Ibn Tofail University

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Writing S1

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Course Description:

This course aims at providing the S1 student with awareness and understanding of as well as application of writing mechanics. By the end of the semester, students will be able to identify different types of phrases, clauses, and sentences. Students will also be able to detect faulty sentence structures such as fragments and run-on sentences. They will also have acquired variety usages of punctuation and capitalization. Finally, students will be aware of the structure of a paragraph and its different types.

1. **Introduction: Course Description & Methodology**

<u>PART I – Sentence Structure</u>

2. **Types of sentences and clauses**
    - ✓ Simple sentences with simple and compound subjects and verbs
    - ✓ Clauses vs. phrases
    - ✓ Dependent vs. Independent clauses
    - ✓ Complex sentences
    - ✓ Compound sentences + coordinating conjunctions
    - ✓ Compound-complex sentences
3. **Punctuation**
    - ✓ Comma; Period; Semicolon; Colon; Quotation marks; (Dashes).
4. **Capitalization**
5. **Faulty sentence structures**
    - ✓ Run-ons
    - ✓ Comma splice
    - ✓ Fragments
    - ✓ Parallelism
    - ✓ Dangling/misplaced modifiers
    - ✓ Subject-verb agreement

<u>PART II - Paragraph Writing</u>

Narrative – descriptive – expository

1. **Paragraph structure**
    - ✓ Topic sentence
    - ✓ Supporting details
    - ✓ Concluding sentence
2. **Tasks**
    - **Identifying the elements of a paragraph**
        - ✓ Topic sentences, Controlling idea, Major + minor supporting details, and Concluding sentences.

- **Techniques to achieve unity, coherence and cohesion**
  - ✓ Repetition of key words
  - ✓ Correct use of pronouns (reference words)
  - ✓ Identification of irrelevant sentences, etc.
  - ✓ Re-ordering paragraphs
- **Completing fragmented paragraphs**
  - ✓ Students provide topic sentences
  - ✓ Students provide supporting details
  - ✓ Students provide concluding sentences
- **Improving sentences**
- **Paragraph writing (process writing)**

Sentence Forms

English sentences could be categorized as follows:

A. Simple Sentence

B. Compound Sentence

C. Complex Sentence

D. Compound-Complex Sentence [Mixed Sentence]

IMPORTANT TERMS

To understand these forms, you must know the following important terms:

SUBJECT

The part which names the person or thing we are speaking about is called **subject.**

Subject may also have an **attribute.**

Example:

My colleague bought fifty books from online book stores.

In this sentence, 'colleague' is a **subject**, while 'my' is an **attribute.**

PREDICATE

The part which tells something about the **subject** is called **predicate.**

Predicate may have 'verb, direct object, indirect object, complement, etc.'

Example:

My colleague bought fifty books from online book stores.

In this sentence, 'bought fifty books from online book stores' is a **predicate.**

VERB

A word or group of words that expresses an action, event, or a state is called **verb.**

Example:

My colleague bought fifty books from online book stores.

In this sentence, 'bought' is a **verb.**

PHRASE

A group of words that does not have a subject and a verb is called **phrase.** A phrase makes sense, but not complete sense.

Phrases may be classified as follows:

Adjective Phrase:

A group of words that does the work of an adjective is called an **adjective phrase**. Thus, **adjective phrase** describes person or thing.

Examples:

Adjective phrase – covered with clouds [adjective – cloudy]

Adjective phrase – made of wood [adjective – wooden]

Adjective phrase – very small [adjective – tiny]

Adverb Phrase:

A group of words that does the work of an adverb is called an **adverb phrase**. Thus, **adverb phrase** describes adjective, phrase, or anther adverb.

Examples:

Adverb phrase – at that place [adverb – there]

Adverb phrase – at this place [adverb – here]

Adverb phrase – in a comfortable manner [adverb – comfortably]

Adverb phrase – in a suitable manner [adverb – suitably]

Adverb phrase – in an efficient manner [adverb – efficiently]

Adverb phrase – in an impatient manner [adverb – impatiently]

Noun Phrase:

A group of words that does the work of a noun is called a **noun phrase**. Thus, **noun phrase** does the work as a subject, an object, a complement, or as the object of the preposition.

Examples:

Noun phrase – the president of the country [noun – president]

Noun phrase – the monitor of the class [noun – monitor]

CLAUSE

A group of words which forms part of sentence, and contains a subject and a predicate is called a **clause**.

Clauses may be classified as follows:

Adjective Clause:

An **adjective clause** is a group of words which contains a subject and predicate of its own, and does the work of an adjective.

Example:

They live in the house ***which has three stories.***

In this sentence – '***which has three stories***' is an **adjective clause**.

Adverb Clause:

An adverb clause is a group of words which contains a subject and predicate of its own, and does the work of an adverb.

Example:

After they came, we left.

In this sentence – '***After they came***' is an **adverb clause.**

Noun Clause:

A noun clause is a group of words which contains a subject and predicate of its own, and does the work of a noun.

Example:

They know ***who won the competition.***

In this sentence – '***who*** **won the competition**' is a **noun clause.**

BASED ON DEPENDENCY, CLAUSES ARE OF TWO TYPES:

Independent or Principal Clause [Main Clause]:

An ***independent clause*** has a subject and a predicate. It **can stand on its own.** It makes sense all by itself. So, it is a complete sentence in itself.

Example:

We hired taxi for the stadium.

This sentence has a subject 'we' and a predicate 'hired taxi for the stadium'. This sentence can stand on its own. It is a simple sentence.

Dependent or Subordinate Clause:

A ***dependent clause*** *also* has a subject and a predicate. However, it **cannot stand on its own.** It does not make sense by itself. So, it is dependent on *independent clause* to make complete sense.

Example:

As we got off the bus

This clause has a subject 'we' and a predicate 'got off the bus'. But this clause is unable to stand on its own. It needs independent clause to make complete sense.

Now, combine both these clauses –

As we got off the bus, we hired taxi for the stadium.

This sentence has both independent and dependent clauses, and stands on its own.

Note: *Types of Dependent Clause: (a). Adjective Clause, (b). Adverb Clause, (c). Noun Clause.*

Simple Sentence

A sentence **which has one subject and one predicate is called simple sentence.** A simple sentence is always an independent clause. A simple sentence expresses a complete thought.

Examples:

We attended the class.

[subject – we, predicate – attended the class]

They are busy.

[subject – they, predicate – are busy]

She is innocent.

[subject – she, predicate – is innocent]

He finished his graduation.

[subject – he, predicate – finished his graduation]

They opened bank accounts.

[subject – they, predicate – opened bank accounts]

Committee awarded him for his outstanding performance.

[subject – committee, predicate – awarded him for his outstanding performance]

IMPORTANT NOTES:

'Compound subject' in a simple sentence

[Two subjects, One verb]

Example:

David and **harry** won the competition.

[subject – David and Harry. verb – won]

[Note – There are two subjects in this sentence. (So, this is called 'compound subject')]

'Compound verb' in a simple sentence

[One subject, Two verbs]

Example:

He **wrote** and **sang** a song.

[subject – he, verb – wrote and sang]

[Note – There are two verbs in this simple sentence. (So, this is called 'compound verb')]

'Compound subject' and 'compound verb' in a simple sentence

[Two subjects, Two verbs]

Example:

Clark and **Tom jogged** and **swam**.

[subject – Clark and Tom, verb – jogged and swam]

[Note – There are both 'compound subject' and 'compound verb' in this simple sentence.]

Compound Sentence

A **compound sentence** consists of **two or more independent clauses** joined together by **(a). coordinating conjunctions, (b). correlative conjunctions** or **(c). transitional expressions (transitional words or phrases).**

Following is the brief description of **coordinating conjunctions, correlative conjunctions** and **transitional expressions***:*

(A). Coordinating conjunctions [Also known as 'Coordinators] –
They are used to merely connect independent clauses of equal importance.

There are **SEVEN** coordinating conjunctions in English -
1. **and** -- used to express a relationship of 'addition'
2. **but** -- used to express a relationship of 'contrast'
3. **for** -- used to express a relationship of 'effect-cause'
4. **nor** -- used to express a relationship of 'negative addition'
5. **or** -- used to express a relationship of 'alternative'
6. **so** -- used to express a relationship of 'cause-effect'
7. **yet** -- used to express a relationship of 'contrast'

To remember these words, you should remember an acronym **'FANBOYS'**. Acronym **'FANBOYS'** is made up of the first letters of the names of the seven coordinators *For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So.*

Examples:
He participated in the national games, **and** she fought the general election.
We played football, **but** they watched movie.
He studied grammar, **for** he wanted to improve his English.
He didn't read a book, **nor** did he write a letter.
He will go for a stroll in the park, **or** he will stay at home.
He was thirsty, **so** he drank water.
I had invited him, **yet** he didn't attend the function.

(B). Correlative conjunctions [Also known as "Paired Coordinators"] –
They are used in **"pairs"** and join words, phrases, and independent clauses which are grammatically equal. They are separated in a sentence but work together to perform a single function.

Following are the most common correlative conjunctions that are used to join independent clauses in compound sentences:

1. although....yet
2. not only....but also
3. either....or
4. neither....nor

Examples:

Although he is quite old, **yet** he is still very active.

Christina is **not only** a bright student, **but** she is **also** a good player.

They are **either** incompetent, **or** they simply don't want to do it.

I am **neither** his supporter, **nor** do I know him.

(C). Transitional Expressions

Transitional Expressions are used to provide a connection between sentences or paragraphs. The word transition literally means passing from one subject to another. Thus, transitional expressions show the logical relationships between ideas. They help to make a piece of writing flow better.

NOTE: Joining two independent clauses with a coordinating or correlating conjunction implies that they are part of the same idea. While, joining two independent clauses with a transitional expression (transitional words or phrases) implies that they are NOT part of the same idea. Instead, there is a specific and logical relationship between two independent clauses.

There are two types of transitional expressions: (1). Transitional words, (2). Transitional phrases

(C1). Transitional Words

[There are numerous transitional words that are used to link or join two or more clauses. Functioning as transitional words, **Conjunctive Adverbs** are commonly used to join independent clauses in compound sentences. Adverbs that are used as conjunctions are called "conjunctive adverbs".]

List of Useful 'Transitional Words' Based on Logical Relationship They Express:

(a). Logical relationship: 'Addition'

Transition Words:

1. besides
2. further
3. furthermore
4. moreover

(b). Logical relationship: 'Cause and Effect'

Transition Words:

1. accordingly
2. consequently
3. therefore
4. thus

(c). Logical relationship: 'Comparison'

Transition Words:

1. however
2. likewise
3. nevertheless
4. otherwise
5. similarly
6. still

(d). Logical relationship: 'Concession'

Transition Words:

1. certainly
2. nonetheless

(e). Logical relationship: 'Consequence (Result)'

Transition Words:

1. hence
2. incidentally

(f). Logical relationship: 'Contrast (Opposition)'

Transition Words:

1. conversely
2. instead

(g). Logical relationship: 'Emphasis'

Transition Word:

1. Indeed

(h). Logical relationship: 'Explanation'

Transition Words:

1. namely

2. specifically

(i). Logical relationship: 'Summary'

Transition Word:

1. finally

(j). Logical relationship: 'Time' and 'Sequence'

Transition Words:

1. afterwards
2. meanwhile
3. next
4. now
5. previously
6. subsequently
7. then

(C2). Transitional Phrases

[Transitional phrases are formed of 'group of words' and are used to join independent clauses in compound sentences]

List of Useful 'Transitional Phrases' Based on Logical Relationship They Express:

(a). Logical relationship: 'Addition'

Transition Phrase:

1. in addition

(b). Logical relationship: 'Cause and Effect'

Transition Phrase:

1. as a consequence (or result)

(c). Logical relationship: 'Comparison'

Transition Phrase:

1. in comparison

(d). Logical relationship: 'Concession'

Transition Phrase:

1. on the other hand

(e). Logical relationship: 'Contrast'

Transition Phrases:

1. after all
2. even so
3. in contrast
4. on the contrary

(f). Logical relationship: 'Emphasis'

Transition Phrase:

1. in fact

(g). Logical relationship: 'Example'

Transition Phrases:

1. for example
2. for instance
3. in other words
4. that is

(h). Logical relationship: 'Similarity'

Transition Phrase:

1. in the same way

(i). Logical relationship: 'Summary'

Transition Phrase:

1. in conclusion

PUNCTUATION RULES

(A). Punctuation Rules: coordinating conjunction

You should use a comma (,) before a coordinating conjunction to connect independent clauses.

Pattern: independent clause + comma + coordinator + independent clause

Example: He won the competition, **but** he was not satisfied with his performance.

Note: You may omit the comma before the conjunction in FORMAL writing.

Example: He won the competition **but** he was not satisfied with his performance.

Note: You may omit the comma before the conjunction if independent clauses are short.

Example: She studied **but** he played.

Note: You can also skip using coordinating conjunction and instead use a semicolon (;) to join two independent clauses.
Example: He won the competition; he was not satisfied with his performance.
Example: She studied; he played.

However, a semi-colon should be used only where ideas are very closely related--
Example: I can defeat him; he cannot defeat me.

Note - Never join two independent clauses with a comma alone.

(B). Punctuation Rules: correlative conjunction
You should use a comma (,) before the second part to connect two independent clauses.
Pattern: correlative word + independent clause + comma + correlative word + independent clause
Example: **Although** he won the competition, **yet** he was not satisfied with his performance.

(C). Punctuation Rules: transitional words or phrases
You should use a semicolon (;) before a transitional words or phrases to connect independent clauses. In addition, transitional words or phrases should be followed by a comma (,).
Pattern: independent clause + semicolon + transitional word or phrase + comma + independent clause
Example: He won the competition; **however,** he was not satisfied with his performance.

Other Examples:
I will go to office after two hours; **meanwhile,** I will read the novel.
He didn't tell me his home address; **on the contrary,** he asked me for my home address.

Compound sentences may have two or more independent clauses –
1. Compound sentence having two independent clauses or simple sentences
Examples:
David joined party, and Henry studied English.
David joined party, but Henry studied English.
David joined party, so Henry studied English.
David joined party, yet Henry studied English.

There are two independent clauses in the above sentences –

David joined party. [subject – David, predicate – joined party]

Henry studied English. [subject – Henry, predicate – studied English]

Coordinators *('and, but, so, yet') have been used to join these clauses.*

Thus, there are ***two independent clauses*** *in a single sentence. [Compound sentence]*

Note *– When there are two independent clauses in compound sentence, it is also called a '****Double Sentence****'.*

Another Example:

He was intelligent, yet he couldn't get the first rank.

There are two independent clauses in this sentence.

He was intelligent. [subject – He, predicate – was intelligent]

He couldn't get the first rank. [subject – He, predicate – couldn't get the first rank.]

Coordinator *('yet') has been used to join these clauses.*

Thus, there are ***two independent clauses*** *in a single sentence. [Compound sentence]*

2. Compound sentence having more than two independent clauses or simple sentences

Example:

Mark studied for five hours, and George played for four hours, yet Jimmy sang for two hours, and Bill ran for one hour.

There are four independent clauses in this sentence.

Mark studied for five hours.

George played for four hours.

Jimmy sang for two hours.

Bill ran for one hour.

Coordinator *('and', yet) has been used to join these clauses.*

Thus, there are ***four independent clauses*** *in a single sentence. [Compound sentence]*

Note *– When there are more than two independent clauses in a compound sentence, it is also called a '****Multiple Sentence****'.*

Another Example:

I read the novel, and I watched the movie, but I didn't write anything.

There are three independent clauses in this sentence.

I read the novel.

I watched the movie.

I didn't write anything.

***Coordinators** ('and, but') have been used to join these clauses.*

*Thus, there are **three Independent clauses** in a single sentence. [Compound sentence]*

Important Note

Compound verb should not be confused with a compound sentence. Sentences may contain coordinating conjunctions and not be compound.

I have given the following examples in the 'Simple Sentence' section:

David **and** harry won the competition.

He wrote **and** sang a song.

Clark **and** Tom jogged **and** swam.

Here, coordinating conjunction '**and**' has been used merely to join two words (two subjects or two verbs).

While in a compound sentence, coordinating conjunction '**and**' is used to join two independent clauses.

Complex Sentence

A **complex sentence** contains **an independent clause** joined by **one or more dependent or subordinate clauses**. Dependent (subordinate) clause begins with a **subordinating conjunction** or a **relative pronoun**. In other words, a complex sentence always has a **subordinating conjunction (subordinator)** or a **relative pronoun**.

Clauses in a complex sentence are not structurally equal. They express related thoughts. Subordinators or relative pronouns are used not only to connect these clauses but also to show the 'clear and specific relationship' between the clauses. In other words, subordinator or relative pronoun show how one clause **(dependent or subordinate clause)** is dependent on other. The two parts are no longer of equal importance.

