

Section B

◆ Using transitional expressions

Transitional expressions are words or word groups that connect ideas, both within sentences and between them. Some common transitional expressions are listed below by the connecting function they perform. To become expert in using them, observe carefully how they are used by other writers.

Transitional expressions

To add or show sequence

again, also, and, and then, besides, equally important, finally, first, further, furthermore, in addition, in the first place, last, moreover, next, second, still, too

To compare

in the same way, likewise, similarly

To contrast

although, and yet, but, but at the same time, despite, even so, even though, for all that, however, in contrast, in spite of, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, on the other hand, regardless, still, though, yet

To give examples or intensify

after all, an illustration of, even, for example, for instance, indeed, in fact, it is true, of course, specifically, that is, to illustrate, truly

To indicate place

above, adjacent to, below, elsewhere, farther on, here, near, nearby, on the other side, opposite to, there, to the east, to the left

To indicate time

after a while, afterward, as long as, as soon as, at last, at length, at that time, before, earlier, formerly, immediately, in the meantime, in the past, lately, later, meanwhile, now, presently, shortly, simultaneously, since, so far, soon, subsequently, then, thereafter, until, until now, when

To repeat, summarize, or conclude

all in all, altogether, as has been said, in brief, in conclusion, in other words, in particular, in short, in simpler terms, in summary, on the whole, that is, therefore, to put it differently, to summarize

To show cause or effect

accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this purpose, hence, otherwise, since, then, therefore, thereupon, thus, to this end, with this object

Punctuating transitional expressions

Transitional expressions are usually, but not always, set off by commas from the rest of the sentence:

The average hot dog, *for example*, supplies 5 to 7 grams of protein for 150 calories. *Moreover*, a glass of nonfat milk supplies 8 grams of protein for only 90 calories.

◆ 7 Combining devices to achieve coherence

Coherence in writing is commonly achieved through a combination of devices. In the following paragraph, transitional expressions are italicized, parallel structures are underlined, and key words plus their synonyms and pronouns are in boldface.

People who wear seat belts *while* traveling in automobiles are much more likely to **survive accidents** than those who do not. *When* an automobile strikes another heavy object, the reaction can be described in terms of two **collisions**, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The **first collision** is the car striking the other object. At this collision, the car, *once* driving at, say, 30 miles per hour, suddenly comes to a complete stop. *Inside*, **unbelted** occupants are still moving at 30 miles per hour. The **second collision** occurs within 0.02 seconds, *when* the unbelted occupants strike something inside the car—the steering wheel, dashboard, or windshield—at a force of 30 miles per hour. The force of this **collision** of person and object is comparable to his or her falling off a three-story building—head first. **Serious injuries and fatalities** resulting from the force of the second **collision** are greatly reduced by **seat belts** worn properly.

EXERCISE

¹The octopus is an eight-armed sea creature that makes its home at the bottom of the sea. ²With its eight tentacles, it can crawl along the seabed, build its house, and fight enemies. ³In addition, its powerful arms are useful for seizing prey and gripping it with double rows of suckers that hold fast anything from crabs, crayfish, and mollusks to lobsters. ⁴Then, to break through hard shells, the octopus drills holes with its tongue, which is covered with small, sharp teeth. ⁵Its prey is at a further disadvantage because of the octopus's ability to disguise itself. ⁶It can change colors to become almost invisible, and it can squirt a dark cloud of ink to confuse the other animal. ⁷Moreover, the octopus is surprisingly intelligent, having a well-developed brain and nervous system that enable it to outsmart less clever neighbors. ⁸Its main enemies are moray and conger eels, dolphins, and sharks, but it is well equipped to evade them. ⁹The octopus population is being depleted mainly by overfishing.

1. List at least five transitional expressions in the paragraph.

- a. _____ c. _____ e. _____
b. _____ d. _____

EXERCISE**Analyzing an Essay's Coherence**

Working individually or in a group, analyze the following essay for coherence both within and between paragraphs. Circle all repetitions of key words (and related synonyms and pronouns), drawing lines to connect them. Underline all instances of parallelism, connecting them with dotted lines. Enclose transitional expressions in boxes.

SUNNY DAYS

- 1 There are many places in the world I would like to visit. Yet, if I could visit any place of my own choosing, I would choose a place within the boundaries of the United States. It's a place everyone knows of, yet no one quite knows how to get there. Still, through the power of imagination almost everyone has been there. This place is none other than Sesame Street.
- 2 Sesame Street is an amazing place that is full of wonder and magic. The heart of this wonder and magic is the street's innocence. It is not a place of perfection. The rules must be broken (but never on purpose) in order for a lesson to be learned. A toy might not be shared or feelings might be hurt, but everything always comes out all right in the end with a hug.
- 3 How I would love to walk the sidewalks of Sesame Street. I'd ride on the tire swing that hangs in the corner, right by the staircase. I'd visit

Oscar in his trash can, and when he tells me to scram I would just smile.

I'd say "Hi" to Big Bird and let him know that I always knew Mr. Snuffleupagus was true. I'd shake Bob's hand because he's Bob—one of the "People in My Neighborhood." Maybe I'd have a snack with Cookie Monster, or go counting with the Count. Before the end of the day, I might take my toaster over to the Fix-It Shop to be fixed. Then I'd "Dance Myself to Sleep" with Ernie.

4 Sesame Street's appeal is unique. As a young child I first watched because it was something my parents put in front of me. It was a learning tool that gave me a jump start on all I would be exposed to once I was old enough for school. However, as the years went by, it was I who would get up early in the morning on my own just to visit this street and my friends who lived there. But there comes a point when enough is enough. I eventually came to realize that I was too smart for Sesame Street. I refused to watch the show out of pride because I was sure I was so smart, even though I secretly still loved every minute of it. As time passed and I came to be in junior high, it once again became "OK" to like Sesame Street. I didn't watch it now, but there was no longer any reason to deny that Ernie was my favorite Muppet on the Street.

5 As an adult, not only do I continue to hold a special place in my heart for my Sesame Street friends, but I now realize how lucky I was to have them. Thanks to cable television I can watch and revisit the Sesame Street I saw as a kid; for the current Street is now home to many new monsters

and other creatures whose names I don't even know. As I watch and experience what I laughed at as a small child, I now see that everything happened for a purpose. Each clever sketch had a lesson--about sharing or cooperation or whatever lesson a child may need to learn. I also see that Sesame Street has a certain appeal for adults. A young child sees just another person hanging out on the Street and singing; an adult sees Stevie Wonder singing a simple song he could sing only in the presence of Muppets. And all those conversations between Muppets and kids about color of skin (or fur) meant much more than I was possibly able to comprehend. For this reason, I think the world could stand to revisit Sesame Street with me.

6 It's a place where everyone can feel at home, children and adults alike. Rubber Duckie is everyone's best friend, and there is the sudden urge to dance along with Bert anytime he's "Doin' the Pigeon." It's not always easy "Bein' Green," but you soon realize that what is most important is to be yourself and be proud of that person, no matter how hard it may be. Yes, this is where I'd like to visit. If even only for a day, that day would create an additional lifetime of memories to add to the ones I already have of Sesame Street and all who live there.

—ROSEMARY REEVE (STUDENT WRITER)

The UVic Writer's Guide: *Summaries*

How Writing Summaries Can Help You: Practice in writing summaries will benefit you in important ways as a student and as a writer:

- It will give you practice in close, attentive reading, and train you to do justice to what you read (rather than reading into a work only what is familiar to you).
- It will strengthen your sense of structure in writing: how a writer organizes material, develops his or her points, and moves from one point to another.
- It will develop your sense of what is important in a written work, enabling you to distinguish between key points, the material backing them up, specific examples and illustrations, and mere asides.

Grasp The Main Trend Of Thought: In writing a summary, make sure that you grasp the main trend of thought in the work being summarized. Above all, you need to understand the work's organization clearly. To help you, concentrate on these three closely related tasks:

1. Identify key sentences (underline them as you read): **thesis statements** (which sum up the major point of the whole work or its particular sections); and **topic sentences** (which are developed in the rest of the paragraphs they begin).
2. Look for the author's own compact summaries, either at the beginning or end of a passage, or at points of transition.
3. Finally, formulate in your own words major points that seem to be implied by the author but not spelled out in any sentence (remembering that your purpose is to report what is said, not to interpret it).

Reduce Explanation: To reduce explanation and illustration to the essential minimum:

- Omit passages that restate a point for clarity or emphasis.
- Drastically condense lengthy details, examples, statistics--but do not omit information or examples that are necessary to a clear understanding of the summarized work.
- Be specific whenever possible.

