION: *"Even though" is a subordinating conjunction. The adverb clause that it introduces cannot stand by itself; it must be connected to the complete sentence before it.*

5.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: Mrs. James, usually accompanied by her three children, regularly attend the First Baptist Church.

ERROR: AGREE

CORRECTED VERSION: Mrs. James, usually accompanied by her three children, regularly attends the First Baptist Church.

EXPLANATION: *The subject of the original sentence is "Mrs. James," a singular noun; therefore, the verb must also be singular. The plural noun ("children") in the intervening participial phrase does not affect the subject-verb relationship.*

6.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: The Spartans blocked listlessly, ran poorly, and showed little spirit, which explained their mediocre record.

ERROR: PR

CORRECTED VERSION: The Spartans' listless blocking, poor running, and indifferent attitude explained their mediocre record.

EXPLANATION: *The relative pronoun "which" cannot refer to an entire clause, especially one with three distinct predicates. The corrected version not only eliminates the bad pronoun but also unifies the sentence by reducing it to a single clause.*

7.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: He returned the computer to the store which was defective, and he refused to accept a replacement; instead, he demanded and received a cash refund.

ERROR: MM

CORRECTED VERSION: He returned the defective computer to the store, and he refused to accept a replacement; instead, he demanded and received a cash refund.

EXPLANATION: *In the original sentence, the adjective clause "which was defective" appears to modify "store." Reducing the clause to a single adjective and placing it before "computer" both corrects the syntax and makes the sentence less wordy.*

8.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: Neither Bill nor he has come forward to pay the fine, nevertheless, the town will probably grant an extension.

ERROR: ROS

CORRECTED VERSION: Neither Bill nor he has come forward to pay the fine; nevertheless, the town will probably grant an extension.

EXPLANATION: *When a conjunctive adverb such as "nevertheless" connects two main clauses, a full stop must precede it.*

9.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: He is not only skillful but suave and not only handsome but intelligent; in sum, he is a boy toward whom almost everyone feels deep envy, if not outright loathing.

ERROR: NONE

10.
ORIGINAL SENTENCE: Apparently, what angered Mr. Polk was me giving my ideas freely to the rest of the students, who then used those ideas in a series of opinion articles that were critical of his teaching.

ERROR: CASE

CORRECTED VERSION: Apparently, what angered Mr. Polk was my giving my ideas freely to the rest of the students, who then used those ideas in a series of opinion articles that were critical of his teaching.

EXPLANATION: *A pronoun before a gerund, such as "giving," must be in the possessive form ("my") rather than the object form ("me").*