Following is the brief description of **subordinating conjunctions** and **relative pronouns**:

(A). Subordinating conjunctions [Also known as 'Subordinators] –

Subordinators may be classified according to their meaning (logical relationship), as follows:-

(a). Subordinating Conjunctions [Cause or Reason]:

as
because
considering that
in order (that)
since
so (that)
that
why

(b). Subordinating Conjunctions [Comparison]:

as much as
rather than
than
whereas
whether

(c). Subordinating Conjunctions [Concession]:

although
as
as though
even though
except
just as
though
whereas
while

(d). Subordinating Conjunctions [Condition]:

assuming (that)
even if
if
in case (that)
lest
only if
provided (that)
unless
until
whether
whether or not

(e). Subordinating Conjunctions [Consequence or Result]:

that

(f). Subordinating Conjunctions [Manner]:

as
as if
as though
how

(g). Subordinating Conjunctions [Place]:

whence
where
wherever

(h). Subordinating Conjunctions [Purpose]:

in order that
so
so that
that

(i). Subordinating Conjunctions [Time]:
after
as
as long as
as soon as
before
by the time
now that
once
since
still
till (or until)
when
whenever
while

Following words are also subordinating conjunctions:
wherein [Meaning: in which]
whereby [Meaning: by which]
wherewith [Meaning: with which]
wherefore [Meaning: for which]

Punctuation Rules: Subordinating conjunction
Subordinator could be used in the beginning or in the middle of the sentence. When you begin sentence with subordinator, you should use ***comma (,)*** *before beginning second clause. If you put subordinator in the middle of the sentence, you don't need to use comma before second clause. In Other Words - When 'dependent clause' comes first, you should separate the clauses with a comma. When 'independent clause' comes first, you don't need to use a comma.*
Pattern: subordinate clause + comma + independent clause

Complex Sentence: Examples [using subordinating conjunctions]

Example 1:

After he completed his post-graduation, he applied for the job. Or
He applied for the job ***after*** he completed his post-graduation.

Independent clause – He applied for the job.
Dependent clause – ***After*** he completed his post-graduation. [This sentence cannot stand on its own.]

Example 2:

When her mother arrived at home, she was singing. Or
She was singing **when** her mother arrived at home.

Independent clause – She was singing.
Dependent clause – **When** her mother arrived at home. [This sentence cannot stand on its own.]

Example 3:

If you help me in this hour of crisis, I will help you later. Or
I will help you later **if** you help me in this hour of crisis.

Independent clause – I will help you later.
Dependent clause – **If** you help me in this hour of crisis. [This sentence cannot stand on its own.]

(B). RELATIVE PRONOUNS:

A relative pronoun is used to connect a clause or phrase to a noun or pronoun. **That, Which, Who, Whom,** and **Whose** are relative pronouns that are commonly used in complex sentences. "Which" is more formal than 'that'

Following is the complete list of relative pronouns:

1. that
2. what
3. whatever
4. whatsoever
5. which
6. whichever
7. who
8. whoever
9. whom
10. whomever

11. whomsoever
12. whose
13. whoso
14. whosoever

Complex Sentence: Examples [using relative pronouns]

Example 1:

Complex Sentence – She has a house **that** looks like a palace.

Independent clause – She has a house.

Dependent clause – **That** looks like a palace. [This sentence cannot stand on its own.]

Example 2:

Complex Sentence – This is the book which I bought for **him**.

Independent clause – This is the book.

Dependent clause – **Which** I bought for him. [This sentence cannot stand on its own.]

Example 3:

Complex Sentences – School administration praised the boy **who** won the first prize.

Independent clause – School administration praised the boy.

Dependent clause – **Who** won the first prize. [This sentence cannot stand on its own.]

Example 4:

Complex Sentences – He entered the building **whose** windows were broken.

Independent clause – He entered the building.

Dependent clause – **Whose** windows were broken. [This sentence cannot stand on its own.]

NOTE: Difference between **Subordinating Conjunctions** and **Relative Pronouns**:

Relative Pronouns act as the subject of a dependent clause.

Subordinating conjunctions are followed by the subject of their clause.

Compound-Complex Sentence

A **mixed sentence or compound-complex sentence** is a type of complex sentence in which there is **more than one independent clause** joined by **one or more dependent or subordinate clauses**. Thus, **a mixed sentence is** the combination of compound sentence and subordinate clause. Sometimes, complex sentence is connected with simple sentence. Sometimes, there is more than one complex sentence.

Thus, three situations are possible:

1. Mixed Sentence Having A Subordinate Clause And A Compound Sentence.

Example:

Even though he won the competition, he didn't organize the party, but his father bought him a laptop.

There is one subordinate clause and a compound sentence.

Subordinate Clause – Even though he won the competition.

Compound Sentence – He didn't organize the party, but his father bought him a laptop.

[Two Independent Clauses – He didn't organize the party. His father bought him a laptop.]

2. Mixed Sentence Having A Simple And A Complex Sentence.

Example:

I entered the class after teacher came, but my classmate didn't join the class.

Here, first part is a complex sentence. Second part is a simple sentence.

Complex Sentence – I entered the class after teacher came.

[Independent Clause – I entered the class. Subordinate Clause – After teacher came.]

Simple Sentence (Independent Clause) – My classmate didn't join the class [subject – classmate, predicate – didn't join the class]

3. Mixed Sentence Having More Than One Complex Sentence.

Example:

I will go to market when I finish my work, and he will go to playground when he completes his duty.

Here both the clauses are complex sentences.

Complex Sentence 1:

I will go to market when I finish my work.

[Independent Clause – I will go to market. Subordinate Clause – when I finish my work.]

Complex Sentence 2:

He will go to playground when he completes his duty.

[Independent Clause – He will go to playground. Subordinate Clause – when he completes his duty.]

Sentence Forms – Comparison

Based on the use of independent and dependent clause; simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences could be compared as follows:

Simple sentence –
One independent clause

Compound sentence –
Two or more independent clauses

Complex sentence –
One independent clause and one or more dependent (subordinate) clauses

Compound-Complex sentence (Mixed Sentence) –
Two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent (subordinate) clause

****

Name: _____

Sentences: Simple, Compound or Complex?

Read the following sentences. Check the box marked "simple" if it is a simple sentence. Check the box marked "compound" if it is a compound sentence. Check the box marked "complex" if it is a complex sentence.

1. We have to go to bed when the clock chimes ten o'clock. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
2. Jennifer liked William's friend, and she also liked his cousin. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
3. The big brown dog ran after the blue and red ball. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
4. James and Eve rode their bicycles after they ate lunch. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
5. The teacher and the principal met in the hall near the library. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
6. Many brave soldiers fought in the war, and they received medals. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
7. The drummers played a long time, but the piano players stopped early. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
8. Before the queen rode in the parade, she gave a speech. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
9. After midnight the ghosts will come out of the haunted attic. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex
10. She dropped the pan and the plate, but she held on to the spoon. ☐ Simple ☐ Compound ☐ Complex

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Coordinating and Subordinating Conjunctions Tip Sheet

Vocabulary:

Sentence—a grammatical unit that contains at least one independent clause
Dependent clause—a group of words that has a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone
Independent clause—a group of words with a subject and a verb which expresses a complete thought
Simple sentence—a sentence consisting of a single independent clause
Compound sentence—a sentence containing two or more independent clauses
Complex sentence—a sentence containing at least one independent and at least one dependent clause

Coordinating Conjunctions

for and nor but or yet so

Adverbial Conjunctions (or Conjunctive Adverbs)

furthermore	moreover	likewise
however	nevertheless	also
consequently	therefore	instead
otherwise	in addition	besides
nonetheless	indeed	in fact
accordingly	hence	thus
meanwhile		

Subordinating Conjunctions

after	although	because	since	when
while	as if	as though	before	whenever
even if	as long as	provided that	though	where
so that	rather than	unless	until	wherever
whether	even if	even though	in order that	
as	if			

Relative Pronouns

Who whom whose which that

Patterns to remember:

Compound sentences

1. Independent clause, coordinating conjunction independent clause.
2. Independent clause; independent clause.
3. Indpendent clause; adverbial conjunction, independent clause.

Complex sentences

1. Independent clause dependent clause.
2. Dependent clause, independent clause.

Sample Sentences

Compound Sentences:

1. Suzanne wanted me to babysit, **but** I already had plans. *(coordinating conjunction)*
2. Suzanne wanted me to babysit; **however,** I already had plans. *(adverbial conjunction)*
3. Suzanne wanted me to babysit; I already had plans. *(semicolon alone)*

Complex Sentences:

1. I could not babysit for Suzanne **because I already had plans.** *(depdent clause following independent clause)*
2. **Because I already had plans,** I could not babysit for Suzanne. *(dependent clause preceding independent clause)*

Relative Pronoun—Complex Sentences:

1. Suzanne, **who is my sister,** wanted me to babysit for her.
2. Suzanne wants me to babysit for her, **which means I have to cancel my plans.**

Chapter 20

Sentence Fragments

Sentence fragments are parts of sentences that are punctuated as if they were complete sentences. We use sentence fragments all the time in our speech. We also see fragments in advertising and in some published books and articles, where writers use them on purpose, for specific effects. However, in most academic and business writing, sentence fragments are major English errors.

A **sentence fragment** is a group of words that does not express a complete thought. (The reader is left asking questions about a fragment.) There are many types of sentence fragments, but most are missing a subject, a complete verb, or both. Fragments that do contain a subject and a verb may not express a complete thought, as in dependent clauses. To correct a fragment, a writer must either add words to the fragment or connect the fragment to a sentence.

✗ Walked his dog at five o'clock every day.

Who walked his dog? To correct this fragment, add a subject.

✓ My **neighbor** walked his dog at five o'clock every day.

✗ The final exam given on Friday.

What about the final exam? To correct this fragment, add a verb.

✓ The final exam given on Friday **was** easy.

✗ In the summer.

What happens in the summer? To correct this fragment, add a subject and verb.

✓ In the summer, **students** sometimes **work** part-time.

Missing-Subject Fragments

- A common type of fragment is one that is missing a subject. It may contain a noun, but that noun does not act as the subject of a complete sentence.

V

✗ *Have* plans for the party on Friday.

Who has plans? To correct this fragment, add a subject.

S V

✓ **I** *have* plans for the party on Friday.

Exception: Remember that the subject *you* is understood in **imperative sentences** (see Chapter 27). Although the subject is not written in the sentence, the reader understands that the verb refers to *you*.

S V

✓ (**You**) *Take* a break after you move those boxes.

Exercise 1

Correct each fragment by adding a subject.

1. Stopped by around noon to talk.

   _____

2. Don't have anything special to talk about.

   _____

3. Couldn't wait for the end of the week.

   _____

4. Starts after the holiday.

   _____

5. Tried to use the phone without charging it.

   _____

Missing-Verb Fragments

- Another type of fragment is one in which there is a subject but no verb.

S

✗ The little **boy** with curly black hair.

What is the little boy doing? To correct this fragment, add a verb.

S V

✓ The little **boy** with curly black hair *pulled* his wagon down the walk.

Fragments also occur when the verb of the sentence is not complete. Present participles (verbs ending in *-ing*) and past participles are not complete verbs. To correct this kind of fragment, add a helping verb or a complete verb.

S

✗ The **student** working on his term paper.

S V

✓ The **student** working on his term paper *was* late to class.

S

✗ The **apples** fallen on the ground.

S V

✓ The **apples** *have fallen* on the ground.

Exercise 2

Correct the fragment by adding a verb.

1. The road taken by the driver.

_____

2. The old car rusting behind the barn.

_____

3. Some students in the class.

_____

4. The glasses in the cupboard.

_____

5. The computer sitting on the desk.

_____

Missing-Subject-and-Verb Fragments

- Phrases lack a subject and a verb; unless they are attached to an independent clause, they are fragments. Add a subject and a verb to make phrases into sentences.

✗ From morning until night.
S V
✓ I *work* from morning until night.

✗ Walking home after dark.
S V
✓ Most **people** *don't enjoy* walking home after dark.

Exercise 3

Correct the fragment by adding a subject and a verb.

1. From morning until late in the evening.

_____

2. Sitting quietly on the bench at the bus stop.

_____

3. Operated by a licensed technician.

_____

4. On the table since yesterday morning.

_____

5. In order to deliver the package.

_____

Dependent-Clause Fragments

- Even though they contain a subject and a verb, dependent clauses are always fragments because they do not express a complete thought. Dependent-clause fragments are corrected by removing words or adding words to make a complete thought. Often, dependent-clause fragments can be joined to an independent clause.

✗ Because Mr. Pastorelli caught a cold last week.
Dependent Clause
✓ Because Mr. Pastorelli caught a cold last week, **he** *missed* work.

✗ The woman who lives down the street.
S V
✓ The **woman** who lives down the street *is* friendly.

Steps to Identifying Fragments

1. Identify the subject and the verb in every word group.
2. Make sure that the word group is a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence.

Exercise 4

Correct the fragment by adding or removing words.

1. When I want to eat a home-cooked meal.

   _____

2. Which is my favorite place to eat.

   _____

3. If it rains today.

   _____

4. Who was my last English teacher.

   _____

5. Because the test is on Friday.

   _____

Exercise 5

Correct the fragment by adding or removing words.

1. Before winter begins this year.

   _____

2. While the children are eating breakfast.

   _____

3. That I answered correctly on the last test.

   _____

4. Although it has not rained in a month.

   _____

5. Unless we have a review session before the test.

   _____

Review Exercise 1

Label each item as Fragment (F) or Sentence (S) and correct the sentence fragments.

____ 1. Being the mail carrier in my neighborhood.

____ 2. There are dogs barking all the time.

____ 3. Bitten on the leg by a mean German shepherd.

____ 4. Because a mail carrier never knows if a barking dog will bite or not.

____ 5. Dogs are not the only problem.

____ 6. One yard that is a real challenge because of the poison ivy climbing up the mailbox.

____ 7. The leaves of the plant, which sting if you touch them.

____ 8. Another hassle for the letter carrier is neighbors who park in front of their mailbox.

____ 9. The carrier can't deliver the mail.

____ 10. The problems delivering mail in my neighborhood safely.

Review Exercise 2

Label each item as Fragment (F) or Sentence (S) and correct the sentence fragments.

____ 1. Making a meal for a family.

____ 2. A real challenge to satisfy everyone's tastes.

____ 3. Some cooks take a vote to decide what to cook.

____ 4. Kids who hate most foods usually like peanut butter and jelly.

____ 5. Teenagers usually love pizza and hamburgers.

____ 6. Which can be fattening for adults.

____ 7. Don't try to please everyone.

____ 8. Because most cooks don't have a lot of time to make a meal.

____ 9. Cooked in the oven for half an hour.

____ 10. A favorite recipe that my mother gave me.

Editing Exercise



Alone or with a partner, correct the fragments in the following paragraph. You may either add subjects and verbs or connect the fragments to other sentences.

The Perfect Houseplant

African violets are the perfect houseplant. Ever blooming, with single, semi-double, or double flowers in lots of colors. African violets also charm admirers with their green or variegated foliage of smooth, velvety, or deeply creased leaves. Discovered in 1890 by Baron Walter von Saint Paul while hiking in Africa. Easy to grow with the right temperature and sunlight. They like temperatures in the 70s. Also, indirect sunlight or the fluorescent lighting from overhead lights. Many gardeners like to start new plants from old ones. Two methods. Division of plants that produce offspring and leaf cuttings that grow new plants. A very inexpensive plant to grow and a very enjoyable indoor hobby!

Chapter 29

Run-Ons

Run-ons consist of two or more independent clauses that are run together without proper punctuation. (See Chapter 27 for a discussion of independent clauses.) Because they make writing difficult to understand, run-ons are major English errors. Readers expect to see a complete thought between ending punctuation marks. When writers omit those marks or fail to add connectors, readers become confused.

Types of Run-Ons: The Fused Sentence and the Comma Splice

- A fused sentence incorrectly joins or fuses together two independent clauses without any punctuation.

S V S V
✗ The **sun** *is shining* **we** *are going* to the beach.

- A comma splice incorrectly joins or splices together two independent clauses with only a comma.

S V S V
✗ The **sun** *is shining*, **we** *are going* to the beach.

Identifying Run-Ons

Identifying subjects and verbs that make a complete thought can help you determine whether there is more than one independent clause in a word group. Remember that independent clauses cannot be run together with no punctuation or with only a comma between them.

Steps to Identifying Run-Ons

1. Identify the subjects and the verbs in a word group that end with a period.
2. If the subjects and verbs can be divided into two complete thoughts that are not joined with the proper punctuation, then the word group is a run-on.
3. If the word group cannot be divided into two complete thoughts (with two subjects and verbs), it is not a run-on.

Exercise 1

Circle the subjects and underline the verbs in the following word groups to determine how many independent clauses are in each word group. If there are two independent clauses without punctuation or spliced together with a comma, indicate the run-on with RO. Identify the sentences with S.

_____ 1. Losing weight is difficult and takes motivation and knowledge.

_____ 2. People may need to change their diet, they should also exercise regularly.

_____ 3. Experts believe changing lifestyle is the key to weight control people must make changes in the way they live.

_____ 4. Two out of three successful dieters change some habits, such as eating late at night.

_____ 5. Change requires awareness of eating habits that may be adding pounds.

_____ 6. Establishing a goal for weight loss is crucial to success, visualizing what needs to be accomplished also motivates people.

_____ 7. Concrete goals are better than vague ones, dieters should set small goals that are realistic such as only eating ice cream twice a week.

_____ 8. Dieters must keep track of their activities, they should record their exercise each week.

_____ 9. With a clear picture of their behavior, dieters will realize when they are not sticking to their diet and exercise.

_____ 10. Consulting a fitness counselor or nutritionist may help dieters to lose weight.

Five Ways to Correct Run-Ons

1. Separate the independent clauses with a **period,** and start the second with a **capital letter.**

   ✓ The sun is shining. We are going to the beach.

