

ENGLISH FOR THE WORKPLACE

PARTICIPANT'S MANUAL

Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP)

State of Louisiana

ENGLISH FOR THE WORKPLACE

Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP)

Sponsored by the Louisiana State Civil Service

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ENGLISH IN THE WORKPLACE

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This one-day course reviews basic grammar rules in order to ensure that written communication is clearly understood by the audience.

JOB OUTCOMES

- Communicates ideas and facts in writing in a clear and organized manner.
- Adjusts style, length, and level of written communication to fit the audience and situation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Applies basic grammar rules to improve written communication.

GRAMMAR, CORRECTNESS, AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Letters, memos, or reports with grammatical errors make a poor impression on the reader. They lessen the writer's credibility and detract from the message that is being sent.

Equally annoying are mistakes of the type that involve faulty sentence construction. The standard English sentence has a subject, verb, and complete thought. A sentence missing one of these, or two sentences running together or linked by a comma, can distort the intended message.

In this course, we will address both types of problems. Here is a list of the topics to be covered:

- Avoiding fragments, comma splices, and fused sentences
- Subject-verb agreement
- Pronoun agreement
- Pronoun case
- Verbs

Individual Activity

What: Grammar Pretest

How: For sentences with choices in parentheses, circle the correct word. For the others, revise as needed for sentence correctness or write CORRECT in the margin.

1. In response to the letter you wrote to the Office of Admissions for information concerning acceptance.
2. My birthday falls on a Monday this year, therefore, we will have the party on Saturday.
3. Please give me the purse (that which) is lying on the floor near you.
4. Bill and I wanted to go to a theater, everyone else wanted to stay in and rent a movie.
5. Among the many students who submitted applications for this scholarship (was were) Chris and Laura.
6. The boss told Aaron and (I me) to talk to her after lunch.
7. Neither her mother nor her father (is are) happy about her grades this semester.
8. I didn't want anyone to find out that it was (I me) who had broken the printer.
9. Each employee must register (his their) car and get a hang tag.
10. The bicycle is lying on (its it's) side in the middle of the driveway.
11. Even though the rain (died had died) down, the thunder and lightning persisted.
12. The cleanup of the beaches after the devastating hurricanes (have has) helped bring back the usual tourism.
13. Virginia (led lead) the discussion on telephone courtesy.
14. The thief (fled fled) the area when he heard an alarm.
15. The guests (had drunk had drank) all the punch with their cake.

SENTENCE SENSE

A sentence is defined as having a subject, a verb, and a complete thought. It may be very short and still meet this definition.

Example: The baby smiled.

However, a sentence may have this main core and many modifiers.

Example: After the ball, Cinderella's coach turned back into a pumpkin, and she was left standing in rags as she had been before the appearance of her fairy godmother.

Whether long or short, sentences must be complete and must be followed by a period. There are three types of sentence errors:

1. **Comma Splice:** Two main clauses are joined by a comma.

Example: Come with us Sunday, we are going to have fun.

2. **Sentence Fragment:**

Example: Watching the parade go by and feeling excited.

3. **Run-on Sentence:**

Example: Jeffrey taught physical education he always preferred the idea of being a lawyer.

In each of these instances, the meaning is made more difficult to grasp because of the sentence errors.

Individual Activity

What: Sentence Sense and Correctness

How: Label each sentence using the abbreviations below.

R	=	Run-on Sentence
CS	=	Comma Splice
F	=	Fragment
C	=	Correct

1. Some of the visitors wanted to see the Superdome, others preferred to listen to jazz at Preservation Hall.
2. With respect to your request for information about how to seek a pardon for your brother.
3. Even though the housing authority had added two new employees, there was still a need for additional clerical workers to process all the applications.
4. Please give me your opinion, and then I will tell you what I think about the matter.
5. The company's Mental Health Center will be glad to see your friend, however, you may also refer her to a private clinic.
6. A comprehensive investigation that will indicate whether, the individual has the background and experience for this special assignment.
7. The Governor's Office has a division dedicated to elderly affairs, nevertheless, each parish must also maintain its own program so that all the needs may be served.
8. Christmas comes on Sunday this year, therefore, we will have a holiday on Monday.
9. Mr. Bryant said to the students, "Why didn't you practice your parts before the band concert?"
10. Every letter you write is important; it is your representative and leaves a good or bad impression of you upon the recipient.

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

A verb must agree with its subject in number and person.

Singular: An ice cream cone melts if it is left in the sun.

Plural: Penguins are found in Antarctica.

First Person: I have a pet squirrel.

Third Person: He has 30 hours of credit in psychology.

Any problems that arise in subject-verb agreement can usually be solved by making sure whether the subject is truly singular or plural. Following are rules and some examples of cases in which errors may occur.

Remember that *-s* or *-es* makes a noun plural, but *-s* or *-es* added to a verb indicates the third person singular.

Examples:

The Capitol building grounds are planted with azaleas and camellias.

The shore of the lake looks cleaner after the kids pick up trash.

Rules:

1. **When phrases or clauses occur between the subject and verb, make sure the subject and verb agree.**
 - *The task of the docents is to acquaint visitors with the Old State Capitol building.*
 - *The bus driver, as well as all the passengers from Texas, is going to Casino Rouge.*
 - The absence of a state income tax, not to mention the beaches, (lure lures) new residents to Florida.
 - The election October 18, together with the one next month, (give gives) you a chance to work as commissioner.

2. Watch for inverted sentence order and make the verb agree with the subject, even if it comes after the verb.

- *To me have been given the duties of payroll clerk.*
- *Enclosed in this mailing are the original invoice and my letter of June 15.*
- *Among the suggestions voiced (was were) the idea that all state buildings should be located downtown.*
- *Found in his briefcase (was were) a gun and two Snickers bars.*

3. In a clause that begins with a relative pronoun, the verb agrees with the pronoun's antecedent.

- *Jane is one of those players who never miss a ball.*
- *The conductor was one of those rare persons who possess perfect pitch.*
- *Lutcher is among the towns that (has have) alcohol and drug abuse clinics.*
- *The Office of Motor Vehicles is one of the agencies that (come comes) under the Department of Public Safety.*

4. Do NOT be misled by subjects and verbs that have endings unclearly pronounced when spoken rapidly.

- *The panel consists of the mayor and council members.*
- *The judge insists that objective evidence be considered.*
- *The tour guide (ask asks) that everyone be seated.*

5. Subjects joined by *and* or *both* are usually plural.

- *Respect and fair play are necessary in any career.*
- *Both our history and culture are worth preserving.*
- *Your devotion and hard work (are is) appreciated.*
- *The wet paint and its odor (make makes) working difficult.*

6. Use a singular verb when two or more subjects connected by *and* are preceded by *each, every, many a/an*.

- *Many a day and a night has passed since the election was questioned.*
- *Every man and woman has an obligation to vote.*
- Each eligibility worker and supervisor (has have) interviewed clients.
- Every restaurant and concession stand (has have) handicapped workers.