Use The Most Economical Wording Possible

- Where the original uses a whole clause, try to sum up the same idea in a phrase; where it uses a phrase, try to use a single word; where several near synonyms restate the same idea, choose the one that gives the central common meaning
- Use a simple or complex sentence rather than a compound sentence to summarize a paragraph (unless the original paragraph itself is poorly organized). A compound sentence implies that there are two or more equally important ideas in the paragraph. If you find that you have written a compound summarizing sentence, recheck the paragraph to make sure that the author did not imply some subordinating relationship that you missed.
- In determining the author's intent, be alert to such writing techniques as parallel clauses and phrases (which indicate ideas of equal weight), and transitional words and phrases (which show relationships between ideas).

Unless the original page is already severely condensed, a summary of about one-third or one-fourth the length of the original can usually preserve the essential points. The shorter the summary, however, the greater the danger of oversimplification or outright misrepresentation. Be careful to preserve the essential conditions or distinctions:

- *if-* and *unless-* clauses;
- differences between *is*, *will*, and *might*;
- words like *only*, *almost*, or the phrase *on the whole*.

Moreover, preserve the relative emphasis of the original, giving more prominence to a point treated at length than to one mentioned in passing.

A Sample Passage To Summarize: Read the following passage--how would you summarize it?

The invention of the process of printing from movable type, which occurred in Germany about the middle of the fifteenth century, was destined to exercise a far-reaching influence on all the vernacular languages of Europe. Introduced into England about 1476 by William Caxton, who had learned the art on the continent, printing made such rapid progress that a scant century later it was observed that manuscript books were seldom to be met with and almost never used. Some idea of the rapidity with which the new process swept forward may be had from the fact that in Europe the number of books printed before the year 1500 reached the surprising figure of 35,000. The majority of these, it is true, were in Latin, whereas it is in the modern languages that the effect of the printing press is chiefly felt. But in England over 20,000 titles in English had appeared by 1640, ranging all the way from mere pamphlets to massive folios. The result was to bring books, which had formerly been the expensive luxury of the few, within the reach of all. More important, however, was the fact, so obvious today, that it was possible to reproduce a book in a thousand copies or a hundred thousand, every one exactly like the other. A powerful force thus existed for promoting a standard uniform language, and the means were now available for spreading that language throughout the territory in which it was understood. (Baugh, *A History of the English Language*)

Now look at two summaries of it, one from a textbook and a second from a student. The two may be compared with each other, and with your own, checking for conciseness, clarity, and accuracy in the sentences, and the selection of information (major points and qualifications).

Textbook: Printing from movable type, invented in Germany about 1450 and brought to England about 1476, had a far-reaching influence on all European languages. Within a hundred years, manuscript books had become rare. Though at first most printed books were in Latin, over 20,000 titles in English had appeared by 1640. Books were now within the reach of everyone and could exert a powerful standardizing influence upon the language. (67 words)

Student: Printing, invented in Germany in the mid-fifteenth century, was introduced into England in 1476 by William Caxton. A century later manuscript books had almost disappeared. Before 1500, 35,000 books, most in Latin, were printed in Europe, but in England over 20,000 books in English had appeared by 1640. Books, within reach of poor and rich alike, promoted the spread of standardized English throughout the English linguistic territory. (68 words)

WRITING SUMMARIES



Writing good summaries requires accurate reading and the ability to find the main idea and most important supporting evidence in a piece of writing. Summaries are always quite a bit shorter than the original texts, perhaps 75 percent shorter. Sometimes, particularly for a book, the summary is much shorter than the original, perhaps 99 percent shorter. When you write a summary, you give your readers an idea of the content of an article or book and save them the time and trouble of reading the entire original.

To write a good summary, keep the following in mind:

1. Read the original carefully.
2. Mention the source and the author at the beginning of the summary.
3. State the author's main idea without distorting those ideas or adding your own.
4. State the author's most important supporting evidence or subpoints without distorting them. Do not include details.
5. Use your own wording. Occasionally, however, a phrase in the original may be especially striking, interesting, or controversial. In that case, you may use the author's exact words if you put quotation marks around them.
6. Don't include your own ideas or comments. The summary should include only the author's ideas.
7. Periodically remind the reader that you are summarizing someone else's idea.

The following selection discusses the problems of staying up all night to study for exams. Before you read, answer these questions:

1. What do you think of the idea of staying up all night to study for an exam?
2. What do you think of using stimulants to help stay alert?
3. Do you think students usually recover well from staying up all night?
4. Have you ever stayed up all night studying for an exam?

PROFESSIONAL WRITING

The Dangers of Cramming

Midnight, and the spiral notebook is barely half full. The rest of its pages, scribbled with organic chemistry equations, litter the dorm-room floor. Every few minutes the figure hunched over the desk tears away another page, having memorized as much as he can, and passes it on to his friend. And thus the two roommates continue all night, dropping the pages to the carpet after each has absorbed his fill.

Welcome to the all-night cramming session, which most students resort to at some desperate point in their college careers. Armed with the energy of youth, they simply ignore their bodies' cries for sleep, trying to fend off fatigue with doses of coffee or, occasionally, drugs. Teachers and parents have long argued that cramming does more harm than good—and the latest research into sleep needs and patterns suggests that they are right.

For some people, disruptions in the regular sleep cycle can cause temporary intellectual lapses—and stimulants can set off severe side effects. Thus, for every student who manages to memorize the chemical synthesis of bona-S-rubber at 5 A.M. and then triumphantly finds that precise question on his test at 9, there are more than a few who lament the "obvious" answers they blew on a multiple-choice exam because they "just couldn't focus."

The outcome of all-nighters is unpredictable because the impact of sleep loss varies so widely. "Some people are markedly impaired by even a small decrease in sleep time," says David Buchholtz, a neurologist and sleep therapist at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, "while others can go without sleep for a few nights without any demonstrable loss of performance." People also have vastly different minimum requirements: a full night's rest can range from 4 to 10 hours. It is critical, experts stress, for each person to know how much sleep he needs.

Heavy use of stimulants can compound the problem. Many students assume that large quantities of coffee or a few amphetamines will increase alertness; they don't. In fact, stimulants merely disguise—briefly—a reduced capacity to grasp, retain, and retrieve information. "Caffeine does not correct the cognitive impairment caused by lost sleep," Buchholtz says. "A person may be awake, but

he'll have to deal with an intellectual deficit, and his concentration won't be there. He can actually have 'microsleeps' and stare at the same word for five minutes."

Nor are unpredictable naps the only penalty of substance abuse. Coffee drinkers should watch out for Caffeine Intoxication Syndrome, an onset of anxiety, panic, headaches and a frustrating inability to sleep. Most people would have to drink about 10 cups to fall into this condition, but some are so sensitive that it can hit them after only 2 to 3 cups. Speed [an amphetamine] is far more hazardous. Overdoses can lead to auditory hallucinations and paranoia. In addition, according to Larry Alessi, assistant professor of psychiatry at The Johns Hopkins Medical School, "if someone uses speed for many weeks and then stops, he may 'crash' into severe depression."

Unless a person abuses his body with stimulants, he should be able to snap back fairly quickly from an all-nighter. One full night of rest will usually produce complete recovery from up to 48 hours of sleep deprivation; normal, healthy people have been known to stay awake for as long as a week without lasting ill effects. On the second night, there is usually an increase in REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, the phase in which dreaming occurs. Normally, REM sleep is beneficial, but some people report particularly graphic and disturbing nightmares associated with a sudden increase in REM.

Then there are the problems of students who want to get a good night's sleep before an exam but just can't. Stress often promotes insomnia. It may cause the reticular activating system, the structure in the brain that is responsible for alertness, to stay on too long; this prevents sleep-inducing mechanisms from doing their job. What do experts advise a student who finds himself tossing and turning for a half hour or so on the eve of a test? He should get up and try an ordinarily relaxing activity, like snacking or watching television, until he is tired. Some people find that making notes about what's worrying them can exorcise those concerns until the morning.

Sleeping too much, authorities agree, should not worry most people. Even after an extended night of "rebound" sleep, the brain arouses itself when its needs have been fulfilled. Clinically depressed people do often retreat into slumber to avoid the waking hours, but true clinical depression is accompanied by other noticeable symptoms such as loss of appetite, decreased self-esteem and even thoughts of suicide.

In the end, the best formula to follow when finals arrive is one that students have been taught for years—moderation. There will surely be times when excelling, or perhaps just passing, requires pushing bedtime back, but any major changes in sleep patterns should be

made cautiously. As Buchholtz suggests, "The key is keeping perspective and not ever overdoing it."

(Keith Ablow, *Newsweek on Campus*
May 1985, p.9)

EXERCISE 1: SUMMARY

Now read the selection again and summarize it in one sentence of not more than 25 words. As with most summaries, use the present tense. (You needn't mention the name of the author or the title of the article yet.)