2. Join the two independent clauses with a **comma** and a **coordinating conjunction.**

   Coordinating conjunctions: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*

   ✓ The sun is shining, so we are going to the beach.

Exercise 2

Correct each run-on by separating the independent clauses with a period or by adding a comma and a coordinating conjunction or just a coordinating conjunction if the comma is already present.

1. The economy is good right now, there are lots of job openings.
2. Interest rates are low people can afford to buy a new house.
3. Banks are making loans almost everyone can qualify.
4. Consumers are buying new cars in record numbers, last month over ten thousand new cars were bought in this state.
5. Sometimes saving money is the wise course of action, later you can use the money for a down payment on a house or car.

3. Join the two independent clauses with a **semicolon,** a **conjunctive adverb** or **transitional expression,** and a **comma.** If you use a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression to join two sentences, you must use a semicolon and not a comma after the first independent clause. Joining two sentences with a comma and a conjunctive adverb or transitional expression creates a run-on. (For a full list of conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions and their meanings, see Chapter 30, page 303.)

   Common conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions: *moreover, also, however, on the other hand, therefore, consequently, for example, then, later*

   ✗ The sun is shining, therefore, we are going to the beach.

   ✓ The sun is shining; therefore, we are going to the beach.

4. Join the two independent clauses with a **semicolon.** Use only a semicolon to connect two independent clauses when the two ideas are closely related and their relationship is clear to the reader.

   ✓ The sun is shining; we are going to the beach.

Exercise 3

Correct each run-on by separating the independent clauses with a semicolon or with a semicolon, conjunctive adverb, and comma.

1. Neighbors can be a source of support, the people in the neighborhood can also be a source of annoyance or danger.
2. Neighbors can help one another in times of need they might give their next-door neighbor a ride when her car breaks down.
3. Neighbors watch out for the houses around them, therefore, they will investigate or call the police if they see something suspicious.
4. Getting a smile and a wave on the way home feels good someone putting the paper on the doorstep or delivering a package creates a sense of support.
5. Neighbors contribute to our quality of life most people appreciate their neighbors.

5. Join two independent clauses with a **subordinating conjunction.**

Subordinating Conjunctions

after	even though	until
although	if	when
as	since	whereas
because	though	whether
before	unless	while

✓ Because the sun is shining, we are going to the beach.

Exercise 4

Correct the following run-ons by joining the two clauses with a subordinating conjunction.

1. Neighborhood organizations can help a neighborhood come together they provide a way for neighbors to meet and discuss common concerns.
2. These organizations also tackle problems, neighbors may have specific complaints.
3. If there are services that the neighborhood wants the city may work well with the organization.
4. Some neighborhoods have organized themselves, many neighborhoods do not have any organization to represent the residents.
5. A few organizations were formed in the 1970s, now such organizations are quite common.

Exercise 5

Return to Exercise 1 and correct each run-on using use one of the five ways of correcting run-ons.

Review Exercise 1

Label each word group as Run-on (RO) or Sentence (S), and correct the run-ons using one of the methods discussed in this chapter.

____ 1. My hometown offers residents many advantages, for example it has lots of parks and playgrounds.

____ 2. He plays the lottery regularly, he wants to win a million dollars.

____ 3. Last weekend, Nancy learned to use a compass because she doesn't want to get lost in the woods.

____ 4. I enjoy going home my family is glad to see me.

____ 5. I can never find a place to park unless I arrive at 7:30 A.M. for my 10:00 A.M. class.

____ 6. Some bosses let employees off for tests, however some bosses do not.

____ 7. The class is required to attend two cultural events, also there are three major exams.

____ 8. The coffee was cold, and the toast was burned.

____ 9. The messenger picked up a package at the post office, later she delivered a package downtown.

____ 10. I graduate in June, which is five years from when I began school.

Review Exercise 2

Label each word group as Run-on (RO) or Sentence (S), and correct the run-ons using one of the methods discussed in this chapter.

____ 1. Many people don't get enough sleep, one in three adults suffers from sleeplessness.

____ 2. Experts advise people who have trouble sleeping well to go to bed only when they feel drowsy, otherwise, they will get frustrated trying to fall asleep.

____ 3. If you can't fall asleep in twenty minutes, you should get up and leave your bedroom for some quiet time elsewhere.

____ 4. Exercising regularly helps the exercise should be done early in the day.

____ 5. Coffee doesn't help us sleep it keeps us awake, so coffee lovers shouldn't drink coffee in the evening.

____ 6. Some people drink alcohol to sleep better, but it doesn't help problem sleepers and should be avoided.

____ 7. We all love naps they should be kept under one hour in the mid-afternoon.

____ 8. Large meals seem to make us sleep, indigestion keeps us awake.

____ 9. Smokers have a particularly hard time sleeping because nicotine is a stimulant.

____ 10. Sleeping pills should be used conservatively they can lead to addiction.

Editing Exercise



Alone or with a partner, correct the run-ons in the following passage.

Future Movie Stars

My friends Jane and Carol are moving to California within a few weeks. They have always been interested in motion pictures, they hope to become movie stars. The two women studied acting in college, therefore they believe that they can find careers in the movie industry. When they arrive in Hollywood, California, they expect to work part-time as waitresses or office assistants while they audition for acting parts. Jane read a book about going to Hollywood that advised actors to get an agent, but Carol is afraid that an agent will cost too much money. Fortunately, Carol has a contact at one of the movie studios he said he would help them. Maybe someday I will see them on the big screen, then I can brag about my good friends.

CHAPTER

32

The Handbook

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This concise handbook focuses on the most common writing problems you are likely to encounter. Attempting to read and remember all the material in this chapter would be time-consuming and in many cases unnecessary; you probably know more grammar than you realize. Most writers, however, make habitual errors.

Strategies for Using the Handbook

1. **Review this chapter to become familiar with its layout.**
2. **Examine previous assignments to identify mistakes in your writing. Note repeated errors.**
3. **Highlight sections in the handbook addressing your problem areas.** You may wish to jot down page numbers or use Post-its® to tab these pages for quick reference.
4. **Review these sections while editing and proofreading papers.**
5. **Refer to the handbook when instructors return papers with errors in grammar and mechanics.**
6. **Access your English CourseMate at www.cengagebrain.com for additional information on mechanics.**

Sentence Problems

There are three common sentence errors:

Fragments	incomplete sentences
Run-ons and comma splices	improperly punctuated compound sentences
Faulty parallelism	words or phrases presented in pairs or lists that do not match in form

You can overcome many errors if you understand basic sentence structure. Review the definitions of *simple* and *compound* sentences on pages 692–693.

Fragments

***Fragments* are incomplete sentences.** They lack a subject, full verb, or fail to state a complete thought. The term *fragment* is misleading because it suggests something short. But even a long group of words can be a fragment:

Sentences:

Duck! (Note: The subject *you* is implied)
Ann sings.
She is seventeen.

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Fragments:

Located by the side of the road just two miles from the main highway	*a phrase lacking a subject and verb*
Worked and toiled for weeks to prepare a new budget before the annual meeting.	*a verb phrase and complement lacking a subject*
Kim working until midnight every weekend.	*incomplete verb. Note:--**ing** verbs cannot stand alone.*
Because Sharon was angered by the voters'	*dependent clause. Note:* lack of support. *Although there is both a subject and full verb, the statement does not express a complete thought.*

Writers sometimes intentionally write fragments in fiction and personal essays for special effect:

> He looked out the window. The blizzard had obliterated the farm. There was nothing but snow. **Snow in all directions. Snow on the fields. Snow in the road. Miles of blinding snow. White and unforgiving snow.**

Fragments should be avoided in formal academic, business, and technical writing.

Fragments often occur when you write quickly and either skip a needed word or accidentally break off part of a sentence that cannot stand alone:

> Working at Mister Paul's was frustrating. I had to supervise six employees. **Most of them teenagers.** They had poor work skills and usually arrived late. On the busiest weekend of the year, three waiters failed to show up. **Because they decided to attend a rock concert.**

Strategies for Detecting and Revising Fragments

1. **Read your paper aloud, pausing after each period.** Make sure all sentences have a complete subject and verb. Each sentence should express a complete thought. Fragments, especially dependent clauses, sound like introductions to unstated ideas:

   After the game ended.
   Because the examination was canceled.
   Before the Internet was developed.

2. **Revise fragments in three ways:**
   - Add missing elements:

     The house *is* completely filled with visitors and relatives.
     ~~Are~~ *They are* unable to locate the source of the pollution.

(Continued)

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- Turn dependent clauses into sentences by deleting subordinating elements (usually the first word or words):

  The
  ~~Because the~~ ∧ president failed to warn Congress.

  The
  ~~Although the~~ ∧ union had won two bitter strikes.

- Connect fragments to related sentences. Often fragments are just that, pieces of another sentence you have accidentally broken off:

  w
  Companies must provide day-care services to recruit employees. ~~Who~~ **who have preschool children.**
  ∧

  The museum purchased works by some of Europe's greatest painters: **Manet, Monet, Degas, and Chagall.**
  ∧

  Even though he was born in Nigeria, Derrick had little knowledge of African politics.
  ∧

WRITING ACTIVITY

Locate and revise the ten fragments in the following passage:

> The word "Harlem" conjures up a variety of images. To some the neighborhood is one of New York's most distressed slums. While others recall the heyday of the Harlem Renaissance. Cradle of black writers, poets, and jazz musicians. But few realize the unique history of this famous black community. Harlem, ironically, began as an upper-class white residential area. In the late 1800s Harlem was open country. Featuring ponds, woods, and pastures. South of Central Park, Manhattan growing. Additional housing was needed. Because of the new streetcar lines. The land north of Central Park was within easy commuting distance to Manhattan's offices, stores, and businesses. Real estate developers seeing great opportunity. Constructed blocks of expensive townhouses. Unfortunately, speculators overbuilt. Demand had been greatly overestimated. When upper-income white people failed to take interest in the new community. Landlords subdivided the units and rented to blacks. Who traditionally had been forced by discrimination to pay higher rents. Within a decade or so, the planned reserve of white executives became a thriving black community. Its collection of artists, musicians, and intellectuals made it the capital of African American culture. However, as landlords continued to subdivide houses to increase rents. Harlem became overcrowded and began to decay.

Run-on Sentences and Comma Splices

Run-on sentences and comma splices **are incorrectly punctuated compound sentences.** *Compound sentences* (see page 692–693) consist of two or more independent

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clauses (simple sentences) joined by a comma and *and, or, yet, but, so, for, nor,* or by a semicolon:

and
The teachers edited the magazine, the students designed the illustrations.

The runway is closed; it will reopen at noon.

Run-ons occur when two sentences run together without the proper punctuation:

and
Administrators are struggling with budget cuts, they hope private industry will donate computers.

Patience is important in parenting; children are often defiant.

Comma splices (also called "comma faults") occur when two sentences (independent clauses) are joined with a comma instead of a semicolon. In writing quickly, you may instinctively sense that two complete ideas should be joined but fail to use the proper punctuation:

The city is responsible for the bridge; the county must repair the on-ramps.

but
Sean Nelson served in the Navy, he never learned to swim.

Strategies for Detecting and Revising Run-ons and Comma Splices

- **Read your sentences aloud.** If they contain more than one complete idea or simple sentence, make sure the independent clauses are joined by a comma with *and, or, yet, but, so, nor, for* or by a semicolon.
- **Revise run-ons and comma splices in four ways:**
  1. **Add missing elements:**

     and
     Celluloid is unstable, many early films have been lost.

     or

     Celluloid is unstable; many early films have been lost.

  2. **Determine if you have used a comma instead of a semicolon.** In revising sentences, you may wonder if a comma should be changed to a semicolon. To determine if you need a semicolon, follow these steps:
     a. Read the sentence aloud. Does it sound like more than one complete idea? Are independent clauses properly joined?
     b. If a comma seems to join two independent clauses, ask yourself if you can replace the comma with a period and have a complete sentence on the left and on the right. If you could create two simple sentences and a word such as *and, or, yet, but, or, so,* or *nor* is not used, use a semicolon.

(Continued)

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3. **Revise the wording of the sentence.** It may be better to stress the relationship between clauses by making one of them dependent:

   Because celluloid is unstable, many early films have been lost.

4. **Separate the independent clauses to form two or more simple sentences.** You may have accidentally run sentences together that are not closely related and should be separated. Ideas are given greater emphasis when stated in simple sentences, as in breaking apart this comma splice and run-on:

   Creditors were demanding payment, *and* employees were threatening to strike. Franklin Motors declared bankruptcy.

- **Read your revisions aloud.** Do your new sentences avoid run-ons? Do they effectively express your ideas?

WRITING ACTIVITY

Revise the following comma splices and run-ons. You may add missing elements, separate the independent clauses, or reword the sentences for clarity and emphasis.

1. The first computers were large machines they filled entire rooms.
2. They contained thousands of tubes, the tubes blew out constantly.
3. Graduate students ran up and down the computer room they pushed shopping carts filled with replacement tubes.
4. These monstrous computers were marvels they had less power than today's handheld calculators.
5. An early computer expert predicted the United States would need only five computers he could not anticipate the revolution to come.
6. Computers remained mysterious and somewhat sinister machines, most Americans saw them only in science fiction movies.
7. Computers have revolutionized society some experts see problems.
8. The 1960 census was computed on massive reels of tape no modern computer can accommodate them.
9. Only one computer from that era is still operational it is located in a museum.
10. Years of data may be lost future researchers will face a daunting task to retrieve information processed on obsolete equipment.

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Faulty Parallelism

When you write about pairs or lists, the words or phrases must match for the sake of *parallelism*—they have to be all nouns, all adjectives, all adverbs, or all verbs in the same form:

Nancy is **bright, creative,** and **funny.**	(all adjectives)
Mary writes **clearly, directly,** and **forcefully.**	(all adverbs)
Reading and **calculating** are critical skills.	(all gerunds)
She should **lose** weight, **stop** smoking, and **limit** her intake of alcohol.	(all verbs matching with *should*)

Mistakes with parallelism are easy to make. If asked to describe your best friend, you might come up with nouns (**a student**), adjectives (**smart**), or verbs (**sings**). It is often difficult to combine all these ideas into one list and keep them in the same format.

well
The concert was loud, colorful, and ~~many people~~ attended.

(The adjective **well attended** matches the adjectives **loud** and **colorful.**)

wrote an unreadable final exam.
John failed to take notes, refused to attend class, and ~~his final exam is unreadable~~.

(The verb **wrote** matches the verb phrases **failed to take** and **refused to.**)

exercising daily
Quitting smoking and ~~daily exercise~~ are important.

(**Quitting** and **exercising** are both gerunds, or *–ing* nouns.)

Strategies for Detecting and Revising Faulty Parallelism

Examine any sentences that include pairs or lists of words or phrases to make sure that they are parallel, by applying this simple test:

1. Read the sentence and locate the pair or list.
2. Test each item to make sure it matches the format of the basic sentence.

Examples:

Students should read directions carefully, write down assignments accurately, and take notes.

Students should **read** directions
Students should **write** down assignments accurately
Students should **take** notes
(Each item matches *Students should . . .*)
Conclusion: This sentence is **parallel.**

Computer experts will have to make more precise predictions in the future to reduce waste, create more accurate budgets, and public support must be maintained.

(Continued)

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Computer experts will have to **make more** precise . . .
Computer experts will have to **create more** accurate . . .
Computer experts will have to **public support** must be . . .
(The last item does not link with *will have to.*)
Conclusion: This sentence is **not parallel.**

Review of Faulty Parallelism

Test each of the following to identify unparallel elements:

1. Unemployment can lead to marital problems, alcohol and drug abuse, feelings of depression, and bouts of irrational behavior such as gambling.
2. Maintenance costs are based on labor rates, availability of spare parts, and are subject to inflation.
3. My job entailed word processing, filing, and sales orders had to be verified.
4. An effective résumé, a confident interview, and being realistic about hiring salaries will increase your chance of being hired.
5. Born a slave, Booker T. Washington founded a college, led a black businessmen's association, and became the first African American to stay at the White House.

ANSWERS

1. Correct
2. Not parallel: *are based on* does not link with *are subject to inflation.* Substitute *inflation* so the list is composed of all nouns.
3. Not parallel: *My job entailed* does not link with *sales orders had to be verified.* Substitute *verifying sales orders.*
4. Not parallel: *Being realistic* does not match with the nouns *résumé* and *interview.* Substitute *a realistic attitude about hiring salaries.*
5. Correct

A Tip on Parallelism

In many cases it is difficult to revise long sentences that are not parallel:

> To build her company, Shireen Naboti is an assiduous planner, skilled supervisor, recruits talent carefully, monitors quality control, and is a lobbyist for legal reform.

If you have trouble making all the elements match, it may be simpler to break it up into two or even three separate sentences:

> To build her company, Shireen Naboti is an assiduous planner, skilled supervisor, and lobbyist for legal reform. In addition, she recruits talent carefully and monitors quality control.

The first sentence contains the noun phrases; the second consists of the two verb phrases. *Remember, it is often easier to create two short parallel lists than one long one.*

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WRITING ACTIVITY

Revise the following sentences so that the pairs and lists are parallel. You may break the sentences into two if you are unable to make a single list of items match.