7. Singular subjects joined by *or, either...or, or neither...nor* take a singular verb and those are plural take a plural verb. If one subject is singular and one plural, make the verb agree with the one closer to it. Since it usually sounds better in a case like this to have a plural verb, try to write the sentence so that the plural verb comes last.

- *Neither rain nor snow is predicted for Christmas.*
- *Either the deputy sheriff or the process servers are going to make the arrest.*
- Neither CODOFIL nor Special Education (is are) sending delegates to the convention.
- Either Information Resources or Information Services (want wants) to make the announcement for the governor.

8. Most indefinite pronouns (*each, either, neither, everyone, everybody, everything, someone, someday, something, anyone, anybody, no one, nobody, nothing*) are singular and take singular verbs. Indefinite pronouns that indicate a quantity of something are plural (*all, any, none, some*). When a compound subject joined by "*and*" is modified by the indefinite pronouns "*each*" or "*every*," it is considered singular and takes a singular verb.

- *Every supervisor has received the schedule.*
- *Neither housing authority director wishes to be quoted.*
- Each boy and girl (want wants) to go on the field trip.
- Anyone who is adventuresome (ride rides) the roller coaster at least once.

9. A collective noun takes a singular verb when it refers to the group as a unit but a plural verb when members are acting individually.

- *The cast are drifting in for tonight's play.*
- *The orchestra is playing the conductor's favorite symphony by Brahms.*
- The Levee Board (is are) issuing a statement about the problem.
- The State Police (is are) driving brand new Oldsmobiles.

10. As a subject, a number takes a plural verb and the number takes a singular verb.

- *A number of our concerns were addressed.*
- *The number of cases of sexual harassment is declining.*
- A number of acres of land (has have) eroded in Grand Isle this year.
- The number of Civil Service applications on file always (increase increases) in June.

11. A singular verb should be used with a singular subject even though the complement is plural.

- *The reason she gave for being late with her payments was problems in collecting fees others owed her.*
- *The item I ordered is chicken wings with sauce.*
- The reason she retired (was were) her numerous activities in private business.
- His greatest joy (was were) his six children and ten grandchildren.

12. A plural subject expressing a unit of thought or measurement takes a singular verb.

- *Sixty dollars is a reasonable amount to contribute to the fund.*
- *To make a wedding veil, twenty yards of tulle is needed.*
- Six cups of flour (seem seems) like too much.
- Three gallons of solution (is are) needed for the experiment.

13. Nouns that end in “ics” are singular if they mean a field of study but plural if they indicate actions, practices, or data.

- *Aerobics is a popular type of activity.*
- *The statistics support the director’s policy.*

14. Some nouns ending in “s” are singular but take plural verbs.

- *Scissors are needed to cut tags off our new clothes.*
- His pants (are is) to be altered before Monday.

Class Activity

What: Subject-Verb Agreement - Practice 1

How: Select and circle the correct form in parentheses in the sentences below.

1. One of the products the company makes (is are) toasters.
2. Included in the tour package (is are) airfare, hotel room, and airport transfers.
3. George is one of those people who (impress impresses) others with his magnetic personality.
4. A number of state agencies (have has) offered training courses in letter writing.
5. Rubenstein Brothers (is are) located at the corner of Canal and Gravier.
6. Have you heard what the criteria (is are) for applicants for the public relations position?
7. Neither the examiners nor the regional manager (want wants) to take the Bastrop assignment.
8. Only one of the sites (has have) reported alarming air quality data during August.
9. The number of casino river boats (has have) increased during the past several years.
10. Either October or November (is are) a good time to observe sugarcane harvesting in Louisiana.
11. Neither one of us (are is) authorized to sign the invoice.
12. Only one of the shirts I sent (has have) come back from the laundry.
13. It is the governor not his administrative aides who (decide decides) what appointments will be made.
14. Statistics (was were) a course required for a major in psychology.

15. The statistics (indicate indicates) that the Baton Rouge area will continue to grow during the twenty-first century.
16. The Board of Supervisors (is are) scheduling a meetings on the first Friday of each month.
17. Mary, as well as all the other clerical employees, (is are) invited to the party on Stephanie's last day of work.
18. The police jury (is are) discussing where they will go for dinner after the meeting.
19. Five weeks (is are) long enough to search for his replacement.
20. In the Valdez disaster, several million gallons of oil (was were) spilled.

Individual Activity & Small Group Activity

What: Subject-Verb Agreement - Practice 2

How: Individually, select and circle the correct form in parentheses for the following sentences. Once you have completed the activity, discuss the answers with your small group.

1. This letter, along with the invoices, (has have) to be completed by 4:30 today; only one of the invoices (require requires) a duplicate copy.
2. The number of LSU students (have has) increased greatly; a number of them (have has) transferred from other schools.
3. On the program manager's desk (is are) the reports you want, and the memoranda he collected (is are) in that file drawer.
4. Neither the Commissioner nor the department heads (is are) enthusiastic about this change.
5. To Mrs. Cuterea (have has) fallen the responsibilities of this project.
6. Among the many companies that submitted bids for this project (was were) Harvey and Associates.
7. Attached to this letter (are is) two copies of the original contract.
8. The renovation of several historic buildings (have has) helped encourage tourism in that parish.
9. Neither the fans nor the air conditioner (were was) working.
10. The engineer as well as the site manager (was were) consulted.
11. Neither of them (is are) ready to retire yet.
12. Each one of you (has have) annual leave that you can take.

Individual Activity

What: Pronoun Agreement and Case

How: Circle the correct pronoun choice for the following sentences.

1. The Planning and Budget Office told the caller that it was not (its their) mission to deal with family debt problems.
2. Everyone gave (his their) donation to United Way at the office.
3. Each new professor must declare (his their) allegiance to the United States.
4. The Earl K. Long Medical Center, (that which) is located on Airline Highway, has a medical librarian on staff.
5. If Harvey Coates is not in when you come by, ask for Harold Jenkins or (me I myself).
6. The payroll office told Carol and (I me) that the checks would be ready late this afternoon.
7. The Board of Supervisors have gone with (their its) friends to the Sugar Bowl game.
8. (Who Whom) did the Inspector General interview when he came to your agency?
9. Justine's Bakery wants to sell all (its their) brownies the same day they are made.
10. The car was lying on (it's its) side after the wreck.
11. Please hand me the dictionary (that which) is lying on Phil's desk.
12. I didn't know (who whom) the delegates had nominated for vice president.
13. Freddy can do computer-aided drawings as quickly as (he him).
14. (Who's Whose) cell phone went off during the meeting?