Write several of the one-sentence summaries from the class on the board. Choose the best ones. Here is one possibility:

Staying up all night to study, especially with the help of stimulants, does not help you learn and can have negative side effects.

Next, label each paragraph with a subheading indicating the subject discussed in that paragraph. The first three paragraphs have been done for you.

1 introduction—description of a cramming session

2 cramming, more harm than good

3 temporary mental lapses

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

8 _____

9 _____

10 _____

When you have finished, compare your subheadings with those of your classmates. If the headings for any paragraph are quite

different from one another, reread that paragraph and select the heading that best states the subject of the paragraph.

Which paragraph seems to state the main point the author wants to make in this article? Paragraph _____

Write that main point or thesis here. _____

Now look at your list of subheadings and group together headings that deal with similar subjects. Give each grouping a name.

How many paragraphs seem to make up the introduction? _____

What are the other groupings you formed?

Now write a short summary (100 to 150 words) of this article. Remember that the summary should be in the present tense. Begin by mentioning the original source. Here are possible ways to include the source.

In his article entitled "The Dangers of Cramming," Keith Ablow { informs us } that . . .
{ states }
{ claims }
{ shows us }

Or:

In "The Dangers of Cramming," Keith Ablow { indicates }
the problems { discusses }
{ explores }

Or:

The article "The Dangers of Cramming" by Keith Ablow examines the negative effects . . .

Or:

Cramming, according to Keith Ablow in his article "The Dangers of Cramming," can do more harm than good.

(Note the correct punctuation and capitalization of the citation.)

Continue the summary, using your list of subheadings and your groupings as a guide to help you remember the main points covered in the article. At least once in your summary, remind your readers that you are summarizing by using a phrase like the following:

The author goes on to say . . .

Or:

Ablow also reports that . . .

Or:

The article further states that . . .

EXERCISE 2: SUMMARY

Now read the following summaries of this article. Each summary has good features, and each also has some weaknesses. Look back to the beginning of this section to review the points to keep in mind when writing a summary. After you have finished reading each summary, list its strong and weak features. Use the following checklist.

A good summary should do the following:

- Include a mention of the source.
- Correctly interpret the original.
- Include no editorial comments.
- Include only the most important points, without details.
- Use the summarizer's own words, not those of the original author (unless in quotation marks).

Summary 1

In "The Dangers of Cramming," Keith Ablow explains that students who try to stay up all night studying for exams are probably doing themselves more harm than good. Most of these students did

not bother to study hard enough during the term and when exams come they feel they have to try to catch up and learn everything all at once. The problem with disrupting normal sleep patterns in this way is that the students may fall into a temporary intellectual lapse and after the exam the next day they lament the obvious answers they blew because they just couldn't focus. Ablow points out that using stimulants to stay awake can be dangerous because they can cause unexpected side effects. On the other hand, most young people can recover from an "all-nighter" with one good night's sleep. Some students suffer from not being able to fall asleep when they are nervous and others may worry about sleeping too much, but the author advises moderation and regular sleeping habits as the best formula.

Summary 2

Contrary to what many students think, staying up all night to study for an exam is not very efficient. Such a disruption in sleeping habits can actually make the student less mentally alert the next day and cause "microsleeps," in which the student cannot concentrate. Taking drugs to help stay awake can cause "Caffeine Intoxication Syndrome" with accompanying headaches and feelings of anxiety, according to neurologist and sleep therapist David Buchholtz of The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Although for most people it would probably take at least 10 cups of coffee to produce this syndrome, some people are so sensitive that they can develop unpleasant side effects with only 2 or 3 cups of coffee. In most young people other kinds of sleep disorders are rare or temporary and one good night's sleep can get them back to normal. As with many other things, the best advice is to not make major and drastic changes in sleeping habits and always think in terms of moderation.

Summary 3

According to Keith Ablow in "The Dangers of Cramming," if you stay up all night trying to study for an exam, you may find yourself the next morning actually less prepared for the exam than if you had just gone to bed, gotten a good night's sleep, and taken your chances with the exam. The reason is that major disruptions in sleep patterns can cause a lack of mental alertness, so that even if you studied for the exam you may not be able to remember much the next day. Furthermore, no matter what people say about not needing much sleep, scientists know that everyone needs a good night's

sleep before a big day, usually 7–9 hours. Stimulants used to help students stay up all night may trick the students into feeling awake even when their minds are going to sleep on them and they stare vacantly for minutes at a time. In addition, even mild stimulants such as caffeine can cause unpleasant side effects if taken in too great a quantity. Moderation is the watch word. Study during the whole term, not just before the exam; you are sure to do better in school if you don't overdo it.

*Summary 1***Strong features**

Weak features

*Summary 2***Strong features**

Weak features

*Summary 3***Strong features**

Weak features

Now look at your own summary again. List its strong and weak features just as you did for the sample summaries.

Strong features

Weak features

Writing Titles

- Capitalize the first and last words of a title plus all words in between except for articles (*a, an, the*), prepositions (*to, between*, and so forth), and coordinating conjunctions (such as *and, but, or*).

The Unfolding Drama of the Bible

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

- Italicize or underline the following:

BOOKS

The Scarlet Letter

War and Peace

EXCEPTIONS Do not italicize titles of sacred books, such as the Bible or the Koran.

FILMS

Gone with the Wind

Get Shorty

JOURNALS

Critical Inquiry

The American Scholar

LONG MUSICAL WORKS

Cats

Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue

La Traviata

EXCEPTION Do not italicize works with numbered titles, such as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

MAGAZINES

Newsweek

Playboy

NEWSPAPERS

*the Washington Post**the Los Angeles Times*

Note: Do not italicize the initial *the* even when it is part of the name.

PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURE

*Rembrandt's Night Watch**Beverly Pepper's Thel*

PLAYS

*Death of a Salesman**Angels in America*

TELEVISION AND RADIO PROGRAMS

*All Things Considered**Roseanne**Nightline*

RECORDINGS

*the Beatles' Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band**the Grateful Dead's Hundred Year Hall*

- Use double quotation marks for the titles of short works such as articles, short stories, and songs.

"Seal Hunting in Alaska" (magazine article)

"Born in the U.S.A." (song)

"Amateurs Go to War" (chapter in a book)

EXCEPTION Use *no* quotation marks for public documents such as The Magna Carta and the Declaration of Independence. Change *double* to *single* quotation marks when the title of a short work appears within another title that needs quotation marks.

An essay titled "Fences and Neighbors in Frost's 'Mending Wall'" has deepened my interest in the poem.

- The essay's title is enclosed by double quotation marks because an essay is a short work. Within this title is the title of a poem—another short work—which is enclosed by single quotation marks.
- Use underlining or italics inside quotation marks if the title of a short work includes the title of a major work.

"On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Again" (poem)

- Do not use italics or underlining or quotation marks when writing your own title at the head of an essay unless your title includes a reference to another title.

The Way to Treat Nuclear Waste

The Ghost in Shakespeare's Hamlet

Correcting Common Errors

In most college papers you are expected to follow the rules of Standard American English. Since some of these rules are troublesome, this chapter shows you how to correct and avoid errors that writers commonly make. We list the errors alphabetically.

12a

Abbreviations Misused

- Do not abbreviate the days of the week, the months of the year, and the names of most geographical entities.

On the last ^{Sunday} ^{Aug}, we hauled our boats from the Saco ^{River} and
^ ^
Nova Scotia.
headed for N.S.
^

EXCEPTION Abbreviate the name of a state, province, or district when it forms part of an address.

Austin TX

Washington DC

Sherbrooke Que.

- Do not abbreviate units of measurement.

Giraffes grow up to eighteen ^{feet} tall.

Most porcupines weigh between fifty and sixty ^{pounds} lbs.

A 50-lb. bag of fertilizer will feed about 2500 ^{square feet} sq-ft of lawn.

12a

Correcting Common Errors

- Do not use any abbreviation that is not widely known without first explaining its meaning.

Committee on Instruction (COI)

The COI has been considering a proposal to lengthen the school year.

After explaining its meaning, you may use the abbreviation on its own.

12b

Colon Misused

- Do not use a colon after *such as*, *including*, or a form of the verb *be*.

On rainy days at camp, we played board games such as Monopoly, Scrabble, and Trivial Pursuit.

One morning, I woke up to find that someone had taken all of my valuables, including my watch, my camera, and my money.

Still in my locker, though, were my toilet kit, my flashlight, and my wallet—now empty.

- Do not use a colon between a verb and its object.

We needed pasta, a window screen, and a bottle of gin.

- Do not use a colon between a preposition and its object.

So on the way home we stopped at the supermarket, the hardware store, and the liquor store.