1. The Knights of Labor fought for higher wages, shorter hours, and opposed unsafe conditions.
2. Farmers must anticipate prices, decrease production costs, maintain accurate records, and willing to take risks.
3. The team faces three major problems: the coach's retirement, recurring injuries, and fans unwilling to purchase season tickets.
4. Computers allow entrepreneurs to market products worldwide and competing with major corporations.
5. They saved money to repair the house, purchase a new car, and repayment of debt.
6. Applicants must be intelligent, creative, flexible, and work with little supervision.
7. They decided to drop out of school and seeking adventure in Europe.
8. The employees will be either fined or demotions may be announced.
9. Parents and teachers must agree on the best methods to discipline rude conduct, instruct children with learning disabilities, and determining the role of extracurricular activities.
10. She was spirited, witty, charming, and showed knowledge about the college.

Strategies for Revising Sentence Problems

1. **Read your paper aloud.** You can often hear incomplete statements, indicating possible fragments or confusing ideas that signal possible run-ons. Errors such as comma splices, however, may sound correct because both a comma and a semicolon denote a pause.
2. **Do not think of sentence errors as puzzles or math problems you have to solve or "fix."** Poorly written sentences may not be easily revised. Reconsider what you were trying to say and express your ideas in a new sentence. Often trying a fresh approach will lead you to not only avoid errors but also create more effective and interesting sentences.
3. **Keep track of errors instructors note in your writing and highlight or tab these areas in the handbook for future reference.**

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Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information on sentence structure.

Agreement

Subjects and their verbs, and nouns and their pronouns, must agree or match in number.

Singular subjects have singular verbs; plural subjects have plural verbs.

Singular:	The **boy** next door ***plays*** the piano.	(**boy . . .** ***plays***)
Plural:	The **girls** across the street ***play*** the violin.	(**girls . . .** ***play***)

Note: An *s* is usually added to indicate plural nouns (cat*s*) and singular verbs (purr*s*).

Singular nouns take singular pronouns; plural nouns take plural pronouns:

Singular:	The **boy** next door rides ***his*** bicycle.	(**boy . . .** ***his***)
Plural:	The **girls** ride ***their*** bicycles.	(**girls . . .** ***their***)

Maintaining these patterns of agreement emphasizes the relationship between ideas and prevents confusion. Although the concept is basic, agreement errors are very common.

Subject–Verb Agreement

Although matching singulars and plurals appears easy in simple sentences, choosing the right verb can be challenging in longer and more complicated structures. Many words can be singular or plural depending on context. Long noun phrases can easily be misread and assigned the wrong verb form. There are eight common situations that present problems for writers:

1. **Nouns ending in *s*:** Many words that appear plural because they end with *s* are in fact singular:

   Singular: mathematics physics economics

   Words like *statistics* can be singular or plural depending on the meaning required:

   Singular: **Statistics *requires*** a keen sense of logic.
   Plural: These **statistics** about homelessness ***are*** alarming.

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2. **Collective or group subjects:** Collective nouns and phrases are singular when they act as a unit:

Singular:

United Technologies ***appears*** to be expanding.	(United Technologies is one company.)
The **jury** ***deliberates*** this weekend.	(The twelve members act as a unit.)
Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea ***is*** my favorite book.	(The title describes one book)
The **number** of dropouts ***is*** less than anticipated.	(one number or figure)
Five dollars ***is*** not enough for lunch.	(a single amount of money)

Collective or group nouns are plural when items in the group act separately:

Plural:

A **number** of parents ***were*** unable to come.	(Parents act separately.)
Five dollars ***were*** spread on the table.	(individual dollar bills)

3. **Subjects joined by *and*:** Subjects linked by *and* are plural if they refer to two separate items:

My **mother and father** ***are*** going to Florida.	(two people)
His **intelligence** and **hard work** ***are*** admirable.	(two separate qualities)

Subjects linked by *and* are singular if they refer to a single item:

My **friend and partner** ***is*** a skilled designer.	(a person who is both friend and partner)
Her **drinking and driving** ***is*** very disturbing.	(a single action)

4. **Subjects joined by *either . . . or*:** The words *either* and *or* indicate that one or the other subject, but not both, is linked to the verb.

If both subjects are singular, the verb is singular:

My **father or mother** ***is*** driving us to the airport. (Only one parent will drive.)

If both subjects are plural, the verb is plural:

Parents or **teachers** ***supervise*** the playground.

(In both instances, more than one adult watches the playground.)

If one subject is singular and the other is plural, the verb agrees with the subject nearer the verb.

Either the **letters** or the **package** ***is*** insured.
Either the **package** or the **letters** ***are*** insured.

5. **Inverted word order or *There* + verb constructions:** In some sentences the normal word order is inverted so that the verb comes before the subject. In other

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instances such words as *there, here, when, how, what, which,* and *who* begin constructions that can be singular or plural:

Singular:
There ***goes*** my best friend.
What ***is*** your problem?
He is a person **who** ***loves*** money.
When ***is*** she coming?

Plural:
There ***go*** my best friends.
What ***are*** your problems?
He is one of those people **who** ***love*** money.
When ***are*** they coming?

6. **Indefinite pronouns:** The words *anybody, anyone, someone, each, either,* and *everybody* are singular.

Singular:
Everybody ***is*** encouraged to participate.
Someone ***travels*** downtown every day.

The words *all, any, some, none, most,* and *half* can be singular or plural, depending on the noun preceding the verb.

Singular:
All of the *money* ***is*** missing.
Some of the *snow* still ***remains*** on the field.
Half of my *income* ***depends*** on bonuses.

Plural:
All of the *books* ***are*** missing.
Some of the *children* ***remain*** on the field.
Half of the *stores* ***close*** early on Sunday.

7. **Prepositional phrases:** Prepositional phrases are groups of related words linked to such words as *above, around, over, under, before, after, while,* or *during.* The subject of a sentence is not included within a prepositional phrase. The key word or subject usually precedes the prepositional phrase.

Singular: **One** of *my friends* ***is*** absent. (The subject is *One,* not *friends.*)

Plural: **Children** *with a love of poetry* ***are*** attracted to these programs. (The subject is *Children,* not *a love*)

8. **Subjects with possessive forms:** Subjects that include a possessive form can be easily misread.

Singular:
The parents' main **concern** ***is*** school security. (*concern* is the subject, not *parents'.*)
The Europeans' **love** for American music ***is*** well known. (*love* is the subject, not *Europeans'*)

Plural:
Paul's **clothes** ***are*** stylish. (*clothes* is the subject, not *Paul's*)
Kim's **books** ***are*** overdue. (*books* is the subject, not *Kim's*)

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Strategies for Overcoming Problems with Subject–Verb Agreement

1. **Recognize sentences that may pose problems—sentences with compound subjects, collective nouns, *either . . . or* constructions, or inverted word order.**
2. **Read sentences out loud to appreciate their meaning.** In a few instances, agreement problems will stand out when spoken.
3. **Locate the verb or verbs.**
4. **Ask who or what is associated with the verb's action or linked to the subject. The answer will be the subject.** In some instances you may have created a long or awkward sentence that should be restated rather than simply repaired. Consider your ideas and express them using different constructions that will avoid agreement errors and state your ideas more clearly.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Circle the correct verb in the following sentences.

1. Children's clothing (is/are) designed for durability, not style.
2. The goal of the parents and teachers (remain/remains) the same.
3. Either the teacher or the substitute (supervises/supervise) the testing center.
4. Neither the lawyers nor the investigators (are/is) confident about solving the case.
5. *Nine Stories* (is/are) on the summer reading list.
6. There (are/is) guests waiting.
7. Either the cities or the federal agency (oversees/oversee) new construction.
8. The teacher's guidelines (provides/provide) strategies for using the library.
9. Fifteen minutes (give/gives) us enough time to evacuate the building.
10. The movies, especially ones filmed before WWII, (was/were) usually in black and white.

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Pronoun Agreement

Pronouns must agree or match with their ***antecedents***—the nouns or pronouns they represent:

1. **Pronouns should agree in number and gender with their antecedents:**

   Bill took ***his*** time. **Nancy** rode ***her*** bicycle.
   The **children** called ***their*** mother.

2. **Compound nouns require plural pronouns:**

   Both **the students and the teachers** argue that ***their*** views are not heard.
   Tom and Nancy announced that ***they*** plan to move to Colorado next year.

3. **Collective nouns use singular or plural pronouns:**

   Singular: The **cast** played ***its*** last performance.
   (The cast acts as one unit.)

   Plural: The **cast** had trouble remembering ***their*** lines.
   (Cast members act independently.)

4. ***Either . . . or* constructions:** The words *either* and *or* indicate that one noun or the other, but not both, is linked to the verb.
   If both nouns are singular, the pronoun is singular:

   Either the **city council** *or* the **county board** will present ***its*** budget.
   (Only one group will present a budget.)

   If both nouns are plural, the pronoun is plural:

   The board members *or* **the city attorneys** will present ***their*** report.
   (In both instances, several individuals present a report.)

   If one noun is singular and the other is plural, the pronoun agrees with the nearer noun:

   Either the **teacher** *or* **students** will present ***their*** findings to the principal.

   Hint: Place the plural noun last to avoid awkward statements or having to represent both genders with *he and she, his or her,* or *him and her.*

5. **Avoid shifts in person or point of view:** Pronouns should maintain the same person or point of view in a sentence, avoiding awkward shifts:

   Awkward shift: To save money, **consumers** should monitor ***their*** [***third person***] use of credit cards to avoid getting over ***your*** [***second person***] head in debt.
   Revised: To save money, **consumers** should monitor ***their*** use of credit cards to avoid getting over ***their*** heads in debt.

6. **Indefinite pronouns.** In speaking, most people use the plural pronouns *they, them,* and *their* to easily include both males and females. But in formal writing, most

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writers follow the established rule that singular indefinite pronouns agree with singular pronouns:

Singular:

anybody	everybody	nobody	somebody
anyone	everyone	no one	someone
either	neither	each	one

Anybody can bring ***his or her*** tax return in for review.
Everybody is required to do the test ***himself or herself.***

Plural: If **many** are unable to attend the orientation, make sure to call ***them.***

Indefinite pronouns like *some* may be singular or plural depending on context:

Singular: **Some** of the **ice** is losing ***its*** brilliance.
Plural: **Some** of the **children** are missing ***their*** coats.

Strategies for Avoiding Sexism in Pronoun Use

Singular nouns and many indefinite pronouns refer to individuals who may be male or female. Trying to include both men and women, however, often creates awkward constructions, such as:

If a **student** has a problem, ***he or she*** should contact ***his or her*** adviser.

In editing your writing, try these strategies to eliminate both sexism and awkward pronoun use:

1. **Use plurals:**

   If **students** have problems, ***they*** should contact ***their*** advisers.

2. **Revise the sentence to limit or eliminate the need for pronouns:**

   Students with problems should contact advisers.
   Advisers assist students with problems.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Circle the correct pronoun in the following sentences:

1. The cable television industry or the local stations are responsible for the messages (it/they) convey to children.
2. An attorney should focus on the needs of (his or her/their) clients.

(Continued)

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3. The attorney and her advisors claimed (her/their) meeting had to be delayed because (they/it) could not be scheduled before the judge's ruling.
4. A child or (his or her/their) parents may sign the release form.
5. The causes of heart disease demand extensive research because of (its/their) complexity.
6. The jury made (their/its) decision.
7. Neither the United States nor any European country is willing to risk (its/their) prestige.
8. Half the merchandise could not be delivered because of (its/their) cost.
9. Either Mom or Dad can let you into (his or her/their) house.
10. If prices of wheat cannot remain stable (it/they) will drive investors from the market.



Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information about agreement.

Verbs

Irregular Verbs

Most verbs are ***regular***, taking the suffix ***-d*** or ***-ed*** to indicate the past participle.

pass/passed walk/walked create/created adopt/adopted

Other verbs are ***irregular***, requiring other spellings or words to indicate the past and the past participle.

swim/swam/swum drink/drank/drunk sing/sang/sung

Common Irregular Verbs

Review this list and highlight any verbs that have given you trouble in the past:

Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle (used with helping verb)
arise	arose	arisen (e.g., have arisen)
be	was/were	been (e.g., have been)
bear (carry)	bore	borne (e.g., were borne)
bear (give birth)	bore	borne/born

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Dangling Modifiers

Modifiers that serve as introductions must describe what follows the comma. When they do not, they "dangle," so that what they modify is unclear:

Grounded by fog, airport officials ordered passengers to deplane. (Were airport officials *grounded by fog?*)

Revised:

Airport officials ordered passengers to deplane the aircraft, which was grounded by fog.

Strategies to Detect Dangling Modifiers

Sentences with opening modifiers set off by commas fit the following pattern:

Modifier, Main Sentence

To make sure the sentence is correct, use the following test:

1. **Read the sentence, then turn the modifier into a question, asking who or what in the main sentence is performing the action:**

   question, answer

2. **What follows the comma forms the answer. If the answer is appropriate, the construction is correct:**

   Hastily constructed, the bridge deteriorated in less than a year.

   Question: What was *hastily constructed?*
   Answer: the bridge
   Conclusion: This sentence is **correct.**

   Suspected of insanity, the defense attorney asked that her client be examined by psychiatrists.

   Question: Who was *suspected of insanity?*
   Answer: the defense attorney
   Conclusion: This sentence is **incorrect.**

   Revised: Suspecting her client to be insane, the defense attorney asked that he be examined by psychiatrists.
   The defense attorney asked that the defendant she suspected of insanity be examined by psychiatrists.

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Misplaced Modifiers

Place modifying words, phrases, and clauses as near as possible to the words they describe:

Confusing: Scientists developed new chips for laptop computers ***that cost less than fifty cents.***
(Do laptop computers cost *less than fifty cents?*)

Revised: Scientists developed laptop computer chips that cost less than fifty cents.

Confusing: Jogging **often** reduces stress.
(Does this mean that frequent jogging reduces stress or that jogging has been proved to occasionally reduce stress?)

Revised: Frequent jogging reduces stress.
Jogging can reduce stress in some instances.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Revise the following sentences to avoid dangling and misplaced modifiers. In some instances, you can merely move phrases; in others, you may have to rewrite the entire sentence.

1. Spinning out of control, the aeronautical engineer struggled to advise the troubled pilot.
2. She is teaching a course at Cornell on plane geometry.
3. Fearing contamination, all food products were ordered destroyed by inspectors after the flood.
4. Hoping to pass with flying colors, the exam grade stunned Michelle.
5. Shocked by his falling blood pressure, Sam was treated by paramedics.
6. Once regarded with suspicion, marketers see the Internet as a way of increasing sales.
7. No longer endangered, tourists can easily see lions in their natural habitat.
8. Popular with customers, the kitchen staff at the Coffee Trader felt overwhelmed.
9. Chewing often provokes headaches.
10. She designed restorations of old houses that people just loved.



Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information about dangling and misplaced modifiers.

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Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives **modify nouns and pronouns, and can be formed from nouns and verbs:**

Nouns:	***car*** insurance	***field*** glasses	***book*** report
Verbs:	***steamed*** rice	***iced*** tea	***dyed*** shirt

Adverbs **modify verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and sentences. Most adverbs are formed by adding *–ly* to adjectives:**

poor/poorly angry/angrily heated/heatedly

Strategies for Using Adjectives and Adverbs

1. **Understand differences between adjectives and adverbs:**

   She gave us ***freshly sliced*** peaches.
   (The adverb ***freshly*** modifies the adjective ***sliced,*** meaning that the peaches, whatever their freshness, have just been sliced.)
   She gave us ***fresh sliced*** peaches.
   (The adjectives ***fresh*** and ***sliced*** both describe the noun *peaches,* meaning the peaches are both fresh and sliced.)

2. **Review sentences to select the most effective adjectives and adverbs.** Adjectives and adverbs add meaning. Avoid vague modifiers:

   Vague: The concert hall was ***totally inappropriate*** for our group.
   Revised: The concert hall was ***too informal*** for our group.
   The concert hall was ***too large*** for our group.

3. **Use adverbs with verbs.**

   Incorrect: Drive ***careful.*** (adjective)
   Revised: Drive ***carefully.***

4. **Avoid unnecessary adjectives and adverbs.**

   Unnecessary: We drove down the ***old, winding, potholed, dirt*** road.
   Revised: We drove down the ***winding, potholed*** road.

5. **Use *good* and *well, bad* and *badly* accurately.** ***Good*** and ***bad*** are adjectives and modify nouns and pronouns:

   The cookies taste ***good.*** (***good*** modifies the noun *cookies*)
   The wine is ***bad.*** (***bad*** modifies the noun *wine*)

   Well and ***badly*** are adverbs and modify verbs, adjectives, and adverbs:

   She sings ***well.*** (***well*** modifies the verb *sings*)
   He paid for ***badly*** needed repairs. (***badly*** modifies the adjective *needed*)

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WRITING ACTIVITY

Correct the adjective and adverb use in the following sentences:

1. I ruined my shoes walking across the fresh tarred parking lot.
2. He played so good last night.
3. That is such a high stressful job.
4. Radical diets are unfortunate popular with teens who feel bad about their appearance.
5. Drive slow because of the ice.
6. He suffered a severely injury in the accident.
7. The soup tasted badly.
8. Without glasses, she sees poor.
9. I was upset at the sloppy decorated banquet hall.
10. That tastes so well.



Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information on adjectives and adverbs.

Punctuation

Punctuation can seem trivial. But missing or misused punctuation marks, like misspelled words, not only detract from your message and your credibility as a writer but also can alter your meaning.

Instructors, say students, complain about the grading policy.

Without commas, faculty members report that students are complaining about the grading policy. With commas, the sentence means the opposite, suggesting that instructors are the ones who are complaining.