15. Either Gerald or Peggy will take (their his or her) turn at telephone duty this afternoon.
16. I didn't want Frances to know it was (I me) who had drawn her name for the Christmas exchange.
17. The State Buildings and Grounds official said that (whoever whomever) is selected to supply plants must adhere to the color scheme for summer.
18. Everyone asked (who whom) we should thank for the nice fruit basket.
19. Assigning grades can sometimes be a problem for (we us) English teachers.
20. Jack Dunne whispered, "Between you and (I me), I don't think he knows what he is talking about."
21. The Legal Section told us we could contract with (whoever whomever) we chose to do the job.
22. Can you complete the project as quickly as (they them)?
23. The Family Support office tries to locate the absent parents if (he or she they) are not paying child support.
24. Would you tell us (who whom) you believe is best qualified to take over the vacant position?
25. We need to know (who whom) you think is best suited for the task.

VERB USAGE

If you have ever studied a foreign language such as French or Spanish, you found that there is much to know about verbs. For example, verbs express action, existence, or occurrence and are an essential part of the predicate. Verb forms indicate the number and person of their subjects, and also tense, voice, and mood. There are simple and perfect tenses, and there are regular and irregular verbs, as well as auxiliary verbs.

Principal Parts

One area that causes problems at times is which principal part of the verb to use. As we know, a verb has three principal parts:

Regular Verbs

Present - **I walk**

Past - **I walked**

Perfect - **I have walked**

Irregular Verbs

Present - **I see**

Past - **I saw**

Perfect - **I have seen**

If you look in a dictionary, you can tell if a verb is regular or irregular. The principal parts of the irregular verb will be given, and the regular verb will have parts given if there is any doubt about whether to double the "l" occurring in the verb (as in traveled), etc. Otherwise, it is assumed that a regular verb will form its past and perfect tenses by adding *-ed*.

Examples: *to train, trained, trained; laugh, laughed, laughed; etc.*

Some irregular verbs are a little tricky, and some people are sometimes unsure of what words form the past and the perfect tenses. A list of some irregular verbs is provided for you in the Appendix.

Passive Forms

The passive forms of a verb consist of some part of the auxiliary verb plus the past participle of the main verb.

Examples: It is expected.
They were informed.
The shipment has been received.
Your attendance will be expected.

In general, using active verbs will make your writing more vigorous and readable. The passive voice may be used when you want to emphasize the receiver of the action, not the doer. Much governmental writing suffers from an overuse of the passive voice and could more easily and successfully be written in the active voice.

Subjunctive Mood

When the verb follows a clause expressing demand, wish, or necessity, the subjunctive mood of the verb is used. It is also used with clauses beginning with *if* and those stating a possibility, as well as in *as if* and *as though* clauses.

Examples: I wish I knew how to do that.
If I were you, I would ask for a new computer.
She acts as if this were her private home.
He behaved as though it were normal to wear a tux to the movies.
I wish I had been there.

Sequence of Tenses

When the verb in the main clause is in the past tense, the verb in a clause beginning with that also should express past time.

Examples: She agreed that we were running out of oranges.
Jeremy said that he had reviewed the lease.

Class Activity

What: Use of Verbs

How: Choose the best verb in parentheses for each sentence below.

1. When the paraded (ended had ended), cleaning crews found tons of trash on the streets of New Orleans.
2. It is spring, and all the flowers (were have been) blooming.
3. Phillip (hanged hung) his raincoat on the rack in the hall.
4. The contractor (bid bidden) too much for the hospital job.
5. I urge that he (be is) elected.
6. If every boss (were was) like her, life would be simpler.
7. Georgette said, "I wish Ted (was were) here to tell us the news."
8. He (comes came) to the meeting and tried to take over.
9. The book (lay laid) on the table waiting to be picked up.
10. Every day Grandfather (lays lies) on the sofa and takes a nap.
11. The receptionist (lay laid) the instructions beside the phone.
12. Six angry consumers (burst bursted) into the hearing and began protesting the charges to their accounts.
13. If I (had would have) known you were coming, I could have reserved a room at the Hilton.
14. Buying a new car (cost costs) more today than it did last year.
15. The politician said if he (was were) elected, he would reduce taxes.
16. Marilyn (sat set) the binder in a convenient place so that anyone could use it.

17. Virgil (asked axed) Tom, "Will you (loan lend) me some money until payday?"
18. After the chaplain (lead led) the Senate in prayer, the day's deliberations began.
19. The memo asked that each request (is be) sent in by April 1.
20. She said that she (is was) now working at the Department of Natural Resources.

Individual Activity

What: Grammar Post Test

How: For sentences with choices in parentheses, circle the correct word. For the others, revise as needed for sentence correctness or write CORRECT in the margin.

1. (Who's Whose) going to ride with me in my car?
2. The Design Library, (which that) is located in the tall brick building nearby, has several computers you can use for Internet research.
3. I wouldn't mind picking you up after work, however, I might be delayed by traffic.
4. Neither the washers nor dryer (were was) working at the Laundromat.
5. The number of accidents on Rock Ridge Road (have has) decreased over the past few years because of the new signs.
6. The wedding is planned for February 14, nevertheless, Bill and (I me) want to change it to June 1.
7. All of the employees (has have) family leave that they can take if necessary.
8. The daughter as well as the parents (was were) invited to the barbeque.
9. Please give me the money, and then I will give you the ticket.
10. (It's Its) time to leave for our meeting.
11. Alex (busted burst) the sack by filling it too full.
12. His brother (loaned lent) him money for the new car.

Class Activity

What: Punctuation and Mechanics Pretest

How: Supply any needed punctuation, capitalization, or changes in use of numbers, abbreviations, and symbols.

1. In january the president will give a state of the union message to congress. "i hope it won't be a cold snowy day," said first lady bess truman.
2. The u s open tennis association's officials disqualified several australian players because their applications were not received in time the mails were delayed by five days when hurricane angela swept by the atlantic seaboard.
3. Oh don't forget to bring the following items to the fourth of july picinic potato salad baked beans coleslaw and dirty rice.

Individual Activity

What: Punctuation Pretest

How: Supply any needed punctuation for the following sentences.