12c

Comma Misused

1 Between Basic Parts of a Sentence

- Do not use a comma between a subject and its predicate.

In August, all the members of the Johnson clan gathered for their annual picnic.

EXCEPTION Use a pair of commas to set off a *phrase or clause* that comes between the subject and its predicate.

In August, all the members of the Johnson clan, *from ancient Winona to little Susie*, gathered for their annual picnic.

- Do not use a comma between a verb and its object.

Altogether we ate */* 40 hamburgers and 6 big watermelons.

2 With a Conjunction

- Do not use a comma before a conjunction within a series of just two words or phrases.

The baseball season of 1994 was exciting */* but short-lived.

The election results of 1994 delighted the Republicans */* and dismayed the Democrats.

EXCEPTION You may use a comma to set off a contrasting phrase.

There is no hope without fear, nor any fear without hope.

—Benjamin Franklin

- Do not use a comma after a conjunction.

I like running my own business, *but* the hours are long.

EXCEPTION Use a pair of commas after a conjunction to set off a word or word group.

I like running my own business, *but, I must admit*, the hours are long.

3 With Restrictive Modifiers

- Do not use commas with **restrictive modifiers**. These are modifying words, phrases, or clauses that restrict the meaning of their **headwords**—the words they are meant to modify.

All customers */* who are caught shoplifting */* will be reported to the police.

No one */* without a ticket */* will be admitted.

12c

Chapter 12: Correcting Common Errors

In 1994, former U.S. president / Jimmy Carter / helped to negotiate a change of government in Haiti.

- A name that follows a noun or noun phrase (like "former U.S. president") is restrictive and should not be set off by commas. But when the name comes first, the common noun or noun phrase that follows it is nonrestrictive and should be set off by commas.

In 1994, Jimmy Carter, the former U.S. president, helped to negotiate a change of government in Haiti.

4 The Comma Splice

The **comma splice** is the error of joining two independent clauses with nothing but a comma.

COMMA SPLICE Gail was stunned, she had been fired without warning.

To fix the error, you may add a conjunction after the comma or replace the comma with a semicolon or a period.

Gail was stunned, ^{for} she had been fired without warning.
 ^

Gail was stunned, [;] she had been fired without warning.
 ^

Gail was stunned, ^{she} had been fired without warning.
 ^

12d**Comparison Fault**

A **comparison fault** is the failure to specify clearly *both* of the items that are being compared.

COMPARISON FAULT The river is cleaner now than two years ago.

This sentence seems to compare the *river* with *two years ago*. To make the comparison clear, specify both of its terms.

The river is cleaner now than ^{it was} two years ago.
 ^

Here are two more examples. First:

Dangling Modifier

12e

COMPARISON FAULT Tokyo's population is larger than New York.

This sentence compares a population with a city. A small revision can solve the problem.

Tokyo's population is larger than New York.^{is}
^A

or

Tokyo's population is larger than ^{the + of} New York.
^A

Second:

COMPARISON FAULT Roger jumps higher than any player on the team.

If Roger himself is a player on the team, this sentence makes him jump higher than he himself does. To clarify the comparison, keep Roger distinct from his teammates.

Roger jumps higher than any ^{other} player on the team.
^A

12e

Dangling Modifier

A dangling modifier occurs when its headword—the word it is meant to modify—is missing. Since a modifier always needs a headword, it will attach itself to a false one if the true one is not in the sentence.

DANGLING MODIFIER After doing my homework, the dog was fed.

To fix this kind of sentence, break it up into two sentences in the *active voice*.

I did my homework.

Then I fed the dog.

Then combine the sentences by turning the first into a modifier of the second.

After doing my homework, I fed the dog.

or

After I did my homework, I fed the dog.

12f

Chapter 12: Correcting Common Errors

12f

Direct and Indirect Reporting of Discourse Confused

Discourse, which is anything spoken or written, may be reported directly or indirectly.

Direct reporting of discourse—quoting the exact words of anything spoken or written—requires quotation marks. (See section 10h.) **Indirect reporting** requires *no* quotation marks but, as is shown in the following, does call for changes in wording:

DIRECT REPORTING The senator said, "I favor federal subsidizing of day care."

Tense changed to match tense of introductory verb

INDIRECT REPORTING The senator said that she favored federal subsidizing of day care.

First person pronoun becomes third person

DIRECT REPORTING The business owner asks, "How can we have free enterprise with government interference?"

Question mark changed to period

INDIRECT REPORTING The business owner asks how we can have free enterprise with government interference!

DIRECT REPORTING The customer sat down at the counter and asked, "Do you have any scruples?"

Tense matches tense of introductory verb

INDIRECT REPORTING The customer sat down at the counter and asked if we had any scruples.

Normally, an indirect question begins with the opening word of the original question—a word such as *how*, *why*, *what*, *when*, or *where*. If the question begins with an auxiliary such as *can* or *did*, the indirect question starts with *if* or *whether*.

12g

Double Negatives

A **double negative** occurs when the writer uses two negative words to make one negative statement.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE People sitting in the back *couldn't hardly* hear the speaker.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE¹ The car *didn't give me nothing* but trouble.

Standard American English allows just one negative word for each negative statement.

People sitting in the back couldn't hardly hear the speaker.

The car ^{gave} ~~didn't~~ give me nothing but trouble.

Negative words include *not (n't), never, hardly, scarcely, barely, none, nothing, no one, no, neither, and nor*.

12h

Fragments

Complete sentences help the writer to sound well organized and the reader to grasp the writer's point. Sentence fragments often do just the opposite.

1 Using and Misusing Sentence Fragments

A **sentence fragment** is part of a sentence punctuated as if it were a whole sentence.

A new mountain to be climbed.

In conversation, we often use fragments that make perfectly good sense.

"When?"

"Tomorrow."

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"Really?"

"No question about it."

In writing also, you can sometimes use a sentence fragment effectively.

For so many years college had seemed far off, but all of a sudden it was there, staring me in the face. A new mountain to be climbed.

—College student

But you should handle sentence fragments with care. Otherwise, your writing will sound disorganized.

In conclusion I feel Falstaff proves to be a most likable character. And interesting too. Showing an ability to think quickly in tight spots. But above all he lends a comical light to the play. Which I feel makes it all the more enjoyable.

—College student

Unless you're sure that you know how to use fragments effectively *and* that your reader will accept them, make all of your sentences complete.

EXCEPTIONS Fragments are commonly used in résumés and marginal notes.

2 Spotting and Editing Fragments

If you aren't sure whether or not a particular word group makes a complete sentence, try these questions:

- Does the "sentence" start with a subordinator and have only one verb? If so, the "sentence" is a fragment and must be attached to an independent clause.

One Halloween night some years ago, a full-grown man with a sick sense of humor disguised himself as a ghost, ^{so} _^ that he could terrify little children.

- Does the "sentence" start with a relative pronoun and have only one verb? If so, this "sentence," too, is a fragment and must be attached to an independent clause.

Misplaced Modifiers

12i

In 1994, the British and French established service on a new train,
^{which}

^{which} travels between London and Paris in just three hours.

- Does the "sentence" lack a subject? If so, furnish one.
^{He defeated}
^{Defeated} the great warriors in the kingdom.

- Does the "sentence" lack a predicate? If so, you can often combine the fragment with the sentence that follows it.

^{is}
^{Bungee jumping} is not for everyone.

- Is the "sentence" merely a modifying phrase? If so, combine it with the sentence that contains what the phrase modifies.

^{with}
^{Our room had a big picture window,} With a view of the Grand Canyon.

12i

Misplaced Modifiers

A **misplaced modifier** does not clearly point to its **headword**—the word or phrase it modifies.

MISPLACED MODIFIER I practiced the speech that I had to give in French class *while taking a bath*.

Since the writer here seems to say that he or she had to give a speech while taking a bath, the modifier (in italics) is misplaced. It belongs right before its headword:

EDITED *While taking a bath*, I practiced the speech that I had to give in French class.

1 Squinting Modifiers

A **squinting modifier** is one placed where it could modify either of two possible headwords.

SQUINTING MODIFIER The street vendor she saw on her way to school occasionally sold wild mushrooms

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Correcting Common Errors

Did the writer see the vendor occasionally, or did the vendor sell wild mushrooms occasionally?

EDITED The street vendor she occasionally saw on her way to school sold wild mushrooms.

or

EDITED The street vendor she saw on her way to school sold wild mushrooms occasionally.

2 Misplaced Restricter

A **restricter** is a one-word modifier that limits the meaning of another word or a word group. Restricters include *almost, only, merely, nearly, scarcely, simply, even, exactly, just, and hardly*. Usually a restricter modifies the word or phrase that immediately follows it.

Only the Fabulous Fork serves brunch on Sundays.