, Comma

***Commas* serve as road signs signaling a change or transition in a sentence. Commas indicate pauses that prevent confusion:**

When we reached the theater, patrons were leaving.

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Commas are used for ten basic reasons:

1. **Commas come before a coordinating conjunction that joins independent clauses in compound and compound-complex sentences:**

   Independent clause, *and* independent clause
   (simple sentence) *but* (simple sentence)
   or
   nor
   for
   yet

2. **Commas follow introductory words, phrases, and clauses:**

   Angered, the committee read the complaint letters.

   Opened in 1912, the bridge remains the only link to the island.

   Earning ten million dollars in one season, she became the highest paid player on the tour.

   To avoid becoming infected, avoid contact with patients.

   Prepared to take decisive action, the firefighters waited for the wind to change.

   Commas follow dependent clauses introducing independent clauses:

   When she graduated from law school, Corinne decided to move to Florida.

   Because prices rose faster than investors anticipated, additional stock offerings were postponed.

3. **Commas separate lists of parallel words, phrases, or clauses:**

   Words: The gym was *old, dark,* and *musty.*

   She *ran, swam,* and *danced.*

   Pens, pencils, paper, and *books* were supplied to refugee children.

   Phrases: He *exercises daily, eats lightly,* and *drinks moderately.*

   Parents of small children, small business owners, and *real estate developers* met with the zoning committee.

   The changes were *developed too late, explained too poorly,* and *implemented too quickly* to solve the problem.

   Clauses: In the ideal company *the customers receive respect, the employees are appreciated,* and *investors are enriched.*

   The students were frustrated, the faculty was confused, and *the alumni were dumbfounded* by the president's speech.

   We were convinced that *most of the children were malnourished, the parents were overworked,* and *the community was nearing collapse.*

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4. **Commas come between coordinate adjectives.** Coordinate adjectives modify the same noun or pronoun and can be joined by a coordinating conjunction. One test is to reverse the order of the adjectives. Another is to place the word *and* between them. If you can include *and* without changing the meaning or creating an awkward phrase, insert a comma:

   It was a **hot humid** day. It was a **hot *and* humid** day.
   (no change in meaning, so add comma)
   It was a hot, humid day.

   I bought a **hot apple** pie. I bought a **hot *and* apple** pie.
   (awkward, so do not add a comma)
   I bought a **hot apple** pie.

5. **Commas set off nonrestrictive phrases or clauses.** *Nonrestrictive phrases and clauses* provide nonessential information about a noun or pronoun. They can be eliminated without changing the meaning of a sentence.

   Restrictive phrases or clauses restrict or limit the meaning of nouns or pronouns. They cannot be eliminated without changing the meaning of a sentence.

   Because the terms *nonrestrictive* and *restrictive* are difficult to remember—think of the words ***extra*** and ***ID***. *Nonrestrictive* elements don't *identify* words; they add *extra* or parenthetical information. *Restrictive elements* help *ID,* or *identify,* words.

   Nonrestrictive: Tom Green, **who wants to quit smoking,** should consider hypnosis.
   (The proper noun *Tom Green* is clearly identified and the phrase *who wants to quit smoking* merely adds additional or *extra* information. Eliminating the phrase does not alter who should consider hypnosis—Tom Green.)

   Restrictive: Anyone **who wants to quit smoking** should consider hypnosis.
   (The pronoun *anyone* is restricted or further *identified* by the phrase *who wants to quit smoking.* Eliminating the phrase alters the meaning, suggesting that everyone should consider hypnosis.)

Nonrestrictive

Extra
George, **who is my friend,** will help.

Extra
Frank's car, **which was repaired last week,** broke down.

Extra
Marquette University, **located in Milwaukee,** will conduct the research.

Restrictive

ID
Anyone **who is my friend** will help.

ID
The car **that was repaired last week** broke down.

ID
A university **located in Milwaukee** will conduct the research.

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In some instances the use of commas depends on the writer's meaning:

Teenagers, who like rock music, love this store.

(implies that all teenagers like rock music and love the store)

Teenagers who like rock music love this store.

(implies that only teenagers who like rock music love the store)

6. **Commas set off appositives, absolutes, and contrasted elements.** *Appositives* provide additional information about a noun or pronoun. Appositives giving nonrestrictive or *extra* details are set off with commas:

George Washington, ***the first president,*** was born in 1732.

Pennsylvania, ***the Keystone State,*** has a new lottery.

Morphine, ***a highly addictive drug,*** is prescribed carefully.

Contrasted elements: Books, ***not television,*** should inspire our children.

Absolutes: ***Designed for speed,*** the car was not practical.

7. **Commas set off parenthetical expressions, interjections, and direct address.**

Parenthetical expressions:

The conduct of the judge and, ***thus,*** the attitude of the jury shocked the defense attorneys.

Her statement to the press, ***no doubt,*** alters the whole investigation.

Interjections: ***Say,*** that is a good idea.

She refuses, ***I bet,*** to share her thoughts.

Direct address: ***Mother,*** are you coming?

I suggest, ***Dr. Wilson,*** that you talk to the parents.

8. **Commas set off geographical names, items in dates, addresses, and numbers.**

Geographical names: The office in **Baton Rouge, Louisiana,** processes all bills.

He was born in **Ottawa, Canada.**

Items in dates: She retired on **December 15, 2011.**

Addresses: Checks can be sent to **Committee for Refugees, 700 Kings Highway, Haddonfield, NJ 08033.**

(Note: No comma between state and ZIP codes.)

Drive to Henri Maltrec's warehouse at **3737 North Lakewood, San Diego.**

Numbers: Commas set off units of three digits:

We sold **425,987** cars last year.

Note: Do not insert commas in page numbers, ZIP codes, Social Security numbers, decimals, street addresses, or telephone numbers.

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9. **Commas set off quotations:** Winston Churchill said, "Never give in."
10. **Commas are inserted in sentences to prevent confusion.** Writers often add commas simply to prevent readers from being confused.

    We assume that by 2014, 500 computers will have to be replaced.

Strategies for Eliminating Unnecessary Commas

Because commas have so many uses, it is easy to place them where they are *not* needed. Note how commas are inserted only where needed in the following sentences:

1. **Do not set off prepositional phrases from what they modify:**

   The boy *in the last row* has a question.

2. **Do not put commas between subjects and verbs unless setting off nonrestrictive elements:**

   The mayor spoke with the press.
   The mayor, *who denied he was resigning*, spoke with the press.

3. **Do not set off titles in quotation marks with commas:**

   I read "**The Gold Bug**" last night.

4. **Do not put commas after a series unless it ends a clause needing to be set off from the rest of the sentence:**

   They brought *food, water, and clothing* to the church.

   They brought *food, water, and clothing*, and they offered to take the supplies to the flood victims.

5. **Do not separate items in a compound verb unless there are three or more.**

   We *talked* and *danced* all night.
   We *talked*, *danced*, and *played cards* all night.

6. **Do not set off dependent clauses that end a sentence:**

   He sold the house *because it was too expensive to maintain.*

WRITING ACTIVITY

Insert commas where needed in the following sentences.

1. Henry Woo who majored in history applied to law school.
2. We can accept cash credit cards and checks for any rentals leases or purchases.

(Continued)

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3. She insisted the documents were filed on January 15 2000.
4. In 1989 the company sold 3500 trucks and 32598 cars.
5. J. Edgar Hoover who ran the FBI for almost fifty years used the media to cultivate his image as a tough crime fighter.
6. Warner Oland who played Chinese detective Charlie Chan was Swedish and he translated the works of Strindberg into English.
7. Exercise not diet is the key to losing weight.
8. Las Vegas the fastest growing city in the West may run out of water.
9. San Diego California once known simply as a military town now features an expanding commercial district.
10. They played tennis ran marathons and lifted weights to stay in shape fight boredom and avoid chores.

; Semicolon

***Semicolons* link related independent clauses and separate items in lists that contain internal commas.**

1. **Semicolons link related independent clauses. Compound sentences without coordinating conjunctions use semicolons:**

   Lewis drove to El Paso; Frank flew to Chicago.

   He visited France often; however, he never learned French.

2. **Semicolons separate items in a list containing internal commas:**

   The Big Three consisted of Franklin Roosevelt, president of the United States; Josef Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union; and Winston Churchill, prime minister of Great Britain.

   The inclusion of semicolons prevents readers from counting an item twice, thinking, for instance, that Roosevelt and the president of the United States were two different people.

   - When you encounter semicolons in a list, all the words and phrases between them are considered one item.

WRITING ACTIVITY

1. Circle each of the six ingredients of milk chocolate as listed on the wrapper of a Hershey's candy bar:

   MILK CHOCOLATE CONTAINS SUGAR; MILK; COCOA BUTTER; CHOCOLATE; SOYA LECITHIN, AN EMULSIFIER; AND VANILLIN, AN ARTIFICIAL FLAVORING.

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2. Add the missing commas and semicolons in this passage from Bruce Catton's "Grant and Lee." After completing the exercise, check your corrections against the original text on page 319.

   Lee was tidewater Virginia and in his background were family culture and tradition . . . the age of chivalry transplanted to a New World which was making its own legends and its own myths. He embodied a way of life that had come down through the age of knighthood and the English country squire. America was a land that was beginning all over again dedicated to nothing much more complicated than the rather hazy belief that all men had equal rights and should have an equal chance in the world. In such a land Lee stood for the feeling that it was somehow of advantage to human society to have a pronounced inequality in the social structure. There should be a leisure class backed by ownership of land in turn society itself should be keyed to the land as the chief source of wealth and influence. It would bring forth (according to this ideal) a class of men with a strong sense of obligation to the community men who lived not to gain advantage for themselves but to meet the solemn obligations which had been laid on them by the very fact that they were privileged. From them the country would get its leadership to them it could look for the higher values—of thought of conduct of personal deportment—to give it strength and virtue.

: Colon

***Colons* are used to introduce elements and separate items such as numerals, titles, and time references.**

1. **Colons introduce a list, explanation, or an example.** Note that colons are used only after an independent clause.

   We need computer paper, pens, and pencils.

   We need office supplies: computer paper, pens, and pencils.

   We could resolve all the problems but one: pollution.

2. **Colons introduce long quotations:**

   Though Harry Truman is highly regarded today, Smith argues that he disappointed many in Washington when he assumed the presidency:

   > Truman lacked the polish and dignity that marked the Roosevelt era. He was a plain-spoken, sometimes earthy, Midwesterner who had only a high school education. He struck many as woefully unprepared to conclude a world war and lead the country forward after victory.

3. **Colons are used in common notations:**

   Time references: 10:15 a.m.

   Ratios: They chose our product by a 4:1 margin.

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Titles and subtitles: His book is called *A Nation Apart: The Young in America.*

Bible references: Ecclesiastes 12:12

" " Quotation Marks

***Quotation marks* are used for direct quotations, titles of short works, and highlighted words.**

1. **Direct quotations.** When you copy word for word what someone has written or said, enclose the statement in quotation marks:

   Martin Luther King said, "I have a dream."

   The final mark of punctuation precedes the final quotation mark, unless added by the writer:

   Did Martin Luther King say, "I have a dream"?

   The identifying phrase is set off with commas:

   Maria argued, "We cannot win."
   "We cannot win," Maria argued.
   "We cannot win," Maria argued, "unless we practice!"

   Commas do not set off a quotation if the quotation is blended into the sentence:

   They "do unto others" by volunteering at the clinic.

   Note: Quotations within quotations are indicated by single quotation marks:

   The president said, "I was only a child when Martin Luther King said, 'I have a dream.'"

   Final commas are placed inside quotation marks:

   The letter stated, "The college will lower tuition," but few students believed it.

   Colons and semicolons are placed outside quotation marks:

   The letter stated, "The college will lower tuition"; few students believed it.

   Note: Indirect quotations or paraphrases do not require quotation marks:

   Martin Luther King stated that he had a vision.

2. **Titles of short works.** Quotation marks are placed around the titles of articles, poems, songs, short stories, essays, individual episodes of television shows, and other larger works. (Titles of longer works such as magazines or books are placed in italics.)

   Did you read "When Are We Going to Mars?" in *Newsweek*?

   Note: In titles, capitalize the first word, and any middle words that are nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, or subordinating conjunctions (such as *if,*

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because, and *that*). Do not capitalize middle words that are prepositions, articles, or coordinating conjunctions (such as *and, but,* and *or*). The *to* in infinitives should also not be capitalized in middle words of titles.

3. **Highlighted words.** Quotation marks can be used to focus attention on items, words, or phrases:

   I still don't know what "traffic abatement" means.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Insert quotation marks where needed in the following sentences.

1. John F. Kennedy stated, Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.
2. The film seems to be a modern adaptation of Willa Cather's story Paul's Case.
3. Nancy Lowe argues, The most famous saying of the Depression was Roosevelt's statement, We have nothing to fear but fear itself.
4. I can't go, James said, until I register these documents.
5. Advertisements aimed at children should not mention the word sex.

' Apostrophe

***Apostrophes* indicate possession, missing letters or numbers, and some plurals.**

1. **Possessive forms:**

   Add *'s* to show possession for most singular nouns:

   a boy's hat the book's cover the dog's collar

   Add *'* to show possession for plural nouns ending in *s:*

   two boys' hats the books' covers the dogs' collars

   Add *'s* to show possession for plural nouns that do not end in *s:*

   women's clothing children's games men's shoes

   Add apostrophes to the last noun to show joint or mutual possession:

   Smith and Baker's travel agency is providing the tickets.

   Add apostrophes to all nouns to show individual possession:

   The parent's and the teacher's statements were reported by the press.

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2. **Missing letters and numbers.** Omitted letters in contractions are indicated by a single apostrophe:

   can't for *cannot* *he'll for he will*

   Note: Only one apostrophe is used, even if more than one letter is deleted. The apostrophe is placed instead of the missing letter or letters, not where words are joined:

   do not = **don't**, *not* **do'nt**

   Deleted numbers are indicated by a single apostrophe:

   He was embued with the Spirit of '76.
   Back in '29, Wall Street collapsed.
   My brother is restoring a '65 Mustang.

   Apostrophes indicate letters dropped to reproduce dialect or slang:

   The London cabby shouted, "'E ain' goin' nowhere!"

3. **Plurals of letters, numbers, or symbols:**

   She got all A's last semester.
   I need a lot of size 7's this week.

   Note: Common abbreviations such as UFO and ESP do not require apostrophes:

   They claimed he stole two TVs and three VCRs.

   Note: Apostrophe use in referring to decades is optional, but you must be consistent:

   Incorrect: I grew up in the *1980s* but loved the music of the *1960's*.
   Correct: I grew up in the 1980s but loved the music of the 1960s.

Remember: *it's = it is* *its = possessive*

it's raining The car will not start because *its* battery died.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Add apostrophes where needed in the following passage.

Charles Lindbergh will always be remembered for 1927s famed flight to Paris. However, his influence on American politics, science, aviation, and medicine cant be underestimated. Fame seemed to follow Lindberghs every move. He pioneered new air routes over some of the worlds most remote areas. Lindberghs marriage to the daughter of Dwight Morrow brought him more fame. The kidnapping of Charles and Annes first son

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thrust the young couples grief into the headlines. The newspapers lurid coverage and the reporters intrusive behavior soured Lindbergh on America. He moved his family to England in the late 1930s because he felt Britains more genteel society would provide a safe haven. During those years, Lindbergh worked with Dr. Alexis Carrel, a Nobel Prize winning scientist. Lindberghs and Carrels creation of an experimental artificial heart in the 1930s signaled an achievement in medical engineering. Lindberghs visit to Nazi Germany and his opposition to Americas entry into the Second World War led many Americans to question his loyalty. Lindbergh did serve in the South Pacific as an advisor, showing US pilots how to extend their planes range by lowering gas consumption. Though he spent most of his life working with aircraft, Lindbergh opposed the SSTs development in the 1960s because he felt it would damage the earths atmosphere. In his last years, Lindbergh devoted his life to environmental causes, sharing the younger generations concern about pollution.

• • • Ellipsis

An *ellipsis*, composed of three spaced periods (. . .), indicates that words have been deleted from quoted material.

Original text: The mayor stated, "The city needs a light rail system to overcome freeway congestion and provide efficient transportation between the airport and the convention center."

With ellipsis: The mayor stated, "The city needs a light rail system to . . . provide efficient transportation between the airport and the convention center."

Note: Do not omit words that will alter or distort the meaning of the original text. Delete extra or parenthetical material.

When deleting words at the end of a sentence or an entire sentence, add the final period before the ellipsis, creating four periods:

The mayor stated, "The city needs a light rail system to overcome freeway congestion. . . ." (The quotation marks follow the ellipsis.)

Do not use an ellipsis when omitting words from the beginning of a quotation:

The mayor stated the city needs light rail to facilitate "efficient transportation between the airport and the convention center."

If omitting words alters the grammar of a sentence, you may change a verb or pronoun to maintain agreement, but show the change in brackets.

Original: The mayor said, "The convention center and the new hotels are the lifeblood of development."

With ellipsis and alteration in brackets:

The mayor said, "The convention center . . . **[is]** the lifeblood of downtown development."

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( ) Parentheses

***Parentheses* enclose nonessential but related ideas. Parenthetical information can be located anywhere in a sentence except at the very beginning. It should be placed just after the idea it refers to.**

1. **Use parentheses to set off additional or illustrative matter and to enclose abbreviations, explanatory letters, or numerals:**

   Students took the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) last week.