1. A pound of shrimp a few crabs and a carton of oysters that's the beginning of a good seafood gumbo.
2. Three members of the organization George Poston plant manager Mary Lou Foster training director and Lynn Shelton grounds superintendent presented reports at the meeting October 9 1998 in Baltimore Maryland but a fourth presenter had to cancel.
3. Your ration of bad and good cholesterol is favorable therefore you do not need to worry about that party of your physical exam.
4. Although I had read War and Peace in college I realized I had forgotten much of it when I attended the movie.
5. The sign at the entrance to the plant said Employees drive through and visitors to JBC Inc. park here to report to the guard house.
6. Among the many things we must do before the conference are reserve rooms and restaurant seatings duplicate the program and papers make travel arrangements for the participants.
7. Many words can be spelled two ways for example in the U S we write aluminum whereas in the U K it is aluminium.

PUNCTUATION

In this section, we will take up the main use of the following punctuation marks: period, question marks, exclamation points, colon, semi-colon, dash, quotation marks, and other marks of punctuation.

A separate section on the use of the comma will follow. We take up commas in greater detail because so many people have difficulty deciding just where the commas should go.

The Period

The period should be used in the following situations:

1. **At the end of a declarative sentence.**

Example: Janie Gray was hired to assist Elise Tompkins.

2. **At the end of a polite request or command.**

Example: Will you please submit your proposal by April 15.

3. **In outlines and bulleted lists if the items are clauses or long phrases on separate lines or when the period is needed to complete a sentence.**

Example: The following points were explained by the travel agent:
The cruise will last ten days.
Three islands will be visited.
The cost for the least expensive cabin is \$1200.

The committee will look at:

- Recruitment procedure and effectiveness.
- Employee training and evaluation.
- Quality control and continuous improvements.

Use no periods if the list has short words or phrases:

Example: We can choose from the following restaurants:
China Gardens
The Wedgewood Room
Saucier's Seafood

4. After an abbreviation.

Example: Mrs. Joyce Kemp, Ph.D., who receives her mail at P.O. Box 212 in St. Martinville, Louisiana, will see you at 8:45 a.m.

5. The period is always placed inside the closing quotation mark, regardless of whether the quotation is a single word, phrase, clause, or sentence.

Example: I asked her to define “satisfactory.”

6. The period is placed inside the parenthesis only if the material within the parenthesis is a complete statement.

The Question Mark

The question mark is used to end a short direct question or when a short question falls within a sentence.

Example: What is the date on which you will issue invitations to bid?
We can talk about flex time, can't we, when we have the meeting?

The Exclamation Point

The exclamation point is not often used in business or governmental reports and letters. It is used to indicate strong emotion, so it might be suitable in an advertising copy about Louisiana but not in official documents.

It is placed inside the quotation marks if the quoted material is a complete sentence and outside if it is not.

Example: Her only response to the suggestion was, “Never!”
You are expected to meet deadlines on this project!

The Semi-Colon

The semi-colon is somewhat similar to the period, in that when it comes at the end of a main clause, it denotes a complete stop. But whereas the period comes at the end of the sentence, the semi-colon comes in the middle.

1. **Use the semi-colon when it links two main clauses that the writer does not wish to punctuate as two separate sentences because of their close relationship.**

Example: We can't spend the night; we'll leave right after the ball.
I told you that last week; I thought you remembered.

2. **Use a semi-colon when independent clauses are linked by transitional expressions. However, if the second clause is long or requires special emphasis, write two separate sentences.**

Here are some transitional expressions used in this instance: accordingly, therefore, moreover, however, consequently, and furthermore.

Example: The selection is based on entrance scores; therefore, you have a good chance since your scores were so high.

We will fly you to Hawaii for a two-week vacation; furthermore, we will pay your hotel and other expenses.

Note: When these transitional words do *not* introduce a clause but are used simply as modifiers, they are usually set off with commas and not semi-colons.

Example: The tennis match, consequently, was postponed until the rain had stopped and the courts were dry at Wimbledon.

James, nevertheless, graduated from high school with his class despite his football injuries.

3. **Use a semi-colon when punctuating lists that have several long items, especially if *and* occurs within the lists.**

Example: The usual course consists of a survey of participants' attitudes; a lecture and demonstration of the purposes and audiences of technical writing; exercises to review grammar and punctuation; and the writing and presentation of an original report.

The Colon

1. **The colon is used before a list, a summary, or a long quotation.**

Example: To equip the office, we need the following electronic equipment: phone, fax, copy machine, and computer.

2. **It may also be used between independent clauses if the second explains or illustrates the first and there is no conjunction.**

Example: We have just bought a camp at False River: my husband loves to fish.

3. **Do not capitalize after a colon if the material cannot stand alone as a sentence, and do not capitalize the first word of an independent clause if the clause explains the thought expressed in the first part of the sentence (as in the example above).**

4. **Capitalize the first word of an independent clause after a colon if it requires special emphasis or it is presented as a formal rule.**

Example: The rules were posted on the trees in Walden Subdivision: There can be no fishing, no feeding of ducks, no trespassing, and no swimming in the area.

The Dash

The dash has legitimate uses, but it should be used sparingly.

1. **The dash can be used in place of commas to set off a nonessential element that already has commas.**

Example: The menu – turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie – was traditional for a Thanksgiving dinner.

Quotation Marks

1. **Use quotation marks to tell the exact words of a quote, with periods and commas always going inside the closing mark.**

Example: “We will close at noon on Saturday,” Mrs. Bargas told the staff.

2. **Quotation marks are used for such artistic works as poems, names of songs, short stories, and articles.**

Example: We read “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost in English class.

Underscore and Italics

The chief use of the underscore is with titles of complete works, such as books, magazines, newspapers, movies, plays, etc.

The underscore is also used for foreign terms or for a word to be defined or referred to.

Example: I always forgot how to spell the name Ft. Meyers. (Note that the underline is unbroken but does not include the terminal punctuation.)

In days before our modern word processing programs, the underscore was used in place of printed italics. Now there is a choice of using italics or underline. One is not preferable to the other.

Parentheses

1. **Use parentheses to enclose dates that accompany a person’s name or an event.**

Example: Henry Arnold (1923-1989) was the first president of the society.

2. **Use parentheses to enclose explanatory material independent of the main thought.**

Example: The date for the meeting (they keep changing it) is now September 15.

Individual Activity

What: Punctuation

How: Supply any needed punctuation in the sentences below.

1. My friend Jim Warren you have met him has a long luxurious custom made yacht that the Advocate featured February 24 1998 in an article called Bachelor Fantasy Comes True.
2. The following officers will sit at the head table Valerie Johnson president Michael McGuire vice president Paula Barnes secretary treasurer and Avery Kelly president elect.
3. The announcement read Each employee will be expected to record the time he or she arrives and leaves each day on the time clock in the lobby.
4. The restaurant hostess was saying to everyone There will be a 30 minute wait before you can be seated Patty reported when she came back.
5. The doctor is not in at this time however you are welcome to wait if you have time.
6. If begun to rain at halftime nevertheless LSU and Alabama finished the game.
7. Even though most fiction at the time was not written about women Marjorie Morningstar 1955 was nevertheless a popular novel.