The Fabulous Fork serves *only* brunch on Sundays.

The Fabulous Fork serves brunch *only* on Sundays.

A restricter placed at the end of a sentence modifies the word or phrase just before it.

The Fabulous Fork serves brunch on Sundays *only*.

A carelessly placed restricter leaves the meaning unclear.

MISPLACED RESTRICTER The Fabulous Fork *only* serves brunch on Sundays.

Is brunch the only meal served on Sundays, or is Sunday the only day on which brunch is served? To make the meaning clear, place the restricter carefully, as shown above.

12j**Mixed Constructions**

A **mixed construction** is a combination of word groups that do not fit together grammatically or meaningfully. Here are three examples:

1 Modifier Misused as Subject

MISUSED MODIFIER ^{S?} Fearful of the dark in the old bedroom / ^P kept the boy awake all night.

To correct a sentence like this, you can do one of two things:

- Turn the modifier into a noun.

^S EDITED ^P Fear of the dark in the old bedroom / ^P kept the boy awake all night.

- Furnish a noun as the subject.

^{MODIFIER} ^S ^P EDITED Fearful of the dark in the old bedroom, the boy / ^P lay awake all night.

2 Verb Misused with Direct Object

MISUSED VERB ^V The president of the company congratulated the achievement of the workers.

An achievement cannot be congratulated; only people can be. To correct this kind of error, change the verb or the object so that the two fit together.

EDITED The president of the company congratulated the workers on their achievement.

or

The president of the company praised the workers' achievement.

3 Incompatible Items Joined by a Linking Verb

JOINED INCOMPATIBLE ITEMS Another kind of flying is a glider.

An activity (*flying*) cannot be equated with a concrete thing (*glider*). To correct a sentence like this, make the linked items compatible.

EDITED Another kind of flying is gliding. [two activities]

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Correcting Common Errors

OR

EDITED Another kind of aircraft is a glider. [two concrete things]

Here is another example:

The greatest thrill of the trip was ^{riding} when we rode the rapids.

A thrill is not a time but an experience, which is what riding is.

12k

Parallel Structure Faulty

Faulty parallelism occurs when two or more sentence elements that are coordinate in meaning do not match in form. Since faulty parallelism can jar your reader, you should make coordinate items parallel.

I like swimming, skiing, and ^{hiking} to-hike.

or

I like ^{to swim, ski} swimming, skiing, and to hike.

The Allies decided to invade Italy and then ^{that} ^{they would} launch a massive assault on the Normandy coast.

In sentences containing correlatives, the items after each correlative should be exactly parallel in form.

Either we must make nuclear power safe or stop using it.

or

We either
Either ^{we} must make nuclear power safe or stop using it.

In a series of phrases beginning with a word such as *to* or *in*, repeat the word before each phrase or don't repeat it at all after the first phrase.

They fought in the streets, the fields, and ⁱⁿ the woods.

or

They fought in the streets, the fields, and in the woods.

Possessive Needed before a Gerund

12n**12l****Passive Voice Misused**

Avoid switching from active-voice verbs to passive-voice verbs when you have no good reason for doing so.

Usually I run two miles each day, but that morning ~~I was decided~~
^I
~~to run~~
~~that a four mile run should be taken.~~

The active version snaps the sentence into shape and keeps the focus on the one who is acting. Switch to the passive only to keep the focus on someone who is acted upon, as in the following:

Usually I run two miles each day, but that morning *I was kept* in bed by the flu.

12m**Past Participle Misformed**

The past participle of a regular verb is misformed when it lacks the ending *-d* or *-ed*.

MISFORMED PAST PARTICIPLES I was suppose to keep the station open until midnight, but when business was slow, I use to close early.

If you write this way, it may be because you speak this way, not pronouncing the final *-d* or *-ed* when they are needed. To hear the difference these endings make, see if you can make them audible as you read the following sentence aloud:

EDITED I was supposed to keep the station open until midnight, but when business was slow, I used to close early.

12n**Possessive Needed before a Gerund**

A **gerund** is a verbal noun—a noun that is made from a verb and used as the name of an action (*running, singing, playing*). Because

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Correcting Common Errors

the gerund always ends in *-ing*, it looks like a participle serving as a modifier. But see the difference:

MODIFIER

The conductor, tapping a baton, called us to attention.

GERUND

The conductor's tapping of a baton called us to attention.

A noun or pronoun used before a gerund should normally be in the possessive case.

Jake winning surprised everyone.

Everyone was surprised by him winning the race.

A noun or noun phrase that follows a gerund is sometimes preceded by *of*.

12o

Pronoun Case Forms Misused

The **case** of a pronoun is the form it assumes according to its grammatical role in a sentence.

SUBJECTIVE CASE POSSESSIVE CASE

OBJECTIVE CASE

When *they* finished *their* dinner, the waiter handed *them* the bill.

To avoid misusing pronoun case forms, observe the following guidelines:

- Use the same case forms for pronouns linked by *and*.

She
Her and I went swimming every day. [both subjects of *went*]
^ ^

He and *myself* took turns driving. [both subjects of *took*]
^

Jake told Cynthia that he wanted the proceeds split between her and
me.
I [both objects of *between*]
^

- Do not use *me, him, myself, himself, herself, or themselves* as the subject of a verb. Use pronouns in the subjective case.

Me and Sally talked for hours.
^

she
Then *herself* and Sam left the party.
^

Pronoun Reference Unclear

12p

- Do not use a pronoun ending in *-self* as the object of a verb (V) or preposition (PR) unless the pronoun refers to the subject.

The director chose Bob and ^V*myself* for two minor parts and then cast herself in the leading role.

The letter was addressed to ^{PR}*me*.

The ball dropped right between Jennifer and ^{PR}*myself*.

- Do not use *I*, *he*, *she*, *we*, or *they* as the object of a verb or preposition.

My uncle always brought presents for my sister and ^{me}*I*.

- Use the subjective case after *than* or *as* when a pronoun is compared to a subject.

^S Ramona runs faster than ^I*me*.

- Use the objective case after *than* or *as* when the pronoun is compared to an object.

The company paid the newcomer as much as ^{me}*I*.

- Do not use *hisself*, *theirself*, or *theirselves* under any condition in Standard English. Use *himself* and *themselves*.

The mayor ^{himself}*hisself* came to the party.

The voters ^{themselves}*theirselves* want change.

- Avoid confusing *its* and *it's*; *their*, *there*, and *they're*; *whose* and *who's*. For help with these, see section 9j.

12p**Pronoun Reference Unclear**

A **definite pronoun** is a word that commonly takes the place of a noun or noun phrase, which is called the **antecedent (A)** of the pronoun.

Brenda thought ^A*she* had lost the dog, but ^A*it* had followed her home.

In contrast, an **indefinite pronoun** such as *everybody* has no antecedent, and the pronouns *I* and *you* need no antecedent. But all definite pronouns (such as *he*, *she*, *it*, and *they*) take antecedents and should clearly refer to them.

When using a definite pronoun, make it clearly refer to its antecedent. Avoid the following:

1 Ambiguity

A pronoun is **ambiguous** when it has more than one possible antecedent.

AMBIGUOUS ANTECEDENT Whenever Mike met Dan, *he* felt nervous.

To eliminate the ambiguity, replace the pronoun with a noun.

EDITED Whenever Mike met Dan, Dan felt nervous.

Or, to avoid repeating the name, you can put the pronoun first.

EDITED Whenever Mike met him, Dan felt nervous.

2 Broad Reference

A pronoun reference is **broad** when *this*, *that*, *which*, or *it* refers to a whole statement that contains one or more possible antecedents within it.

BROAD REFERENCE The Congressman opposes [gun control], which rankles many of his constituents.

EDITED The Congressman's opposition to gun control rankles many of his constituents.

Here is another example.

BROAD REFERENCE [Judge Ito finally ruled that a TV camera would be allowed to film the trial of O. J. Simpson.] *This* was a mistake.

Pronoun Reference Unclear

12p

Does *this* refer to the judge's ruling or the trial?

EDITED Judge Ito finally ruled that a TV camera would be allowed to film the trial of O. J. Simpson. This ruling was a mistake.

3 Muffled Reference

A pronoun reference is **muffled** when the pronoun refers to something merely implied by what precedes it.

MUFFLED REFERENCE The chief fact of life in Eastern Europe is *their* struggle to recover from forty years of Soviet domination.
A?

EDITED The chief fact of life in Eastern European countries is their struggle to recover from forty years of Soviet domination.

Also consider the following:

MUFFLED REFERENCE Lincoln spoke immortal words at Gettysburg,
but most of the large crowd gathered there couldn't hear *it*.
A?