   George Wilson (later joined by Jan Sullivan) argued for a policy change.

   Michael Collins (1890–1922) remains one of Ireland's greatest heroes.

   Primary diagnostic methods (such as blood tests and X-rays) are fully covered by the new insurance policy.

   Because Tom graduates in December (he took a semester off to travel), he won't look for a job until after New Year's.

   When parenthetical comments appear after a word or phrase set off by commas, the commas follow the parentheses:

   Star Trek, which lasted only three seasons (1966–1969), became a TV classic.

2. **Use parentheses to enclose nonessential sentences:**

   College instructors assume students will use computers to conduct research and prepare research papers. (Some professors refuse to accept handwritten documents.) Many colleges guarantee students access to computers.

   Note: The parentheses enclose the entire sentence, including the final mark of punctuation.

[ ] Brackets

***Brackets* are used to enclose words inserted into a quotation.**

1. **Brackets set off clarifications or explanations added within a quotation:**

   "The main plant [located in Tennessee] will be expanded next year."

   "During the Gulf War, the President kept in touch with Professor Sarah Bush [no relation] at the Middle East Institute."

   "The ambassador stated she could not deliver the message until he [Frank Wilson] completed the annual report."

2. **Brackets indicate grammatical alterations or corrections:**

   Original: The United States, Canada, and Germany are among the most promising markets.

   Quotation with brackets containing alteration:

   "The United States . . . [is] among the most promising markets."

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Quotation with brackets noting error:

Original: After Rosevelt's death, Harry Truman became president.
Quotation: "After Rosevelt's [*sic*] death, Harry Truman became president."

(The Latin term *sic* is used to indicate that an error appears in the original text.)

- Hyphen

A *hyphen* is a single short line used to separate or join words and other items.

1. **Use hyphens to break words at the end of a sentence:**

   We attempted to tele-
   phone her last night.

2. **Use hyphens to combine words into adjectives:**

   Grossman made a last-ditch attempt to save his job.

   Do not use a hyphen after an adverb ending in *ly*:

   Grossman issued a quickly drafted statement to the press.

3. **Use a hyphen to join words forming numbers:**

   The company was forced to pay twenty-two million dollars in back taxes.

4. **Use a hyphen after some prefixes (consult a dictionary to determine which ones):**

   It is dangerous to take these drugs based on a self-diagnosis or the advice of an ex-doctor.

5. **Use a hyphen between a combination of a number and a word that is used as an adjective:**

   He drove a 4.5-ton truck.

— Dash

A *dash* is used to set off words in a sentence. Sometimes a dash appears in print as two hyphens (- -) but usually it appears as one continuous line (—) that is about the length of two hyphens. Dashes are dramatic marks of punctuation that emphasize words and phrases:

The college changed the tuition schedule—driving it to near bankruptcy.
The college—long pressured by student groups—changed the tuition policy.

Note: Do not place spaces between the dash and the words it connects.

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/ Slash

The *slash* is used to separate words when both are applicable and in quotations of songs or poetry to signal line breaks:

A student should study his/her lessons.
To test the microphone, she began reciting the simple refrain, "Mary had a little lamb/Its fleece was white as snow/And everywhere that Mary went/The lamb was sure to go."

Note: For poetry line breaks, place a space before and after each slash.

? Question Mark

***Question marks* are placed after direct questions and to note questionable items:**

Can anyone truly predict the stock market?
He read a disturbing article, "What Is to Be Done?"

Note: In the preceding example, the question mark is placed within the quotation marks because it is part of the title.

Did you read Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"?

Note: In the preceding example, the question mark is placed outside the quotation marks because it is not part of the title.

The children reported that they waited two hours (?) for the police to arrive.

Note: To indicate that you doubt the accuracy of a fact, number, or idea, place the question mark in parentheses after the item in question.

! Exclamation Point

***Exclamation points* are placed after emphatic statements:**

I can't go on! Get out!

Exclamations, like dashes, should be viewed as special effects that lose impact if overused.

. Period

***Periods* are used after sentences, in abbreviations, and with decimals:**

They moved to Michigan.
We gave the report to Mrs. Chavez and promised to give an estimate by Jan. 15. We promised to pay $134.45 a share.

Note: When a sentence ends with an abbreviation, only one period is used.
Note: Some acronyms, such as CIA, NBA, TWA, and UCLA, do not require periods.

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WRITING ACTIVITY

Insert punctuation where needed in this passage from Armond Budish's "Fender Benders: Legal Dos and Don'ts." After you finish editing the section, review the original text on page 360.

5. Call the Police

Its obvious that if its a serious accident in which someone is injured the police should be called immediately. Thats both the law and common sense. But what if the accident seems minor. Say youre stopped another car taps you in the rear. If its absolutely clear to both drivers that there is no damage or injury you each can go your merry way. But thats the exception.

Normally you should call the police to substantiate what occurred. In most cities police officers will come to the scene even for minor accidents but if they wont you and the other driver should go to the station of the city where the accident occurred to file a report. Ask to have an officer check out both cars.

If you are not at fault be wary of accepting the other drivers suggestion that you leave the police out of it and arrange a private settlement. When you submit your $500 car repair estimate several weeks later you could discover that the other driver has developed amnesia and denies being anywhere near the accident. If the police werent present on the scene you may not have a legal leg to stand on.

Even if you are at fault its a good idea to involve the police. Why. Because a police officer will note the extent of the other drivers damages in his or her report limiting your liability. Without police presence the other driver can easily inflate the amount of the damages.



Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information about punctuation.

Mechanics

Mechanics include the conventions of capitalization and presenting abbreviations and numbers. The writing context can dictate or influence the rules of mechanics. Make sure your writing follows the accepted style used in your discipline or profession.

Capitalization

Capital (or uppercase) letters signal the beginning of a new sentence and denote proper nouns such as *Alabama, Chevrolet, Dublin, Islam,* and *Dark Ages.* Capitals also help prevent confusion by making distinctions:

They drove the Dodge to ford the stream.
We bought china made in Japan.
The Republican candidate supported democratic principles.

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Capitalize the pronoun *I* as well as proper nouns and their abbreviations and acronyms, including those in the following categories.

Names of people, specific objects, and trademarks:

Michael Collins	Malcolm X	Coca-Cola	Buick
Xerox	Apollo	Ford Mustang	Apple computer
Titanic	Tommy	Lucky Jim	

Geographical names:

Maple Avenue	Chicago	Lake Michigan	Midwest
Asia	Mars	Mexico	Lee Circle
Grant Park	Moon Beach		

Peoples, nations, and languages:

Asians	Jews	Italian	Chinese
Mexican	Kurds	Germany	Canada
Cheyenne	Iran		

Corporations, organizations, institutions, and government agencies:

FBI	Clark College	NASA	New York
Yankees	IRS	Microsoft	CORE
KLM	NAACP	Campbell Soup	

Historical documents, eras, events, and movements:

Declaration of Independence	the Dark Ages	the Civil War
the Civil Rights Movement	Existentialism	Nazism

Days of the week, months, and special days:

Monday	October	Christmas Eve	Memorial Day

The seasons—winter, spring, summer, fall—are not capitalized.

Religions and their followers, sacred texts, holidays, and names for the Supreme Being:

Presbyterian	Islam	Roman Catholic	Hinduism
Muslim	Jews	Buddhists	Mormons
Bible	Talmud	Koran	Book of Mormon
Easter	Christmas	Ramadan	Kwanzaa
Allah	God	Immanuel	Christ

Special events:

World Series	Super Bowl	Winter Olympics	Founder's Day

Common or generic words when used in titles or part of proper names:

Clark College Children's Hospital Chicago Police Department

but "The police took him to a children's hospital after the accident."

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Titles of books, films, paintings, and other works of art:

Hamlet *Starry Night* *Moon for the Misbegotten* "Moonlight"

Professional titles preceding a personal name or when used in place of a person's name:

"Get Doctor Wilson" *but* "Get the doctor."

The delegation met with a mayor and Senator James.

The following morning President Wilson met with the premier of France.

Words derived from proper nouns:

Orwellian Marxism French

Breeds of animals are not capitalized unless they refer to a geographical region, such as *Irish terrier, French poodle,* and *Labrador.*

WRITING ACTIVITY

Edit this opening passage from Joe Rodriguez's "Mexicans Deserve More Than *La Mordida*" to add missing capital letters. After completing the exercise, review the original text on page 245.

"i wouldn't give you a dime for mexico!"

my father used to tell us that every time mexico broke his heart. he was *muy indio,* with dark reddish brown skin, huge calloused hands and a handsomely hooked nose. on our occasional trips to tijuana to visit relatives, he'd see indian women begging on the streets, indian kids selling chiclets chewing gum, and white-skinned mexicans owning and running everything.

"not a dime for mexico!"

he was more mexican than i'll ever be, more mexican than any harvard-educated technocrat, any spanish-looking *gachupin,* any middle-class zapatista guerrilla-intellectual, or any bald-headed ex-president crook from mexico city's ritzy polanco district. my father wasn't referring to the nation's people, but to a political and social system that still fosters extreme poverty, discrimination and injustice, and to the privileged and the ruthless who benefit by it.

i should have remembered my dad's dime recently when two mexico city policemen pulled me over for making an illegal left-hand turn at the monument of cuauhtemoc on the famous paseo de la reforma boulevard.

i was driving back into the giant city after three days in the countryside.

i had escaped a traffic accident only minutes earlier. i was hot, tired, grumpy and jumpy. i was driving a rental car. these conditions made me the perfect *pollo* for these two uniformed coyotes.

both cops got out. the older one checked out the rental plates. the younger one wanted to see my driver's license.

"where's your hotel?" he asked.

right over there, i said, the maria cristina hotel on rio lerma street.

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Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information about capitalization.

Underlining and Italics

Because traditional typewriters (now rarely used) could not change type, writers used *underlining* to indicate text that would be *italicized* in print. The advent of changeable type and computers has made underlining unnecessary, and the Modern Language Association now favors italicizing in place of underlining (see page 555).

***Italics* serve to highlight words and phrases for the following four reasons:**

1. **Italic is used for titles of long works of art. Books, magazines, newspapers, plays, television programs, and recordings are italicized:**

   House is an awesome show. We saw *Death of a Salesman.*

   Note: Titles of religious texts and historical documents are not italicized: the Bible, the Bill of Rights

2. **Names of ships, trains, aircraft, and space vehicles:**

   My grandmother sailed on the *Titanic.*
   My father took the *City of New Orleans* to Chicago.

3. **Words being emphasized or highlighted:**

   Patients ***must*** sign a release before receiving treatment. Your paper is hard to read because the *I*'s and *7*s look alike.

4. **Uncommon foreign words and phrases:**

   Hitler demanded *Lebensraum.*
   The hero was undone by his overwhelming ***hubris.***

   Note: Once foreign words enter popular English usage, they are no longer italicized, for example, kindergarten, tortilla, rotisserie, and lasagna. Consult your dictionary if you are unsure.

Abbreviations

***Abbreviations* are shortened versions of words or phrases.**

1. **Acronyms of the names of organizations, names of products, and common phrases:**

FBI	UPS	GM	NATO	IRA
USA	DVD	BBC	COD	AFL-CIO

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Note: Capitalize all letters and do not separate them with periods.

Note: Some writers insert periods between letters or numerals: U.S.D.A. Consult your handbook or professional style manual. Always be consistent.

2. **Abbreviations of single words:**

   Mon. Dec. pg. fwd. ms.

   Note: Most abbreviations use lowercase letters except for abbreviations of proper nouns.

3. **Professional titles:**

   Dr. Smith Ms. Wong Jim Chavez, M.D. Nancy Gross, Esq.

   Note: Professional titles preceding names are followed by a period. Professional titles following names are set off with commas.

   Note: Avoid using title abbreviations unless they are associated with a name:

   We saw Dr. Green.
   or
   We saw the doctor.
   not
   We saw the Dr.

   Note: Do not use double titles:

   Dr. Green *or* Sandy Green, M.D.
   not
   Dr. Sandy Green, M.D.

4. **Geographical regions:**

   Do not use periods between letters in state abbreviations used in addresses:

   Haddonfield, NJ Albany, NY San Diego, CA

   Note: Use periods in *Washington, D.C.*, and *U.S.* when it is used to modify another word, as in *U.S. regulations.*

5. **Latin expressions:**

   etc. e.g. i.e. vs. et al.

6. **Certain terms used with dates or numbers:**

80 B.C.	A.D. 95	*or*	80 B.C.E	95 C.E.
35 mph	10 a.m.	*or*	35 MPH	10 AM

   Note: Be consistent with the form you use. You do not have to identify commonly known abbreviations such as FBI, NYC, or UCLA. When you use an abbreviation,

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your readers may not understand or may misunderstand, define it after its first use:

> We reported the incident to the Center for Air Pollution Studies (CAPS). She worked for the CIA (Canadian Insurance Adjusters) for two years.

Numbers

***Numbers* are either written out (*twenty-two*) or presented as numerals (*22*).**

1. **Numbers presented as words.** Write numbers out if they appear infrequently in your writing, can be written in one or two words, or when they begin a sentence:

   > We drove **forty-two** miles.
   > **Three hundred seventy-five** students graduated last week.

   Note: Hyphenate numbers between 21 and 99 (except for round numbers such as *forty* and *sixty*).

   To avoid long and awkward phrases, avoid opening sentences with large numbers:

   > Last week 8,998 students graduated from the city's high schools.

2. **Numbers presented as numerals.** Use numerals to represent dates, addresses, large or often repeated numbers, page numbers, most percentages, decimals, and identifications:

   > She accepted the post on January 25, 2000.
   > Send the car to the garage at 700 West State Street.
   > Last year 32,987 complaints were received.
   > Look on page 23.
   > Sales rose 34% last year.
   > The average subject slept less than 7.5 hours a night.
   > You can find the offices of Channel 36 in Room 300.

3. **Numbers presented in combinations of words and numerals:**

   4646 North 47th Street *or* 2323 Second Avenue

4 PM	*or*	four o'clock in the afternoon
$24,000,000	*or*	24 million dollars



Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information about mechanics.

Spelling

Spelling errors, even in the age of computer spell-checkers, remain one of the most common and most annoying errors that you can make. Poor spelling detracts from

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the impact and authority of your writing. Readers interpret spelling mistakes as indications of haste, sloppiness, and ignorance.

Understand the Limits of Spell-Checking Programs

If you write on a computer, you may be lulled into the belief that you can rely on a spell-checking program to locate errors.

1. Spell-checkers do not find missing or misused words.
2. Many programs will not detect problems in usage, such as the use of *there* for *their* or *conscience* for *conscious*.
3. Spell-checkers often flag correctly spelled words, especially proper names. If your spell-checker keeps flagging a repeated word, click IGNORE ALL or customize the program by adding the word to its list of correctly spelled words.

Spelling Guidelines

1. **Prefixes:** *Prefixes* are added to the beginning of words to form new words. The spelling of the base word does not change:

   im + moral = immoral
   re + entry = reentry
   anti + biotic = antibiotic
   mayor + elect = mayor-elect

   Note: Some combinations use hyphens, especially if the base word is capitalized:

   un-American non-Lutheran anti-Communism

2. **Suffixes:** *Suffixes* are added to the end of words to form new words. If the word ends in a silent *e* and the suffix begins with a vowel, drop the *e:*

   continue + ous = continuous pure + ist = purist

Strategies for Improving Spelling

1. Review the guidelines in this chapter, noting words that you have found confusing.
2. Review the Commonly Confused Words on pages 746–748. Underline or highlight pairs that you have found troublesome.
3. Review the Commonly Misspelled Words on pages 749–751. Underline or highlight those that you recall misspelling.
4. As you are introduced to new terms in college courses, readings, or your career, make sure to get the correct spelling. If you learn to spell a word correctly as soon as you learn it, you will not have to unlearn or correct a habitual error. Refer to glossaries in your textbooks and specialized dictionaries.
5. Develop a list of words that you commonly misspell.

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If the word ends in a silent *e* and the suffix begins with a consonant, do not drop the *e*:

state + ly = stately
state + ment = statement

Note: There are some exceptions to these guidelines:

dye + ing = dyeing *not* dying
true + ly = truly *not* truely

If a word ends in *y*, change the *y* to an *i* if preceded by a consonant:

easy + ly = easily play + ful = playful

Note: If the suffix is *–ing*, the *y* at the end of a word is always retained:

cry + ing = crying

Add *–ly* to adjectives to create adverbs. For most words ending in *–ic* add *–ally*. Retain the final *l* in words ending in *l*:

regular + ly = regularly
tragic + ally = tragically
cool + ly = coolly

Double the last consonant if the word ends with a single accented vowel and a single consonant and is joined to a suffix beginning with a vowel:

stop + ed = stopped
begin + ing = beginning

3. ***ie* and *ei* words:**

When words sound like *ee* as in *see*, write *ie*, except after *c*:

belief field brief yield shield
receive ceiling perceive conceit

When words sound like *ay* as in *ray*, write *ei*:

weigh rein neighbor eight vein

Exceptions: ancient, either, foreign, height, science

4. **Plurals:**

Most words in English simply add *-s* to create plural forms, but there are a few exceptions:

When words end with a consonant and *y*, add *-ies*:

theory/*theories* mystery/*mysteries*

When words end in *s*, *sh*, *ch*, *x*, or *z*, add *-es*:

bus/*buses* bush/*bushes* fox/*foxes*

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Many words ending in *f* or *lf* change to *ves* in the plural:

leaf/*leaves* calf/*calves* *self/selves*

Some words do not have a separate plural form:

deer/deer *sheep/sheep*

Latin and Greek terms ending in *on*, *um*, or *us* change to *a* or *i*:

medium/*media* alumnus/*alumni*

Add the *s* to the first word in hyphenated words:

mother-in-law/*mothers-in-law* court-martial/*courts-martial*

5. **British spellings.** If you read material published in the United Kingdom, Canada, or Australia, you may note spelling differences.