The Comma

In the exercises, the first two examples are punctuated correctly. The remaining ones need for you to put in the commas.

1. Use a comma to set off items in a series.

- *A report has the following principal parts: abstract, introduction, discussion, conclusion, and recommendation.*
- *The three branches of government are legislative, judicial, and administrative.*
- *The investigators will go to Louisiana Mississippi Texas and Arkansas.*

2. Use a comma to set off modifying words, phrases, or clauses after a noun when these modifiers do not provide vital information.

- *Kathleen Able, who is an acute-care supervisor, resigned last week.*
- *The Marlins, which is a Miami team, won the 1997 World Series.*
- *Dr. Joseph Martin who was 80 died yesterday.*
- *Michael Meyers who owns a local surf shop will be married this week to his college sweetheart.*

However, when the modifiers provide vital information, omit the commas to attach the modifiers more closely to the nouns which they modify.

- *An employee who is an accountant resigned this week.*
- *A hostess who works for Culture, Recreation, and Tourism is expected to be cordial to all visitors.*
- *Any school that needs help with its phone system can call on the Office of Telecommunications Management.*

3. Use a comma whenever a pause would prevent a misreading.

- *In between the molding, sand must be well tamped.*
- *To improve, the cause of the problem must be discovered.*
- *After playing the saxophone section took a ten-minute break.*
- *While grooming the cat will lick her paws and wash her face.*

4. Use a comma to set off a long introductory phrase or an introductory clause.

- *Although encouragement was available within the hospital, funding was limited.*
- *If a photocopy machine is used in the process of report preparation, you may find that color-coded paper is unsuitable because it does not easily reproduce.*
- When you take a problem to your boss take your recommendation for solutions along with you.
- In order to take guests to tour the Governor's Mansion it is necessary to schedule a tour with the staff.

5. Use a comma plus a coordinating conjunction ("and," "but," "or," "for," "nor") to separate independent clauses - that is, groups of words which could be sentences if written.

- *The interns believed that immediate clinical application reinforced learning, and all evaluators believed that the program relieved stress.*
- *Independent study provides an economical, flexible way to gain college credit but the student must be motivated and self-disciplined.*
- A moving liquid has a higher heat-transfer rate but non-circulating liquids transfer heat less efficiently than does a solid.

6. Use a comma to separate the day and the year in a date.

- *Classes should begin on April 1, 1999, according to the administration.*
- *Bids are due to the Department of Transportation and Development on October 31, 2000, for review by the project coordinator.*
- The theme park opened on May 1 1998 according to the press announcement.
- Alison was born on September 28 1974 in Tampa, Florida.

7. Use a comma to introduce a direct quotation.

- *The announcement reads, "Photographs of each staff member will be displayed in the first floor lobby."*
- *The receptionist said, "How may I direct your call?"*
- Governor Jimmy Davis said "If we can dream it, then we can do it."
- "Wear your seat belts at all times when driving a state vehicle" the manual admonished.

8. Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives modifying the same noun and not joined by a conjunction.

- *The safety director spoke in a steady, soothing voice; the workers became quieter and more attentive.*
- *A messy, shabby looking report will alienate the reader even before the contents can be evaluated.*
- Arriving at the beautifully decorated comfortable hotel was only the beginning of a wonderful day.
- The difficult thankless job of regulating emissions is only one of DEQ's responsibilities.
- The Department of Financial Institutions works in a diligent painstaking manner to see that all the organizations they regulate are solvent.

9. Use a comma to set off a participial or infinitive phrase coming before the word it modifies.

- *Reading the meter, the serviceman noticed that someone had tempered with the shut-off valve.*
- *To participate in company benefits, the worker must have been employed for three months.*
- Agreeing with the executive officer of the APA the court said the ruling was consistent with the organization's ethical standards.
- To make the system efficient you must have an extensive heat-transfer surface.

10. Use a comma to set off titles or degrees after a person's name.

- *Dr. Arthur Ellis, Chairman of the Board, will direct the instillation.*
- *Samuel Avery, Director of Marketing, will announce the winner.*
- Frank Hinson Ph.D. was a consultant for this project.
- Barry Ruskin D.D.S. is a person I would rather not visit.

11. Use a comma to set off an appositive from the noun it modifies.

- *John Smith, the recreation consultant, holds a B.S.W. degree.*
- *Albert Walker, the chief engineer, recently gained his P.E. certification.*
- The first ingredient for gumbo is a roux a mixture of oil and flour that is browned before the other items are added.
- The poster used interesting artwork to promote the blues a type of music played in clubs in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and all over Louisiana.

12. Use a comma to separate a person's title from the name of his organization (unless the words "of the" appear between the title and the name of the organization.)

- *Send your requests to take classes to Training Director, Office of Personnel Management.*
- *Doris May's title is Dean, College of Basic Sciences.*
- Mr. Battle is now Medicaid Supervisor Director of Social Services.
- You may address Mrs. Burns as Surveyor Department of Health and Hospitals.

13. Use a comma to set off direct addresses.

- *Mr. Able, your partial payment will be ready when you submit your plans.*
- *Mrs. Brown, you will be promoted once you have fulfilled all the requirements.*
- Mr. Little your car is on fire.
- Congressman Miller the voters are demanding election reform.

14. Use a comma to set off geographical names.

- *The warehouse was moved to Ruston, Louisiana, the previous September.*
- *The forestry service is located in Alexandria, Louisiana, which is in the central part of the state.*
- The shareholders' annual meeting is held in Austin Texas each February.

Individual Activity

What: Comma Exercise

How: Supply commas in the following sentences.

1. Today I went to the mall and purchased the following things: shirt shoes socks hat and jeans.
2. Mickey Mouse who is the icon for Walt Disney Company resides in Toontown in the Magic Kingdom.
3. When you drive long distances alone take your cell phone with you.
4. We have finished neutralization and cleaning of one storage tank and we plan to start cleaning the lines later this week.
5. Acceptance letters should be sent out no later than July 1 2011 according to the recruiter's secretary.
6. The article said "Thousands applauded the return of their former leader."
7. The agency is divided into five pleasant tastefully furnished offices.
8. To be an effective eligibility worker you must learn to deal with unreasonable frustrated citizens occasionally.
9. Ron Nesborn planning advisor presents his blueprint for the next phase of development this afternoon.
10. Mike Johnson the captain of the team will flip the coin.