EDITED Lincoln gave an immortal address at Gettysburg, but most of the large crowd gathered there couldn't hear it.

or

EDITED Lincoln spoke immortal words at Gettysburg, but most of the large crowd gathered there couldn't hear them.

4 Free-Floating *They*

They is **free-floating** when it has no definite antecedent.

FREE-FLOATING *THEY* In England, *they* allow off-track betting.
A?

EDITED In England, the law allows off-track betting.

or

EDITED In England, off-track betting is legal.

or

EDITED English law allows off-track betting.

12p

Correcting Common Errors

5 Indefinite You and Your

You and *Your* are **indefinite** when they are used to mean anyone but the reader.

In Lincoln's day, *you* didn't have microphones.
^{there were no}
^A

To call ^{is to say}
^A By calling a man a fundamentalist-*you* are saying that he considers
 the Bible historically true.

12q**Question Mark Misused**

Do not use a question mark at the end of a question reported indirectly.

I wonder who wrote this ^{song.}
^A song?

12r**Quotation Misfitted**

A quotation is **misfitted** when it fails to combine with your own prose to make a complete, coherent sentence.

MISFITTED QUOTATION According to Orwell, "When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims."

Neither the introductory phrase nor the quoted words make a complete sentence, so we are left to wonder what happens "when there is a gap." To correct the error, do one of the following:

- Quote a complete sentence.

EDITED According to Orwell, "When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttle fish squirting out ink."

- Make the quoted matter part of a complete sentence.

EDITED According to Orwell, one resorts to obscure language "when there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims."

12s

Run-On (Fused) Sentences

A **run-on sentence**, sometimes called a **fused sentence**, joins two independent clauses—two possible sentences—with no punctuation or conjunction between them.

RUN-ON SENTENCE Bears can be huge the Kodiak stands 9 feet high and weighs over 1600 pounds.

Here the first independent clause (*Bears can be huge*) simply pushes into the second. To spot this kind of error in your writing, try reading each of your sentences aloud, listening for the drop in your voice to tell you where one statement (or independent clause) ends and another begins. When you find that point and see no punctuation to mark it, do one of the following:

- Use a comma and a conjunction between the clauses.

Bears can be huge the North American Kodiak stands 9 feet high and ^ weighs over 1600 pounds.

- Use a semicolon between the clauses.

Bears can be huge ; the North American Kodiak stands 9 feet high and ^ weighs over 1600 pounds.

- Use a semicolon between the clauses and a conjunctive adverb.

Bears can be huge ; for instance, the North American Kodiak stands 9 feet high and ^ weighs over 1600 pounds.

- Use a period between the clauses, and make two sentences.

Bears can be huge . The North American Kodiak stands 9 feet high and ^ weighs over 1600 pounds.

12t

Semicolon Misused

- Do not use a semicolon to separate a main clause from a phrase or a subordinate clause.

12t

Correcting Common Errors

The band played for three hours^y but without much heart.

Most of the crowd left^y before the concert ended.

Though we had expected a great night^y we did not get one.

- Do not use a semicolon to introduce a list. Use a colon.

The prophets denounced three types of wrongdoing^y idolatry, fornication, and neglect of the poor.

12u**Split Infinitives**

When one or more modifiers are wedged between *to* and a verb form, the infinitive is **split**.

SPLIT INFINITIVE Detectives needed special equipment *to thoroughly and accurately investigate* the crime.

To eliminate a cumbersome split such as this, put the adverbs at the end of the infinitive phrase.

EDITED Detectives needed special equipment to investigate the crime *thoroughly and accurately*.

or

EDITED To investigate the crime *thoroughly and accurately*, detectives needed special equipment.

12v**Subject-Verb Agreement Faulty**

The rules of agreement in Standard English differ from the rules of agreement in regional and ethnic dialects. To write Standard English correctly, observe the following guidelines:

- In writing about what anything or anyone (except you and your reader) does, make sure you add *-s* or *-es* to the verb.

Subject-Verb Agreement Faulty

12v

My brother work for the post office.

^{es}
^

He rush to keep up with the mail.

^{es}
^

- In writing about what you, we, or they (any group of two or more) are doing now, use only the bare form of the verb.

I need/^s a job.

We all want/^s opportunity.

Politicians love/^s to make promises.

They want/^s votes.

- The only verb to use between *I* and a verb with *-ing* added is *am* or *have been*.

I be taking calculus this semester.

^{am}
^

- In writing about what anything or anyone (except you and your reader) is at present, use *is*.

Veronica be a dancer.

^{is}
^

Chain-smoking be risky.

^{is}
^

- In writing about what two or more persons or things are, use *are*.

Banks be closed on holidays.

^{are}
^

We be friends.

^{are}
^

- Use *has* after any one thing or person except yourself and your reader.

Cheryl have a new apartment.

^{has}
^

It have two bedrooms.

^{has}
^

- Use *have* after *I, you, we, they*, or nouns naming more than one.

I has a lot of bills to pay.

^{have}
^
^{has}

My feet has been hurting.

^{has}
^

- Before *been*, always use *has*, *have*, or *had*.

Everyone been hurt by the layoffs.

^{has}
^

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: Correcting Common Errors

have

I been studying chemistry.

had

She done been watching the news when the phone rang.

12w**Tangled Sentence Structure**

It is sometimes hard to put several ideas into a single sentence without getting them tangled up in the process. Consider this sentence:

The author of "The Cold Equations" is saying, in effect, that the main difference of life on the frontier for people living there after living in settled communities is because their lives are now ruled by the laws of nature instead of people making the laws.

To untangle such a sentence, break it up into single ideas:

The author of "The Cold Equations" is saying, in effect, something. There is a difference between life on the frontier and life elsewhere. The lives of people on the frontier are ruled by laws of nature. They aren't ruled by laws people make.

Then reassemble the ideas as clearly as you can.

According to the author of "The Cold Equations," the difference between life on the frontier and life elsewhere is that the lives of frontier people are ruled by laws of nature rather than by laws people make.

12x**Verbs: Faulty Tense Shift**

When a sentence has more than one verb, the writer may shift from one tense to another. But the shift in tense is **faulty** if there is no good reason for it.

- When all the verbs in a sentence describe actions or states that occur at or about the same time, their tenses should be the same.

The novel *describes* the adventures of two immigrant families who enter the United States at New York, *withstand* the stresses of culture shock, and ^{travel}_A traveled to the Dakota Territory to make their fortune.

- Shift tenses only when the sentence describes actions or states occurring at different times.

PAST

PAST
PERFECT

By the time Columbus *sighted* land, most of his crew *had lost* all hope of survival.

PRESENT

PRESENT
PERFECT

Most children *learn* to talk after they *have learned* to walk.

12y

Would Have Misused in a Conditional Clause

Do not use *would have* to express a condition of any kind.

If I ^{had}_A *would have* found the key, I could have entered the house easily.

Use *would have* only to express the *result* of the condition—not the condition itself.

Editing Exercises

In this section you will find a series of short texts that contain grammatical, mechanical, and word form errors frequently made by advanced non-native writers. You can sharpen your editing skills by trying to find and correct the errors in the articles. Do one or more of these exercises just before you are ready to edit one of your own papers.

Before you begin to edit a text, read it through completely at least once to be sure you understand the meaning of the entire article. The number of errors is indicated for each text.

When Babies Cry

New parents will be interesting in a recent discovery discussed in a well-known medical journal. As hospital personnel work in maternity wards are aware for a long time now, infants crying in the nursery have quite an effect on calm babies. When the calm infants hear the sound of other infant crying, they too begin to sob. In reported experiment, psychologists were making recordings of newborns crying; then have let the infants listen to the sound of their own cries. Amazing, most of infants stopped crying as soon as they heard themselves on tape. Furthermore, if the infants had not been crying, listen to their own cries did not make them begin. Other observations had shown that the cries of older babies will not cause the newborns to start crying. Thus, researchers have conclude that newborns are capable of making distinction between their own crying and that of other babies, furthermore, they react differently depending who the baby's crying they hear, their own, that of another infant, or that of an older baby. The exact mechanism by which this discrimination has been occurred, however, remains a mystery.

17 errors

Women Executives and Daddies

What makes some women success in a man's world where few women even operate? Is it genetic? Are success women just a character type? According to a study done on 25 top women executives, presidents and vice-presidents of major corporations, the answer is apparent no. But these women do have several fascinate feature in common. All 25 women were the first born in their families, a position gave them both extra privileges and responsibilities. Second, none of this women wished they were boys when they were youngs. They were all quite happy to be girls, except when people told them they were doing things girls shouldn't do. These girls were ignored people who told them to wear dresses, to be passive, not to engage in sports, or to be interest in cook instead of in building things. But the most important element in this picture was their relationship with their fathers. In each case their fathers encouraged them to do as they pleased regardless of what did society say. This does not mean their fathers treated them like boys or wished they were boys. On the other hand, their fathers admired their feminine while never assuming that their femininity should avoid them from striving for experience and freedom. All these fathers also spent time with these girls, playing sports with them, going for walks, or just talk. Furthermore, whereas boys may become rivals for their fathers, these girls were apparently never threat to their fathers. Therefore, these fathers prouded very much when their girls were competitive successful in any area. It seems clear that the combination of the close comradeship and continual encouragement of their fathers gave these women the strong and the sense of self-worth that allowed them to succeed where a few women do.