American	British
curb	kerb
theater	theatre
color	colour
tire	tyre
labor	labour

Use British spelling only in direct quotes of written material.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Read and correct the spelling errors in this passage from George Orwell's essay "Shooting an Elephant." When you complete the exercise, examine the original text on page 219 to see whether you located all the misspellings and errors in usage.

> In Moulmein, in Lower Berma, I was hated by large numbers of people—the only time in my life that I have been impotant enough for this to hapen to me. I was sub-divisonal police oficer of the town, and in an aimless, petty kind of way anti-European feeling was very bitter. No one had the guts to raise a riot, but if a European women went through the bizarres alone somebody would probably spit betel juice over her dress. As a police officer I was an ovious target and was bated whenever it seemed safe to do so. When a nimble Berman tripped me up on the football field and the refere (another Berman) looked the other way, the crowed yelled with hedious laughter. This happen more then once. In the end the sneering yellow faces of young men that meet me everywhere, the insults hooted after me when I was at a safe distance, got badly on my nerves. The young Budhist priests were the worst of all. Their ere several thousands of them in the town and none of them seemed to have anything to do accept stand on street corners and jear at Europeans.



Access the English CourseMate for this text at **www.cengagebrain.com** for additional information about spelling.

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16 WORKING WITH PARAGRAPHS: TOPIC SENTENCES AND CONTROLLING IDEAS

The well-developed paragraph almost always has a topic sentence. In this chapter, you will learn how to recognize and generate your own strong topic sentences. The following skills are covered:

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- identifying the characteristics of an acceptable paragraph
- finding the topic sentence of a paragraph
- distinguishing between a topic sentence and a title
- finding the topic in a topic sentence
- finding the controlling idea of a topic sentence
- choosing controlling ideas
- writing topic sentences

WHAT IS A PARAGRAPH?

A ***paragraph*** is a group of sentences that develops one main idea. A paragraph may stand by itself as a complete piece of writing, or it may be a section of a longer piece of writing, such as an essay.

No single rule can prescribe how long a paragraph should be, but a paragraph that is too short can make a reader think that some basic information is missing. On the other hand, a paragraph that is too long will likely make a reader lose interest. An effective paragraph must be long enough to develop the main idea the writer is expressing, usually six or seven sentences in length, but no more than ten or twelve sentences. While it is true that newspapers or magazines take liberties with the paragraph form and often have paragraphs as short as a single sentence, a well-developed piece of writing will seldom present a single sentence as a paragraph (unless the sentence is a piece of dialogue).

Before you begin writing and printing out your own paragraphs, your instructor may want you to demonstrate your ability to work with the computer. You may need to show

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your ability to set margins, to double space the text, and to paginate. Your instructor will also explain other specific information needed for turning in written assignments (such as your name, the class, and the date of submission). This information may be placed on a separate title page. Standard paragraph form will require consistent margins, an indented first sentence, a capitalized word at the beginning of each sentence, and correct punctuation to end each complete sentence. These are the basic requirements that all students must be able to meet in order to do college-level work.

While you are studying in college, you will need to become comfortable using a computer, so take this opportunity to learn new word processing skills. For example, if you have never paginated a paper before or you have never used the spell-check option, explore these features. Find something new to learn. Because jobs for your generation will demand computer literacy, you will need to have an enthusiastic attitude about learning new skills on the computer.

EXERCISE 1 Standard Paragraph Form

Type the following sentences into a standard paragraph. Follow your instructor's requirements for margins and spacing. Then print out your work, being sure to check the page for typos and other errors.

1. The local high school became a haven for disaster victims.
2. In the large basement, thirty families huddled in little groups of four or five.
3. Volunteer workers were busy carrying in boxes of clothing and blankets.
4. Two Red Cross women stood at a long table sorting through boxes to find sweaters and blankets for the shivering flood victims.
5. One heavyset man in a red woolen hunting jacket stirred a huge pot of soup.
6. Men and women with tired faces sipped their steaming coffee and wondered if they would ever see their homes again.
7. Outside, the downpour continued.



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WHAT IS A TOPIC SENTENCE?

A ***topic sentence*** states the main idea of a paragraph. It is the most general sentence of the paragraph. All the other sentences serve to explain, describe, extend, or support this main-idea sentence.

Most paragraphs you read will begin with the topic sentence. However, some topic sentences come in the middle of the paragraph; others come at the end. Some paragraphs have no stated topic sentence at all; in those cases, the main idea is implied. Students are usually advised to use topic sentences in all their work to be certain that the writing has a focus and develops a single idea at a time. Whether the task is an essay exam in a history course, a research paper for a sociology course, or an essay in a composition course, thoughtful use of topic sentences will always bring better results. Good topic sentences help both the writer and the reader think clearly about the main points.

Below are two paragraphs. Each paragraph makes a separate point, which is stated in its topic sentence. In both of these paragraphs, the topic sentence happens to be first. Read the paragraphs and notice how the topic sentence is the most general sentence; it states the main idea of each paragraph. The other sentences explain, describe, extend, or support the topic sentence.

I went through a difficult period after my father died. I was moody and sullen at home. I spent most of the time in my bedroom listening to music on the radio, which made me feel even worse. I stopped playing soccer after school with my friends. My grades in school went down. I lost my appetite and seemed to get into arguments with everybody. My mom began to look worried, but I couldn't bring myself to participate in an activity with any spirit. It seemed life had lost its joy for me.

Fortunately, something happened that spring that brought me out of my depression. My uncle, who had been disabled while serving in the army, came to live with us. I learned many years later that my mother had asked him to come and live with us in the hope that he could bring me out of myself. I, on the other hand, was told that it was my responsibility to help my uncle feel at home. My mother's plan worked. My uncle and I were both lonely people. A friendship began that was to change both our lives for the better.

EXERCISE 2

Finding the Topic Sentence of a Paragraph

Each of the following five paragraphs contains a topic sentence that states the main idea of the paragraph. Find the sentence that best states the main idea and underline it. Keep in mind that the topic sentence will not always be the first sentence of the paragraph.

1. Mountains of disposable diapers are thrown into garbage cans every day. Tons of yogurt containers, soda cans, and other plastic items are discarded without so much as a stomp to flatten them out. If the old Chevy is not worth fixing, tow it off to sit with thousands of others on acres of fenced-in

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junkyards. Radios, televisions, and toasters get the same treatment because it is easier and often less expensive to buy a new product than to fix the old one. Who wants a comfortable old sweater if a new one can be bought on sale? No thought is given to the fact that the new one will look like the old one after two or three washings. We are the great "Let's junk it" society!

2. Anyone who has been in the hospital with a serious illness can tell you that the sight of a good nurse is the most beautiful sight in the world. Today, the hospital nurse has one of the hardest jobs of all. Although a doctor may direct the care and treatment of a patient, it is the nurse who must see to it that the care and treatment are carried out. A nurse must pay attention to everything, from the condition of the hospital bed to the scheduling of medication throughout the day and night. In addition to following a doctor's orders for the day, the nurse must respond to whatever the patient might need at any given moment. A sudden emergency requires the nurse to make an immediate judgment: can the situation be handled with or without the doctor being called in? More recently, nurses have become increasingly burdened by paperwork and other administrative duties. Many people worry that the increasing demands on nurses will take them away from what they do best—namely, taking care of people on a one-to-one basis.

3. Anything can happen at a county agricultural fair. It is the perfect human occasion, the harvest of the fields and of the emotions. To the fair come the man and his cow, the boy and his girl, the wife and her green tomato pickles, each anticipating victory and the excitement of being separated from his or her money by familiar devices. It is at a fair that a man can be drunk forever on liquor, love, or fights; at a fair that your front pocket can be picked by a trotting horse looking for sugar, and your hind pocket by a thief looking for his fortune.

4. This was one of the worst situations I had ever been in. There was a tube in my nose that went all the way to the pit of my stomach. I was being fed intravenously, and there was a drain in my side. Everybody came to visit me, mainly out of curiosity. The girls were all anxious to know where I had gotten shot. They had heard all kinds of tales about where the bullet struck. The bolder ones wouldn't even bother to ask: they just snatched the cover off me and looked for themselves. In a few days, the word got around that I was in one piece.

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5. Many people go to the grocery store without much thought. Once there, they become victims to clever product placement. In order to shop wisely, several basic rules should be kept in mind. First, the wise shopper should make a list. This will keep a focus on the person's needs, not wants. Grocery stores purposely place tempting items such as candy and magazines near the checkout counters; these are things that are not basic needs on anyone's list. A person who sticks to the list will save a substantial amount of money within a few months. Secondly, the shopper should avoid delis and convenience stores where the markups tend to be higher than in the large grocery chains. Next, buying store brands can result in big savings. In many cases, these store brands are of the same quality as the higher priced brands. Of course, we all know we should clip coupons, but be careful not to buy items that are not really necessary. Sometimes a store brand is still cheaper than the more expensive item even after the coupon amount has been deducted. Some people claim they can save by buying in bulk. They might buy a bushel of apples or 40 pounds of potatoes. However, if the food spoils before you can eat it, this may be a big mistake. It is true that a bargain is not always a bargain.

EXERCISE 3 Finding the Topic Sentence of a Paragraph

Each of the following five paragraphs contains a topic sentence that states the main idea of the paragraph. Find the sentence that best states the main idea and underline it. Keep in mind that the topic sentence will not always be the first sentence of the paragraph.

1. Last evening at a party, a complete stranger asked me, "Are you a Libra?" Astrology is enjoying increasing popularity all across the United States. My wife hurries every morning to read her horoscope in the paper. At the local stores, cards, books, T-shirts, and other useless astrological products bring fat profits to those who have manufactured them. Even some public officials, like the British royal family, are known to consider the "science" of astrology before scheduling an important event.

2. Participating in fundraising walks and runs can raise needed research money for good causes, such as cures for multiple sclerosis or breast cancer. Donating used clothing to organizations like the Salvation Army is better than having closets full of clothes you never wear. It only takes an hour to donate blood, and this one hour of your time may save someone's life. Volunteers are badly needed at animal shelters and food pantries. What

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about volunteering to tutor a child or take an elderly person to medical appointments? Anyone with a caring heart can find some time in the week to make a difference in another person's life.

3. When we remember something, our brain uses more than one method to store the information. Short-term memory helps recall recent events; long-term memory brings back items that are further in the past; and deep retrieval gives access to long-buried information that is sometimes difficult to recall. Whether these processes are chemical or electrical, we do not yet know, and much research remains to be done before we can say with any certainty. The brain is one of the most remarkable organs, a part of the body that we have only begun to investigate. It will be years before we even begin to understand all its complex processes.

4. Some of the homes were small with whitewashed walls and thatched roofs. We were eager to see how they were furnished. The living rooms were simple, often with only a plain wooden table and some chairs. The tiny bedrooms usually had room for only a single bed and a small table. Occasionally, a bedroom would be large enough to have a stove made of richly decorated tiles. Visiting these houses was an experience that would always stay in our memory. All of the windows held boxes for flowers so that even in the dark of winter there was the promise of a blaze of colors in the spring.

5. Advertisements that claim you can lose five pounds overnight are not to be trusted. Nor are claims that your luck will change if you send money to a certain post office box in a distant state. You should also avoid chain letters you receive in the mail that promise you large amounts of money if you will cooperate and keep the chain going. Many people are suspicious of the well-publicized million-dollar giveaway promotions that seem to offer enormous cash prizes, even if you do not try the company's product. We should always be suspicious of offers that promise us something for little or no effort or money.

EXERCISE 4 Finding the Topic Sentence of a Paragraph

The topic sentence is missing in each of the following four paragraphs. Read each paragraph carefully and circle the letter of the best topic sentence for that paragraph.

1. I would probably have lived my entire existence within a one-mile radius of where I was born. I would undoubtedly have married a woman of

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my identical religious, socioeconomic, and cultural background. I would almost certainly have become a medical doctor, an engineer, or a software programmer. I would have socialized within my ethnic community and had cordial relations, but few friends, outside that group. I would have a whole set of opinions that could be predicted in advance; indeed, they would not be very different from what my father believed, or his father before him.

a. If I had remained in India, my destiny would to a large degree have been predictable.
b. If I had remained in India, I would have been very happy living in the neighborhood where I grew up.
c. If I had remained in India, I would have married someone very like my own mother.
d. If I had remained in India, I would have had an excellent education.

2. It is not that poor people in the Third World don't work hard. On the contrary, they labor incessantly and endure hardships that are almost unimaginable to people in the West. In the villages of Asia and Africa, for example, a common sight is a farmer beating a pickax into the ground, women wobbling under heavy loads, children carrying stones. These people are performing very hard labor, but they are getting nowhere. The best they can hope for is to survive for another day. Their clothes are tattered, their teeth are rotted, and disease and death constantly loom over their horizon.

a. Poor people from the Third World live in small villages in Asia and Africa.
b. The lives of many poor people in the Third World are defined by an ongoing struggle to exist.
c. Disease is a constant threat to poor people in the Third World.
d. Poor people in the Third World work constantly.

3. The roads are not properly paved. The water is not safe to drink. Pollution in the cities has reached hazardous levels. Public transportation is overcrowded and unreliable. There is a two-year waiting period to get a telephone. Government officials, who are very poorly paid, are inevitably corrupt, which means that you must pay bribes on a regular basis to get things done. Most important, there are limited prospects for the children's future.

a. It is difficult to live in a Third World country where corruption is so widespread.
b. Everyday life in the Third World is filled with hardships for everyone.
c. Only the very poor in the Third World suffer; the Upper and Middle Classes live an easy life.
d. Governments in the Third World do not care about the common people.

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4. Let me illustrate with the example of my sister, who got married several years ago. My parents began the process by conducting a comprehensive survey of all the eligible families in our neighborhood. First they examined primary criteria such as religion, socioeconomic position, and educational background. Then my parents investigated subtler issues: the social reputation of the family, reports of a lunatic uncle, the character of the son, and so on. Finally my parents were down to a dozen or so eligible families, and they were invited to our house for dinner with suspicious regularity. My sister was "free to choose." My sister knew about, and accepted, the arrangement; she is now happily married with two children. I am not quarreling with the outcome.

   a. Children in India are free to choose the person they want to marry.
   b. In India, the reputation of the family into which you are married is very important.
   c. A person's future in India is largely determined by the parents.
   d. In all cultures, parents want their children to marry for love.

DISTINGUISHING A TOPIC SENTENCE FROM A TITLE

The topic sentence works like a title by announcing to the reader what the paragraph is about. However, keep in mind that the title of an essay or book is usually a single word or short phrase, whereas the topic sentence of a paragraph must *always* be a complete sentence.

Title:	**Backpacking in the mountains**
Topic sentence:	**Backpacking in the mountains last year was an exhausting experience.**
Title:	**The stress of college registration**
Topic sentence:	**College registration can be stressful.**

EXERCISE 5 Distinguishing a Topic Sentence from a Title

Indicate whether each of the following examples is a title (T) or a topic sentence (TS) by writing *T* or *TS* in the space provided.

____ 1. The benefits of a college education
____ 2. The outstanding achievements of aviator Charles Lindbergh
____ 3. The president's cabinet faced two major problems
____ 4. The basis of the Arab-Israeli conflict
____ 5. The Mediterranean diet is perhaps the healthiest diet in the world
____ 6. The astounding beauty of the Rocky Mountains at dusk
____ 7. The finest sports car on the market

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____ 8. Fast-food restaurants are popular with families having small children

____ 9. The expense of maintaining a car

____ 10. Maintaining a car is expensive

EXERCISE 6 Distinguishing a Topic Sentence from a Title

Indicate whether each of the following examples is a title (T) or a topic sentence (TS) by writing *T* or *TS* in the space provided.

____ 1. Dreams can be frightening

____ 2. The advantages of term limits for people in public offices

____ 3. *Frida* tells the tragic story of a famous Mexican artist

____ 4. The home of my dreams

____ 5. Taking a walk can be calming

____ 6. Sewing requires great patience as well as skill

____ 7. Selecting the right camera for an amateur

____ 8. A regular routine is healthy for children

____ 9. The worst bargain of my life

____ 10. My last used car was a bargain

EXERCISE 7 Distinguishing a Topic Sentence from a Title

Indicate whether each of the following examples is a title (T) or a topic sentence (TS) by writing *T* or *TS* in the space provided.

____ 1. How to make friends at college and still have time to study

____ 2. With the widespread use of computers, word-processing skills are needed for many jobs

____ 3. The disadvantages of living alone

____ 4. The fight to keep our neighborhood park

____ 5. The peacefulness of a solitary weekend at the beach

____ 6. Our investigation into the mysterious death of Walter D.

____ 7. The flea market looked promising

____ 8. The two main reasons divorce is common

____ 9. The single life did not turn out to be as glamorous as I had hoped

____ 10. The increasing popularity of board games

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FINDING THE TOPIC IN A TOPIC SENTENCE

To find the topic in a topic sentence, ask yourself what subject the writer is going to discuss. In the first sentence that follows, the topic is underlined. Underline the topic in the second example.