11. A capable loyal employee is Director of Human Resources Division of Administration.
12. Mrs. Collins the information you requested will be sent out as soon as possible.
13. The new mall is located in Baton Rouge Louisiana near the intersection of Bluebonnet Road and Siegen Lane.
14. The recipe for muffins calls for flour sugar butter and several other ingredients.
15. Mr. Culpepper a product developer designed a new hat for our fall season.
16. When you return tomorrow bring your books with you.
17. I wanted to go to Colorado in December but I did not think I had enough money for the ski trip.
18. You will receive your package no later than September 21 2011 and if you are not fully satisfied you will receive a refund.
19. The trip to the science center was educational long and interesting.
20. John Holmes President of A&R Electric will demonstrate the effectiveness of his plan and answer questions from the audience.
21. James Black the tax consultant was the announced guest speaker for the evening but he will be unable to attend.
22. His official title in the company's merchandising division is Director of Planning and Allocation.
23. Mr. Theriot your dinner is served.
24. Our home office is located in Anaheim California but we have locations all across the United States and Canada.
25. Mr. Frost who works for the Office of Motor Vehicles will be attending the conference with our company in Ohio and will remain with us until our return to Louisiana.

USE OF NUMBERS AND HYPHENS

Numbers

When you are typing, numbers 1 through 100 and all numbers above 100 are spelled out, unless they require more than two words. Use the same style, either words or numbers, if two or more numbers occur in a sentence. If your document contains many numbers, and especially if it is technical in content, spell out “zero” through “nine” (single-digit numbers) and use numerals in other cases.

Example: We expect one thousand dignitaries to attend the state funeral. We have 500 reserved seats, 250 open seats, and 250 spaces for visitors to stand.

Hyphens

Use the hyphen between words joined together to modify other words (energy-producing cells). Use suspension hyphens for a series of adjectives that you would ordinarily hyphenate (10-, 20-, and 30-ft. beams).

CAPITAL LETTERS

The general rule about capitalization is that you should adhere to standard conventions, but avoid unnecessary capitals. In state government, often people are inclined to capitalize words that are not proper nouns, but that are general terms for offices, persons, etc. A recent dictionary is a good guide when capitalization is in question.

1. **Capitalize proper names, including the following:**

- **Names of persons or things:** Tiffany LeFleur, Microsoft Words
- **Trademarks:** Xerox, Kleenex
- **Geographical names:** Pensacola, Achafalaya Basin, Old River
- **Organizations, Agencies, and Companies:** General Motors, Department of the Interior, Pi Beta Phi
- **Religions and associated words:** Episcopalian, Baptist, Bible, Jewish, Catholic, Easter
- **Abbreviations and acronyms:** LA, DFW, IRS

2. **Capitalize titles that precede the name but not those that follow it.**

Examples: Professor Dan Russell; Governor Tom Dewey; Fielding Jones, the governor; Mary Bishop, secretary of commerce.

3. **Capitalize the major words in titles.**

Example: *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*

4. **Capitalize the first word of every sentence and of direct quotations, as well as I.**

Example: The director said, "Yesterday I told them it would be easy to accomplish our mission."

Small Group Activity

What: Capitalization

How: Underline or circle all words in the following sentences that should be capitalized.

1. vernon wakefield, the secretary of labor in the carter administration, said to the associated press, "my wife, ambassador wakefield, and i are moving to the south because we do not wish to spend another winter in the corn belt, and we would also like to be near the gulf of mexico so that we can tour nasa and attend games in the astrodome."
2. at usl, a state university, i took a course in french literature under dr. bellini and history of the language 4002 under dr. evans, both of whom were from the magnolia state and had lived through the great depression.
3. even though the secretary of the department of health and hospitals says running the department is difficult, he prefers that position to being mayor, because he receives help from his executive committee and deputy secretary brownstone.
4. many british people belong to the church of england and read services each sunday from their book of common prayer, which was written by bishop cranmer and others during the time of the reformation. some of the authors were imprisoned in the tower of london for their beliefs, as catholics and protestants were not tolerant of each other after the reign of queen elizabeth.
5. the first lady showed the visitors into the oval office and asked the president, "did you meet professor barry reynolds when you were a rhodes scholar at oxford university studying economics?"
6. since labor day is a holiday which brings in the fall season, many people like to go to pensacola beach then to relax and enjoy the activities at sun and surf resort.
7. the irs has been meeting taxpayers on saturdays to resolve questions that any person or corporation may have, so the ceo of uniflex corporation went in wearing his usual weekend attire, his sweatsuit and reeboks.

Individual Activity

What: Post-Test for Punctuation, Capitalization, and Mechanics

How: Correct the following sentences.

1. the foreman ordered special tools to use while installing the one hundred ten foot christmas tree atop the two story building on december 1 2010 in new roads louisiana for the annual parade.
2. while studying ulysses by james joyce at memphis state university I asked dean walker smith if he knew much about the irish people the catholic religion the jesuit order and the easter rebellion.
3. smith replied, "if you wish to know more read dubliners, a short story collection, and note especially counterparts which is the best story in the volume.

CORRECT USE OF WORDS, SPELLING, AND STYLE

Individual Activity

What: Pre-Test on Words, Spelling, and Style

How: Follow the specific directions for each section.

Rewrite the following sentences for greater conciseness:

1. There are five routine tasks that you are expected to perform each morning when you first come in.
2. It has always been my belief that punctuality is essential to good job performance.

Select the correct spelling for the following pairs:

3. preceding preceeding
4. alright all right
5. facsimile faxcimile

Rewrite to correct the dangling participle:

6. While working at my last job, a great many computer resources were available to me.

Rewrite for parallelism:

7. Children need nurturing, protection, and to be disciplined in a consistent manner.

Spelling

English spelling is so variable that it is hardly worth the effort to try to review the rules in such a short course. Therefore, we will practice with some of the most frequently misspelled words.

Class Activity

What: Spelling

How: As a class, choose the correct spelling in the list below.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1. dependant | dependent | 14. grievous | grievous |
| 2. supercede | supersede | 15. paraphenalia | paraphenalia |
| 3. feasability | feasibility | 16. sergant | sergeant |
| 4. prerogative | perogative | 17. accommodate | accomodate |
| 5. commitment | committment | 18. cematary | cemetery |
| 6. occurrance | occurrence | 19. genealogy | geneology |
| 7. accidentally | accidently | 20. embarrass | embarass |
| 8. seige | siege | 21. cafateria | cafeteria |
| 9. defendant | defendent | 22. priviledge | privilege |
| 10. catagory | category | 23. subpeona | subpoena |
| 11. grammar | grammer | 24. existence | existance |
| 12. occured | occurred | 25. acheivement | achievement |
| 13. separate | seperate | | |

Plurals

Plurals are regularly formed by adding *s* to the singular. Since there are many exceptions to this rule, here is a list of words in which the plurals are not formed by adding the usual addition of *s*, as well as some that do follow the basic rule.