20 errors

Information taken from Gail Sheehy, *Passages* (New York: Dutton, 1976).

Section C

Recognizing Word Meanings

1a Finding Out What Words Mean

Most of us know enough vocabulary to read from the many sources of information around us. We can read newspapers, magazines, signs, posters, advertisements, credit card and job applications, instructions, and recipes, to name a few examples. The richer our vocabulary, the more sources of information are available to us. The more we read, the more our vocabulary grows. You may not be as confident about reading a textbook or a set of directions on how to work your iPOD, as you are about reading newspaper ads or signs in the supermarket. Still, adding to your usual readings with a wide variety of materials can help you expand your knowledge of words. It also can improve your reading skills.

First, you should realize that you cannot know the meaning of every word you see. Sometimes you may say to yourself, "I sort of know what this means" or "I can get by without figuring this one out." Often, however, you need to find out exactly what an unfamiliar word means. In the short run, not paying attention to words you don't know may save you some work. In the long run, not paying attention to words means you just won't know as much as you should.

Here are some ways to find the meanings of difficult words:

- Learn to use the context—that is, the clues that surrounding words and sentences give about the meanings of new words.
- Learn to use visual clues, such as pictures, drawings, signs, and symbols, that can help you figure out meanings. Often a picture starts you thinking about an unfamiliar word on the page, and you can work out a usable definition.

Recognizing Word Meanings

- Look for familiar parts within a word you don't know; you might know what the parts mean. For example, if you know the meaning of *art*, you might be able to guess at the meaning of *artistic* or *artful*.
- Learn the difference between what a word means and what a word suggests or makes you feel. Even words that have the same meaning can suggest different things to different people. Although *happy* and *joyous* both suggest good feelings, *joyous* is a much stronger word; it creates a feeling of powerful happiness.
- Be aware that one word can have many meanings. The word *check*, for example, has more than thirty separate meanings! We check our facts, write a check to pay bills, get a checkup at the doctor's, and put a check next to a correct answer, just to name a few.
- Learn to use a dictionary so you can find meanings easily. Dictionaries help you in many ways, not only for finding the meanings of words but also for finding how to pronounce the words, how to spell them, how to use them correctly, and how to change their forms, among many other uses.
- Keep a list of words that you want to add to your vocabulary. By writing down new words and trying to learn them, you can improve your vocabulary.

1b Remembering New Words

Once you've learned a new word and you think you understand it, try to make sure you don't forget it. To remember new words, do the following:

- Write the word and its definition often, just for practice.
- Say the word. Learn to pronounce it correctly by using the pronunciation clues in your dictionary.
- Use the word when you talk—in class, with friends, at home. Make sure you pronounce the word correctly.
- Try to learn the word and its meaning the first time you see it.
- Use index cards to study vocabulary. Write the word on one side of a card and its definition on the other side.
- Make up a sentence you can understand using the word.

1c

Using Context Clues

- Change the ending of the word. Try to make it plural; try to change the tense; try to add *ly*.
- Use the word whenever you can in your writing assignments.
- Say the word and its meaning over and over again in your mind.
- Don't try to learn long lists of new words. Study just a few words each day for several days so you can learn by repeating.

1c Using Context Clues

An important part of building your reading skills is learning how to guess what unfamiliar words mean. Very often a word you have never seen before appears in a sentence. Perhaps it is a word you *have* seen before, but you don't remember its meaning. Maybe it is a word whose meaning you thought you knew, but the meaning doesn't make sense in the sentence you're reading.

All readers, even the best and most experienced, come across such words from time to time. You see a word and it stumps you. You don't know its meaning quickly. But don't reach for the dictionary right away! (Use your dictionary when nothing else works.) Often you can figure out what a word means from clues in the sentence in which it appears or in surrounding sentences. These clues are *context clues*. *Context* here means surrounding words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that help you find out meanings.

Sentences give clues that help a reader guess at definitions of unfamiliar words. Try to use clues to figure out the meaning of the word *pillory* from the sentences below.

- (1) An early form of punishment in America was the pillory.
(2) A wooden framework with holes for the hands and head, the pillory stood in a central place for everyone to see. (3) A person who committed a crime was locked in the structure so that people could make fun of the criminal. (4) Even now, when we say that a person is *pilloried*, we are saying that the person is exposed to scorn or ridicule.

What is a pillory?

Recognizing Word Meanings

You probably wrote something like this: *A pillory is a wooden structure used for punishing criminals in America many years ago. The criminal's head and hands were locked in the pillory, and he or she was put in a public place for everyone to make fun of.*

How did you figure out the meaning? You didn't stop reading when you saw the word *pillory* even though you might not have known its meaning right away. You knew from the first sentence that *pillory* was a form of punishment in early times in our country. Later sentences gave you other clues. You saw from sentence 2 that a *pillory* was a structure made of wood and that it had holes for people's hands and heads. You saw, too, that criminals were placed in these wooden traps so others could make fun of them. Sentence 4 explains how we use the word *pillory* today.

Words you think you don't know may be words you can figure out. Use the words and the sentences around the unfamiliar word to guess at the meaning. Of course, not every unfamiliar word is made clear by surrounding sentences. Sometimes context gives you no help at all. In many cases, however, you can come up with definitions from sentence clues.

The following chart names kinds of context clues, gives examples, and explains how to use the clues to find word meanings.

Using Sentence Clues to Find Word Meanings

Clue	Example	Explanation
Some sentences set off the definition for a difficult word by means of punctuation.	The <i>principal</i> —the money he put in his savings account to earn interest—was safe even though the bank was closed by the police.	The pair of dashes sets off the definition of <i>principal</i> , here used to mean "sum of money." Other punctuation that can set off meaning includes commas,, parentheses (), and brackets [].
Sometimes helping words, along with punctuation, introduce important clues to meaning.	Carlos looked <i>dazed</i> , that is, stunned, as if someone had shocked him with bad news or with a heavy blow to the head.	Helping words: <i>that is</i> , <i>meaning</i> , <i>such as</i> , <i>or</i> , <i>is called</i> .

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Using Context Clues

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Clue	Example	Explanation
Some sentences tell the opposite of what a new word means. From its opposite, you can figure out the meaning of the word.	During office hours, he looks <i>very tense</i> , but on weekends he is quite relaxed.	The word <i>but</i> helps you understand that <i>relaxed</i> is the opposite of <i>tense</i> . If you know that <i>relaxed</i> means "at ease," you can figure out that <i>tense</i> means "tight" or "at attention."
Sometimes you can use your own experience to figure out the definition of a word.	Martha's husband and mother died within a month of each other. She cried often at her terrible <i>sorrows</i> .	You know that family tragedy would fill a person with "great sadness," the meaning of <i>sorrows</i> .
Sentences before or after a sentence that contain a difficult word sometimes explain the meaning of the word.	The lovely wooden tray had grown <i>brittle</i> . It was dry and hard, and it cracked easily.	Anything dry, hard, and easily cracked can be called <i>brittle</i> .
Some sentences provide exact definitions of difficult words—words readers need to know to understand what they are reading.	She wanted baked clams for her <i>appetizer</i> . An appetizer is the first course of a meal.	The second sentence defines the word <i>appetizer</i> exactly.
Some sentences give examples for a new word, on which you can build a definition.	<i>Legumes</i> , such as string beans, lima beans, and green peas, are important in your diet.	The sentence doesn't say that <i>legume</i> is a name for a group of vegetables with pods, but you can figure out some of that meaning from the examples.
Some sentences use a word you do know to help explain a word you don't know.	The mayor wanted <i>privacy</i> because she knew that being alone would help her solve her problems.	You can tell from the sentence clues that <i>privacy</i> means "being alone."

SECTION 1: READING COMPREHENSION

Deceit: The Silent Chinese Stereotype

(1) When it comes to the words Chinese and stereotypes, legendary American author Mark Twain may have said it best in his work *Roughing It* (1872): "They [The Chinese] are quiet, peaceable, tractable, free from drunkenness; and they are as industrious as the day is long. A disorderly Chinaman is rare, and a lazy one does not exist."