Backpacking in the mountains last year was an exhausting experience.

College registration can be stressful.

Note that a topic sentence may have a two-part topic:

The differences between softball and baseball may not be readily apparent to the person who is unfamiliar with the games.

EXERCISE 8 Finding the Topic in a Topic Sentence

Find the topic in each of the following topic sentences. For each sentence, ask yourself this question: What topic is the writer going to discuss? Then underline the topic.

1. Remodeling an old house can be frustrating.
2. College work demands more independence than high school work.
3. A well-made suit has three easily identified characteristics.
4. Growing up near a museum had a profound influence on my life.
5. My favorite room in the house would seem ugly to most people.
6. The huge trade imbalance of the United States has several sobering consequences.
7. One of the disadvantages of skiing is the expense.
8. Spanking is the least successful way to discipline a child.
9. An attractive wardrobe does not have to be expensive.
10. Of all the years in college, the first year is usually the most demanding.

EXERCISE 9 Finding the Topic in a Topic Sentence

Find the topic in each of the following topic sentences. For each sentence, ask yourself this question: What topic is the writer going to discuss? Then underline the topic.

1. Taking care of a house can easily be a full-time job.
2. Many television news programs are more interested in entertaining than providing newsworthy information.

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3. One of the undisputed goals in teaching is to be able to offer individualized instruction.

4. Whether it's a car, a house, or a college, bigger isn't always better.

5. Violence on television is disturbing to most child psychologists.

6. In today's economy, carrying at least one credit card is probably advisable.

7. Much highway advertising is not only ugly but also distracting for the driver.

8. Figuring out a semester course schedule can be a complicated process.

9. In recent years, we have seen a dramatic revival of interest in quilting.

10. Working for a small company can be more rewarding than working for a large corporation.

EXERCISE 10 Finding the Topic in the Topic Sentence

Find the topic in each of the following topic sentences. For each sentence, ask yourself this question: What topic is the writer going to discuss? Then underline the topic.

1. To my surprise, the basement had been converted into a small studio apartment.

2. Of all the presidents, Abraham Lincoln probably enjoys the greatest popularity.

3. Nature versus nurture is a controversial issue in child psychology.

4. Many people find dependence on public transportation frustrating.

5. When we met for dinner that night, I was shocked at the change that had come over my friend.

6. According to the report, current tax laws greatly benefit those who own real estate.

7. Marian Anderson, the famous singer, began her career in a church choir.

8. As we rode into town, the streets seemed unusually empty.

9. The United Parcel Service offers its employees many long-term benefits.

10. Many people claim that clipping coupons can save them as much as 30 percent on their food bills.

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WHAT IS A CONTROLLING IDEA?

A topic sentence should contain not only the topic but also a controlling idea.

> The ***controlling idea*** of a topic sentence is the point the writer makes about the topic.
>
> **Backpacking trips are *exhausting.***

A particular topic could have any number of possible controlling ideas, depending on the writer's focus. On the same topic of *backpacking*, three writers might make different points:

A family backpacking trip can be much more *satisfying* than a trip to an amusement park.

or

Our recent backpacking trip was a *disaster.*

or

A backpacking trip *should be a part of every teenager's experience.*

FINDING THE CONTROLLING IDEA OF A TOPIC SENTENCE

When you look for the controlling idea of a topic sentence, ask yourself this question: What is the point the writer is making about the topic?

In each of the following examples, underline the topic and circle the controlling idea.

Sealfon's Department Store is my favorite store in town.

The writer of this topic sentence announces that the focus will be on what makes the store a favorite.

Sealfon's Department Store is too expensive for my budget.

The writer of this topic sentence announces that the focus will be on the store's high prices.

EXERCISE 11

Finding the Controlling Idea

Below are ten topic sentences. For each sentence, underline the topic and circle the controlling idea.

1. Vigorous exercise is a good way to reduce the effects of stress on the body.
2. Buffalo and Toronto differ in four major ways.
3. Television violence causes aggressive behavior in children.

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4. Athletic scholarships available to women are increasing.
5. Caffeine has several adverse effects on the body.
6. Serena Williams and her sister Venus have dominated the world of women's tennis.
7. Training a parakeet to talk takes great patience.
8. Babysitting for a family with four preschool children was the most difficult job I've ever had.
9. The hours between five and seven in the morning are my most productive.
10. The foggy night was spooky.

EXERCISE 12 Finding the Controlling Idea

Below are ten topic sentences. For each sentence, underline the topic and circle the controlling idea.

1. Piano lessons turned out to be an unexpected delight.
2. The training of Japanese policemen is quite different from American police training.
3. An Olympic champion has five distinctive characteristics.
4. The candidate's unethical financial dealings will have a negative impact on this campaign.
5. A bicycle ride along the coast is a breathtaking trip.
6. The grocery store is another place where people waste a significant amount of money every week.
7. Being an only child is not as bad as people think.
8. Rewarding children with candy or desserts is an unfortunate habit of many parents.
9. A childhood hobby often develops into a promising career.
10. The writing of a dictionary is an incredibly detailed process.

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EXERCISE 13

Finding the Controlling Idea

Below are ten topic sentences. For each sentence, underline the topic and circle the controlling idea.

1. Learning to type takes more practice than talent.
2. Shakespeare's plays are difficult for today's students.
3. Atlanta, Georgia, is one of the cities in the Sunbelt that is experiencing significant population growth.
4. Half a dozen new health magazines are enjoying popularity.
5. The importance of good preschool programs for children has been sadly underestimated.
6. The disposal of toxic wastes has caused problems for many manufacturers.
7. Censorship of school textbooks is a controversial issue in some towns.
8. Finding an inexpensive method to make saltwater drinkable has been a difficult problem for decades.
9. Developing color film is more complicated than developing black and white.
10. The cloudberry is one of the rare berries of the world.

CHOOSING CONTROLLING IDEAS

Teachers often assign one general topic on which all students must write. Likewise, when writing contests are announced, the topic is often the same for all contestants. Because very few people have exactly the same view or attitude toward a topic, it is likely that no two papers will have the same controlling idea. In fact, there could be any number of controlling ideas. The secret to writing a successful topic sentence is to find the controlling idea that is right for you.

EXERCISE 14

Choosing Controlling Ideas for Topic Sentences

Below are two topics. For each topic, think of three possible controlling ideas, and then write a topic sentence for each of these controlling ideas. An example is done for you.

Topic: My mother

Three possible controlling ideas:

1. Unusual childhood

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2. Silent woman
3. Definite ideas about alcohol

Three different topic sentences:

1. My mother had a most unusual childhood.
2. My mother is a very silent woman.
3. My mother has definite ideas about alcohol.

1. **Topic:** My grandmother

First controlling idea: _____

First topic sentence: _____

_____

Second controlling idea: _____

Second topic sentence: _____

_____

Third controlling idea: _____

Third topic sentence: _____

_____

2. **Topic:** California (or another state)

First controlling idea: _____

First topic sentence: _____

_____

Second controlling idea: _____

Second topic sentence: _____

_____

Third controlling idea: _____

Third topic sentence: _____

_____

EXERCISE 15 Choosing Controlling Ideas for Topic Sentences

Below are two topics. For each topic, think of three possible controlling ideas, and then write a topic sentence for each of these controlling ideas. An example is done for you.

Topic: The movie *Gran Torino*

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Three possible controlling ideas:

1. Explores the clash of cultures in a Detroit neighborhood
2. Shows Clint Eastwood's acting and directing talent
3. Reveals how a close-minded character can be transformed

Three different topic sentences:

1. *Gran Torino* explores the clash of cultures in a Detroit neighborhood.
2. *Gran Torino* shows Clint Eastwood's great talent for both acting and directing.
3. *Gran Torino* is a movie whose main character, played by Clint Eastwood, is transformed from a close-minded individual to someone who is open to change.

1. **Topic:** Late night talk shows

First controlling idea: _____

First topic sentence: _____

_____

Second controlling idea: _____

Second topic sentence: _____

_____

Third controlling idea: _____

Third topic sentence: _____

_____

2. **Topic:** Working in a nursing home

First controlling idea: _____

First topic sentence: _____

_____

Second controlling idea: _____

Second topic sentence: _____

_____

Third controlling idea: _____

Third topic sentence: _____

_____

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EXERCISE 16 Choosing Controlling Ideas for Topic Sentences

Below are two topics. For each topic, think of three possible controlling ideas, and then write a topic sentence for each of these controlling ideas. An example is done for you.

Topic: Fitness and health

Three possible controlling ideas:

1. The growth of new lines of products
2. Increased popularity of health clubs
3. Use of exercise DVDs and equipment at home

Three different topic sentences:

1. Recent years have seen the creation of entire lines of products devoted to fitness and health.
2. The high level of interest in physical fitness and health has resulted in a widespread growth of health clubs across the country.
3. A person can improve his or her health by exercising at home with a professional on DVD or working out on one of the many pieces of equipment available for private use.

1. **Topic:** Rap music

First controlling idea: _____

First topic sentence: _____

_____

Second controlling idea: _____

Second topic sentence: _____

_____

Third controlling idea: _____

Third topic sentence: _____

_____

2. **Topic:** Junk food

First controlling idea: _____

First topic sentence: _____

_____

Second controlling idea: _____

Second topic sentence: _____

_____

Third controlling idea: _____

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Third topic sentence: _____

_____

MASTERY AND EDITING TESTS

TEST 1

Further Practice Writing Topic Sentences

Develop each of the following topics into a topic sentence. In each case, the controlling idea is missing. Decide on the point you wish to make about the topic. Then include this controlling idea as part of your topic sentence. When you are finished, underline the topic and circle your controlling idea. Be sure your topic sentence is a complete sentence and not a fragment. An example has been done for you.

Topic: My brother's car accident

Controlling idea: Tragic results

Topic sentence: My brother's car accident had (tragic results) for the entire family.

1. **Topic:** Teaching a child good manners

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

2. **Topic:** Two years in the military

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

3. **Topic:** Living with in-laws

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

4. **Topic:** Moving to a new location

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

5. **Topic:** Cheating

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

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TEST 2 Further Practice Writing Topic Sentences

Develop each of the following topics into a topic sentence. In each case, the controlling idea is missing. Decide on the point you wish to make about the topic. Then include this controlling idea as part of your topic sentence. When you are finished, underline the topic and circle your controlling idea. Be sure your topic sentence is a complete sentence and not a fragment.

1. **Topic:** Camping

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

2. **Topic:** Vegetarians

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

3. **Topic:** Noisy neighbors

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

4. **Topic:** Driving lessons

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

5. **Topic:** Subways

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

TEST 3 Further Practice Writing Topic Sentences

Develop each of the following topics into a topic sentence. In each case, the controlling idea is missing. Decide on the point you wish to make about the topic. Then include this controlling idea as part of your topic sentence. When you are finished, underline the topic and circle your controlling idea. Be sure your topic sentence is a complete sentence and not a fragment.

1. **Topic:** Computer programming

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

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2. **Topic:** Body piercing

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

3. **Topic:** Allergies

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

4. **Topic:** The Red Cross

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

5. **Topic:** Text messaging

   Controlling idea: _____

   Topic sentence: _____

   _____

Exploring Online



Go to **www.cengage.com/devenglish/scarry/writersworkplace** to find the **Writer's Online Workplace,** a website designed for students using this book. You will find links to handouts, interactive quizzes, and other online resources as you explore the following topics:

- paragraphs and topic sentences
- paragraph development
- finding the topic sentence

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What Are the Types of Paragraphs?

There are four different types of paragraphs.

Narrative	used to tell a story or a sequence of events
Descriptive	used to describe a scene or an object
Expository	used to provide information, including facts, instructions, and definitions
Persuasive	used to share opinions and convince others to agree or take action

The type of paragraph you use will depend on your *purpose for writing*. To ***entertain*** readers or ***express*** themselves, writers use narration or description. Exposition and narration are used to ***inform*** readers about something. Writers use persuasion to ***influence*** people. Several paragraphs written about the same subject might be very different, depending on why the writers wrote them. The four paragraphs that follow all talk about roller coasters, but in different ways.

Narrative paragraphs tell about an event or series of events, usually in chronological order. Most short stories and newspaper articles are examples of narrative writing.

Reference Note

For more information and practice on **chronological order,** see page 297.

> Your knuckles are white, your palms are drenched, and it feels like your dentist has just switched on the drill. Worse still, as the click of the chain pulls the train skyward, you glance back at the gum-chewing guy who strapped you in and wonder what possessed you to put your life in the hands of a kid you wouldn't trust to wrap your sandwich. That's when you realize: This is all a big mistake. Only now you're at the top, staring into the air, the track seems to have vanished, and the car teeters on the edge of nothingness. Then gravity takes hold and whoooooaa . . . you're hurtling
>
> *(continued)*

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(continued)
earthward. Faster, faster. Suddenly you're upside down, spinning around corners, praying for it all to end. Minutes later the shoulder bar rises, you stagger out on wobbly knees . . . and hey, where's that kid? Maybe he'll let us ride up front this time.

Anne-Marie O'Neill, "On a Roll," *People Weekly*

Descriptive paragraphs do exactly what you think they do; they describe a person, an object, or a scene in detail.

Reference Note
For more information and practice on **spatial order,** see page 300.

Rising ominously from the frozen Muskegon landscape, it is a sight both exhilarating and unnerving, this man-made mountain range of wood. Under a cold grey sky, the soul of this creation waits in silent hibernation for the warmth of spring. Then, when the clouds part, the snows melt, and the earth awakens, *it shall be silent no more*. A gorgeous, textbook example of the classic "out-and-back" roller coaster, Shivering Timbers will be Michigan's largest coaster. Even more, this humongous lumber wonder will rank as the third longest wooden coaster in the United States.

"1998 Preview," Thrillride! Web site

Expository paragraphs are used for explanation. They can list facts, give directions, or explain ideas. Writers also use expository paragraphs to define terms, make comparisons, and show cause and effect. Since information in expository writing can usually be put into categories, it often uses logical order.

Reference Note
For more information and practice on **logical order,** see page 301.

In the Nickel Empire, attractions grew bigger, faster, weirder: horses diving from platforms; "guess men" who guessed your weight, age, occupation; clowns with cattle prods who mildly shocked innocent bystanders. Every amusement park had its Ferris wheel, but only Coney Island

(continued)

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(continued)
had the Wonder Wheel, with cages that rocked and slid along tracks inside the 135-foot disk. In 1920 the Wonder Wheel replaced the Statue of Liberty as the first sight immigrants saw as they sailed into New York Harbor. Pumping up the adrenaline, Coney's showmen built roller coasters with hair-raising names like the Tornado, the Thunderbolt, and in 1927, the Cyclone. With its 60-mile-per-hour plunge, the Cyclone soon drew lines five hours long. Charles Lindbergh has been quoted as calling the coaster "a greater thrill than flying an airplane at top speed."

Bruce Watson, "Three's a Crowd, They Say, But Not at Coney Island!" *Smithsonian*

Persuasive paragraphs are used to share an opinion about a particular subject. Writers of persuasive paragraphs try to convince readers to agree with the opinions in the paragraphs and, sometimes, to take action. A persuasive paragraph often uses *order of importance.*

Reference Note
For more on **order of importance,** see page 218.

Going on amusement park rides is one of the safest forms of recreation. According to the International Association of Amusement Park Attractions, you are more likely to be injured when you play sports, ride a horse, or even ride a bicycle. Statistics show the occurrence of death to be approximately one in 250 million riders. This group's statistics are supported by those of the National Consumer Product Safety Commission. It estimates that more than 270 million people visit amusement parks each year, and that 7,000 people out of those 270 million go to emergency rooms for injuries they receive on amusement park rides—that's only 0.00259 percent of riders.

"Amusement Park Physics," *Learner on Line* Web site

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Exercise 11 Identifying Types of Paragraphs

With two or three other students, find an example of each of the four paragraph types in magazines, newspapers, books, or on Web sites. Then, answer the following questions for each paragraph.

1. Do you think the paragraph is narrative, descriptive, expository, or persuasive? How can you tell?
2. How are the details organized in each paragraph (chronologically, spatially, logically)? How do you know? Could the information have been organized in a different way? How?
3. What was the writer's purpose for writing each piece (to entertain, inform, influence, express)? Does your group feel that the writer achieved his or her purpose? Why?

How Are Paragraphs Used in Longer Pieces of Writing?

So far, you have had practice with paragraphs that can stand on their own or are part of the body of a longer piece of writing. There are two other kinds of paragraphs you will need to use in your writing: *introduction* and *conclusion* paragraphs. The body paragraphs in a composition are like the supporting details in a paragraph—they serve as the filling for your "idea sandwich." Introduction and conclusion paragraphs are the bread for that sandwich. They are like larger versions of your topic and clincher sentences.

Reference Note

For more on **introductions** and **conclusions,** see "Writing" in the Quick Reference Handbook.

Dividing a Piece into Paragraphs

When you write a longer piece, you need to divide the body into paragraphs to give your readers' eyes a rest and to switch to a new main idea. To help your readers understand changes in a longer piece of writing, start a new paragraph when

- you express a new or different main idea
- you explain another part of your subject or step in a process
- you provide another kind of support for your opinion
- the setting—time or location—of your piece changes
- a different person or character speaks

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