Small Group Activity

What: Plurals

How: After each word, write the plural form.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. half | 14. policy |
| 2. halo | 15. business |
| 3. potato | 16. quartz |
| 4. mother-in-law | 17. quota |
| 5. teaspoonful | 18. memorandum |
| 6. come-on | 19. alumna |
| 7. editor in chief | 20. apparatus |
| 8. foot | 21. analysis |
| 9. soprano | 22. Mr. and Mrs. Jones |
| 10. duty | 23. Mr. |
| 11. belief | 24. CEO |
| 12. stereo | 25. 1990 |
| 13. bias | |

Possessives

1. **Form the possessives of a singular noun by adding 's.**

Examples: Mary's hat
Jim's annual leave
the department's budget
the boss's tie
Paris's hotels

2. **Form the possessive of plural nouns by adding only '.**

Examples: boards' duties
locations' addresses
attorneys' fees

NOTE: Some irregularly formed plurals add 's.

Examples: women's shoes
children's playroom

Class Activity

What: Possessives

How: Add whatever is needed to form the possessive of the underlined word(s).

1. She wore her mother-in-law diamond ring.
2. Three M.D. opinions were written on the chart.
3. The cat groomed it coat after eating.
4. The stockholders reaction was jubilant.
5. The Coxes usual babysitter was busy.
6. The reports information damaged their case.
7. Anyone else job would be better than this.
8. My New Year resolution was forgotten by February.
9. The ladies sweets sold rapidly at the bazaar.
10. My church walls have stained glass windows.

Conciseness

Be concise when writing. Repeat a word or phrase only when it is needed for emphasis, clarity, or coherence.

1. Avoid using different words that say the same thing.

Example: To complete the circuit, join the wires together with solder.
To complete the circuit, join the wires with solder.

2. Remove unnecessary and wordy expletive constructions like “there” and “it.”

Example: There are many mechanics who own their own tools.
Many mechanics own their own tools.

It is evident that the time needed to repair the hoses is still too long.
The time needed to repair the hoses is still too long.

3. Omit unnecessary words and phrases that report the idea contained in the word they modify.

Example: Each actor has a unique talent and ability that he or she uses in his or her own acting.
Each actor has a unique talent.

There is a list of old-fashioned business phrases with their updated counterparts in the Appendix.

Small Group Activity

What: Conciseness Practice

How: As a small group, rewrite the following sentences more concisely.

1. There are ten people that are coming to your party.
2. I held a meeting with my professor yesterday in reference to my exam grade.
3. Obesity in people who are overweight can be cured by diet and exercise as a remedy.
4. We decided not to go on account of the fact that Sarah was not feeling well.
5. We are in agreement that new circuit breakers should be installed.
6. We moved the boxes into the empty basement, which had nothing in it.
7. There are three people that are applying for the job.
8. At 9:30 a.m. in the morning is when I leave to distribute the mail.
9. The locking device that has suffered breakage is spherical in shape and blue in color.

Dangling Modifiers

Dangling modifiers are a type of sentence coherence error that can be fixed easily if we learn how to recognize them. The problem with dangling modifiers is that the sentence has a phrase that has no grammatical relationship with any other part of the sentence.

Example: Jill swims well.
(Jill is related to swims because they are subject and verb.
Well is related to swims because it tells how Jill swims.)

By swimming well, the race was won by Jill. (Dangling Modifier)
(By swimming well is sitting beside the race, but it is not the race that was swimming.)

Dangling modifiers often appear in business and government documents.

Many dangling modifiers begin with words ending in *-ing*, called participles. An example of a dangling participle follows:

Example: Upon installing the system, greater efficiency in telecommunications will be enjoyed by the Board of Review.

Here are two revisions:

When the system is installed, the Board of Review will enjoy greater efficiency in telecommunications.

OR

When the Board of Review installs the system, great efficiency in telecommunications will be enjoyed.

Class Activity

What: Dangling Modifiers

How: As a class, revise the following sentence.

Even though dead for ten years, I wondered what my grandfather's opinion of my activities would be.

Small Group Activity

What: Dangling Modifiers

How: Rewrite the following sentences.

1. Returning from lunch today, two boys on bicycles snatched her purse in front of the Attorney General's office.
2. The state horticulturist told us that after sowing the seed, the ground should be raked gently and watered.
3. When applying for a civil service position, several forms, a transcript, and three references may be required.
4. Upon winning the award, the master of ceremonies gave the beauty queen a bouquet of roses.
5. Hurrying to finish the work before the 4:30 deadline, several malfunctions of the printer caused the typist to feel anxious and annoyed.

Parallelism

All of learned what parallel lines are in school – lines that go along beside one another, like railroad tracks. In writing, we also want to have parallel structure to make our words run smoothly.

Parallel structure is especially noticeable in lists.

Example: Complete the following actions:
Switch on the computer
Boot up the Windows program
Click on our files to start working

Every handyman should have the following tools:
Wrench
Pliers
Screwdriver

Parallel structure is used more often in sentences.

Example: Frank loves to sing, draw, and paint.
NOT: Frank loves singing, drawing, and to paint.

We will pay for cleaning, painting, and decorating the space.
NOT: We will pay for cleaning, painting, and for you to decorate the space.

Class Activity

What: Parallelism

How: As a class, revise this sentence for parallelism.

A prospective merchant must think of the following matters: financing his operation, how to attract customers, locating a desirable location, and what merchandise to select for sale.

Individual Activity

What: Post-Test on Words, Spelling, and Style

How: Follow the directions to the individual exercises.

Rewrite the following sentences for conciseness:

1. At your earliest convenience return to me the form enclosed in this envelope with your signature.
2. There have been several serious fatalities at that intersection where U.S. 292 meets with Elgin Drive.

Choose the correctly spelled word of each pair:

1. separate separate
2. cafateria cafeteria
3. defendant defendent
4. commitment committment

Correct the following sentence to eliminate the dangling modifier:

While working with State Parks, several innovative programs were introduced by this diligent recreation manager.

State the plural for these nouns:

1. scissors
2. mouthful
3. pants

4. Katz
5. Minimum
6. 1950

Make the elements in the sentence parallel:

For the presentation of a concert, the director must go through several stages of preparation, including selecting the music, auditions for singers and instruments, rehearsals, printing the programs, and the advertisement of the even to the public.