(2) A stereotype, like bias, creates an idea about a certain group of people so that those people are not seen as individuals with distinct differences, but altogether they are viewed as a mass where all act in the same manner. While these stereotypes personify what may be viewed as desirable traits amongst the Chinese, there is another stereotype that dates back over 200 years in the United States, and has more recently resurfaced amongst many American citizens. Words such as deceit, dishonesty, and even cheat can be silently heard amongst many Americans although many will avoid openly admitting it for fear of being seen as racist. In conjunction with this stereotype, I will present a brief look at the historical, political, and global implications of these labels.

(3) Some of the first signs of deceit amongst Americans concerning Chinese can be traced to the mid 1800's. As the first Chinese immigrants came to America via California in search of a better life, they were originally viewed as hard workers. However, as recession set in on the American West Coast, many people saw these immigrants as taking away American jobs. Slogans such as "The Chinese Must Go," made famous by labor leader Dennis Kearney, created resentment towards the immigrants. Coinciding with these developments, several violent attacks against Chinese occurred in San Francisco, Tacoma, and other areas throughout the West Coast. Further emphasizing this hatred for the Chinese during this period, one could find in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* information such as: "The Chinese is cold, cunning, and distrustful, always ready to take advantage of those he has to deal with, extremely covetous and deceitful, quarrelsome, vindictive, but timid and dastardly." In all, there was a significant amount of hatred that was fostered through stereotyping during this period.

(4) Through the course of the 20th century, several developments influenced the stereotypes. The "Yellow Menace" views of the 1930's, the torturing of prisoners by the Chinese during the Korean War and the distrust created by the Cold War, a subject that some may be able to write books on in itself, created views of distrust, inferiority, and deceit amongst many. Hollywood has even been accused of, perhaps falsely, promoting a deceitful atmosphere of late with the depiction of "Asian women as "dragon ladies" - exotic and deceitful objects of desire".

(5) However, the actions of the Chinese government of late may be the most compelling source for distrust and deceit amongst not only Americans, but members of the European Community and other countries as well. As one reporter states, the "Chinese government's self-damaging denial of the spreading of the SARS emergency" not only affects their stability, but we can also recall the fear and anguish that was spread throughout Europe and other parts of the world as the story unfolded. Hence, not only has deceit derived from perhaps racist views from many, it has been fueled by their own government's actions as well.

(6) Hence, deceit, dishonesty, and even cheat are stereotypes that Chinese people residing in the U.S. and elsewhere may have to deal with. As presented, there is evidence available to show how some can hold these stereotypes to be true, but emphasis should be made that the actions of a few can have unfair implications for all associated. In assuming that all Chinese meet the stereotypes presented would be wrong, narrow-minded, and foolish. Instead, one should realize that stereotypes are crude generalizations made by some and are not representative of the population as a whole.

A. True/False/Not Given

Write the appropriate response to each of the following questions, by deciding if the information is True (T), False (F) or Not Given (N), according to the information in the passage above.

1. Mark Twain said that there are no lazy Chinese people. _____
2. Americans openly discuss their negative opinions about Chinese people. _____
3. Many Western encyclopedias and books discuss negative stereotypes of Chinese. _____
4. Hollywood also contributes to negative stereotypes of the Chinese in America. _____
5. Racism is a reflection of national character and is acceptable in most cases. _____

B. Vocabulary

The first column words are highlighted in the reading passage. Circle the word following closest to the meaning the first word as used in the text.

1. Industrious	Strong	Smart	Hard-working	Ugly
2. Resentment	Hardness	Bitterness	Foolishness	Inflation
3. Cunning	Sneakiness	Fast	Hording	Violent
4. Unfolded	Straightened	Simplified	Crisp	Revealed
5. Crude	Rough	Barbaric	Infantile	Militant

C. Short Answer

Write a short answer for each of the following questions. Use complete sentences, without copying from the text.

1. Why has the author chosen to begin the essay with this quote from Mark Twain?
2. Why did negative stereotypes about Chinese first develop in America?
3. What are two factors in the 20th Century that have added to the negative stereotypes of Chinese?

4. How did the SARS incident affect the Chinese stereotype?

 5. If these stereotypes are based on true incidents, why shouldn't they be assumed as generally true?

D. Summary Writing

D. Summary Writing
In the space below, write a summary of the Reading Comprehension article above. It should be between 75 and 100 words in length.

SECTION 1; READING

The Decline of Reading

[1] America is caught in a tide of indifference when it comes to literature, according to a new survey released by the National Endowment for the Arts, which describes a **precipitous** downward trend in book consumption by Americans and a particular decline in the reading of fiction, poetry and drama.

[2] The survey, called "Reading at Risk," is based on data from a survey of 17,135 Americans conducted by the Census Bureau in 2002. Among its findings are that fewer than half of Americans over 18 now read novels, short stories, plays or poetry; that the consumer pool for books of all kinds has diminished; and that the pace at which the nation is losing readers, especially young readers, is quickening. In addition, it finds that the downward trend holds in virtually all demographic groups.

[3] "What this study does is give us accurate numbers that support our worst fears about American reading," said Dana Gioia, the chairman of the endowment. "It gives numbers to the anecdotal stories people have been telling, but the news is that it has been happening in a more rapid and more **pervasive** way than anyone thought possible. Reading is in decline among all groups, in every region, at every educational level and within every ethnic group."

[4] The study, with its **stark** depiction of how Americans now entertain, inform and educate themselves, does seem likely to fuel debate over issues like the teaching and encouragement of reading in schools and the prevalence in American life of television and the other electronic media that have been increasingly stealing time from readers for a couple of generations at least. It also raises questions about the role of literature in the contemporary world.

[5] The survey makes a striking correlation between readers of literature and those who are socially engaged, noting that readers are far more likely than nonreaders to do volunteer and charity work and go to art museums, performing arts events and ballgames. "Whatever good things the new electronic media bring, they also seem to be creating a decline in cultural and civic participation," Mr. Gioia said. "Of literary readers, 43 percent perform charity work; only 17 percent of nonreaders do. That's not a subtle difference."

[6] Still, in a world where information is more readily available than ever, where people know more than they ever have, and where visual acuity is becoming ever more important, it is worth asking: What, if anything, does literature's **diminished** importance to Americans represent? The study has already produced conflicting reactions.

[7] "It's not just unfortunate, it's real cause for concern," said Professor James Shapiro of Columbia University. "A culture gets what it pays for, and if we think democracy depends on people who read, write, think and reflect — which is what literature advances — then we have to invest in what it takes to promote that."

[8] On the other hand Kevin Starr, librarian emeritus of California, said that having close to 50 percent of Americans reading literature is not bad, actually. "In an age where there're no books all educated people must read, where there are so many other forms of information, and where we're returning to an oral culture based on television," he said, "I think that's pretty impressive." Mr. Starr continued: "We should be alarmed, I suppose, but the horse has long since run out of the barn. There are two distinct cultures that have evolved, and by far the smaller is the one that's tied up with book and high culture. You

can get through American life and be very successful without anybody ever asking you about the real motivation of Jay Gatsby."

[9] The Census Bureau study upon which the survey was based shows that the number of readers of literature fell even more precipitously than that of general readers: by 5 percent between 1982 and 1992, and by 14 percent in the following decade; this means that in the last decade the erosion accelerated significantly. The survey also found that men were doing less literary reading than women, minorities less than whites, but that all categories were declining. The steepest declines of any demographic group are among the youngest adults. Between 1982 and 2002, the percentage of those who read literature dropped from 59.8 to 42.8 among 18-to-24-year-olds, and from 62.1 to 47.7 among 25-to-34-year-olds.

[10] The conclusion seems inevitable: reading is becoming outmoded.

(by Bruce Weber, New York Times, July 2004)

1. Answer the following questions about the passage above BRIEFLY in the space provided below each question.

[a] What is actually new for Dana Gioia in the information provided by the study?

[b] What is it that James Shapiro thinks we have to "invest" in? Why?

[c] What negative effects does Dana Gioia see in the new electronic media?

[d] Summarize briefly, in your own language, paragraph 8, namely Kevin Starr's opinion of the study's findings (use only one or two sentences).

2. Check the best answer for the following questions, based on the information in the passage.

[a] A reader of poetry would be more likely to

use big words. hoard money.

help others. buy expensive items.

[b] Jay Gatsby, referred to by Kevin Starr, is most likely to be

a person of high culture. a character in a novel.

a famous professor. a character in a television serial.

3. Considering their use in the passage, circle the best meanings for the following words.

precipitous [para 1]: expensive perceptive falling steep

pervasive [para 3]: invasive widespread persuasive permanent

stark [para 4]: clear optimistic verbose confused

diminished [para 6]: indirect minimal lessened enlarged

erosion [para 9]: rise destruction decline corrosion