APPENDIX

IRREGULAR VERB FORMS

<u>Present</u>	<u>Past</u>	<u>Perfect</u>
Arise	Arose	Arisen
Awake	Awoke or Awaked	Awoke or Awaked
Beat	Beat	Beat or Beaten
Bear	Bore	Borne
Begin	Began	Begun
Bend	Bent	Bent
Bid	Bid	Bid
Bind	Bound	Bound
Bite	Bit	Bitten or Bit
Bring	Brought	Brought
Burst	Burst	Burst
Choose	Chose	Chosen
Climb	Climbed	Climbed
Cling	Clung	Clung
Come	Came	Come
Deal	Dealt	Dealt
Dig	Dug	Dug
Dive	Dived or Dove	Dived
Do	Did	Done
Draw	Drew	Drawn
Drink	Drank	Drunk
Drown	Drowned	Drowned
Eat	Ate	Eaten
Flee	Fled	Fled
Freeze	Froze	Frozen
Hang (to suspend)	Hung	Hung
Hang (to execute)	Hanged	Hanged
Hide	Hid	Hidden
Lay	Laid	Lied
Lead	Led	Led
Lie	Lay	Lain
Plead	Pleaded or Pled	Pleaded or Pled
Prove	Proved	Proven or Proved
Ring	Rang or Rung	Rung
Run	Ran	Run
See	Saw	Seen
Shake	Shook	Shaken
Shine (to give light)	Shone	Shone
Shine (to polish)	Shined	Shined

<u>Present</u>	<u>Past</u>	<u>Perfect</u>
Shrink	Shrank or Shrunk	Shrunk
Spit	Spat or Spit	Spit or Spat
Spring	Sprang or Sprung	Sprung
Stink	Stank or Stunk	Stunk
Wake	Waked or Woke	Waked, Woken or Woke
Weave	Wove	Woven
Write	Wrote	Written
Wring	Wrung	Wrung

OLD-FASHIONED BUSINESS ENGLISH

OLD

According to our records

As per your request

At this point in time

Complying with your request

Duly noted

Enclosed please find

Favor of a reply

Hereby advise

In response to same

In the immediate future

Kindly advise

Pursuant to

Regret to advise

Subsequent to

Thanking you in advance

Under advisement

Undersigned, the writer

With respect to same

Your earliest convenience

NEW

We find

As you requested

Now

As you have asked

I have read, we have seen

Here is

Please answer

Let me say

In answer to, answering it

Soon

Please tell me (us)

According to, following

Regret to say, sorry to say

After

Thank you

Being considered

I (me)

About it

As soon as convenient

MISUSED WORDS

The following word pairs are often misinterpreted because of their similar sound, meaning, or spelling.

Word	Meaning
Accept Except	<i>Accept</i> means to receive. <i>Except</i> means to leave out.
Advice Advise	<i>Advice</i> is a noun. <i>Advise</i> is a verb.
Advise Tell	<i>Advise</i> means you give advice. Use <i>tell</i> when you are giving information.
Affect Effect	<i>Affect</i> is commonly used as a verb that means to influence or change. <i>Effect</i> is used as a verb meaning to bring about a change or a noun meaning the result of a change.
Allude Elude	<i>Allude</i> is to refer to indirectly. <i>Elude</i> means to avoid.
Anytime Any time	<i>Anytime</i> means whenever. <i>Any time</i> is followed by a preposition.
Appraise Apprise	<i>Appraise</i> means to set a value on. <i>Apprise</i> means to inform.
Anxious Eager	<i>Anxious</i> implies apprehension. <i>Eager</i> means awaiting or anticipating
As Like	<i>As</i> can be used as a conjunction or a preposition. <i>Like</i> is a preposition.
Awhile A while	<i>Awhile</i> is an adverb. <i>A while</i> is a noun.
Bad Badly	<i>Bad</i> is an adjective. Use <i>bad</i> after the verbs <u>feel</u> or <u>look</u> . <i>Badly</i> is an adverb.
Balance Remainder	<i>Balance</i> is usually used with money and it means difference. <i>Remainder</i> means surplus.
Between Among	<i>Between</i> is used when referring to two people or things. <i>Among</i> is used when referring to three or more.
Bimonthly Semimonthly	Prefix <i>bi-</i> means once every two and <i>semi-</i> means twice in that period.
Bring Take	<i>Bring</i> means to take with oneself to a place. <i>Take</i> means to remove with oneself away from a place.
Capital Capitol	<i>Capital</i> is the city where the government is located. <i>Capitol</i> is the government building.
Cite Site	<i>Cite</i> means to give credit to reference, accuse, or summon. <i>Site</i> is a place.

Word	Meaning
Complement Compliment	<i>Complement</i> means to go well with something. <i>Compliment</i> means to praise something or someone.
Continually Continuously	<i>Continually</i> means with interruption. <i>Continuously</i> means without interruption.
Council Counsel	<i>Council</i> is a governing body. <i>Counsel</i> means to advise.
Disinterested Uninterested	<i>Disinterested</i> means impartial. <i>Uninterested</i> means not interested.
Elicit Illicit	<i>Elicit</i> means to request. <i>Illicit</i> means illegal.
Ensure Insure	<i>Ensure</i> means to make sure. <i>Insure</i> means to buy insurance.
Ex Former	<i>Ex</i> is used with a title to designate the person who immediately preceded the current titleholder. <i>Former</i> should be used with anyone earlier.
Farther Further	<i>Farther</i> is physical distance. <i>Further</i> means beyond.
Foreword Forward	<i>Foreword</i> is found at the beginning of a book or document. <i>Forward</i> means ahead.
Formally Formerly	<i>Formally</i> means in a formal manner. <i>Formerly</i> means at a former time.
Good Well	<i>Good</i> is an adjective. <i>Well</i> is used in reference to health as an adverb.
Healthy Healthful	People are <i>healthy</i> and food is <i>healthful</i> .
Imply Infer	When someone says something they <i>imply</i> meaning and the listener <i>infers</i> the meaning.
Lay Lie	<i>Lay</i> means to put something down. <i>Lie</i> means to recline.
Lend Loan	<i>Lend</i> is a verb. <i>Loan</i> is a noun.
Liable Likely	<i>Liable</i> means responsible for. <i>Likely</i> means probable.
Principal Principle	<i>Principal</i> means first in authority. <i>Principle</i> is a monetary unit.
Raise Rise	<i>Raise</i> means to lift something. <i>Rise</i> means to ascend.
Stationary Stationery	<i>Stationary</i> means still or not moving. <i>Stationery</i> is paper.