

20 Common Sentence Errors Explained WExercises

Learn these errors & NOT to make them.
Your writing will *IMMEDIATELY* & *DRAMMATICALLY* improve.

Code	Explanation of the error with an example and a correction
A	<p>Adverb/Adjective - used incorrectly</p> <p><u>Adjective</u> = modifies a noun Ex: I ran a <u>good</u> race. Adj N</p> <p><u>Adverb</u> = modifies a verb(it usually ends in <i>ly</i>. Ex: I quickly ran yesterday. Adv V</p> <p><u>Adverb</u> = modifies an Adjective Ex: I ran a <u>really</u> good race yesterday. Adv Adj N</p> <p>Exercise Choose the correct item:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He (correct, correctly) defined the terms. The answer sounded (correctly, correct). 2. She (quickly, quick) adjusted the fees. She adapted (quick, quickly) to any situation. 3. He measured the floor (exact, exactly). They proved to be (perfectly, perfect) (exact, exactly) measurements. 4. The stillness of the tomb was (awfully, awful). The tomb was (awfully, awful) still. 5. It was a (dangerously, dangerous) lake to swim in. The man was (dangerous, dangerously) drunk. The gas smelled (dangerously, dangerous). 6. She performed (magnificent, magnificently). It was a (magnificent, magnificently) beautiful performance. 7. Her voice sounds (beautifully, beautiful). She sang the song (exact, exactly) as it was written. We heard it (perfectly, perfect). 8. He was a very (sensibly, sensible) person. He acted very (sensible, sensibly). 9. Mike wrote too (slow, slowly) on the exam. He always writes (slow, slowly). 10. Talk (softly, soft) or don't talk at all. The music played (softly, soft). 11. Andrea knows the material very (good, well). She always treats us (good, well). 12. You must send payments (regular, regularly). We deal on a (strictly, strict) cash basis. 13. The mechanic's tools were (well, good). The foreman said that his work was (good, well) done. 14. She worked (careful, carefully) with the sick child. She was a very (careful, carefully) worker. 15. He did not pass the course as (easy, easily) as he thought he would. 16. I find this novel very (interesting, interestingly). It was (interesting, interestingly) written
Cap	<p>Capital Letters - missing or incorrectly used</p> <p>Capitals are used for: The first word of a sentence, Proper Nouns (Tom, Middlesex County College, Virginia)</p>

21. The governor's mansion requires a large, housekeeping staff.
22. After Tom fell into the lake he realized he lost his wallet.
23. College students generally speaking earn more than high-school graduates earn.
24. After falling into the lake losing his shoes and injuring his hand, Sid decided to go homes.
25. Even though it was raining we went to the movies.
26. Each child's Christmas list included a toy a book and an item of clothing.
27. While Henry was deciding which rout to take George fell asleep.
28. Larry wanted to win the race so he practiced every day.
29. They are very happy, because Mike and Sally had a healthy baby.
30. Any student, who doesn't turn in a final research paper on time, will fail the class.

Modifiers

MPM

Misplaced Modifier – incorrectly placed

A group of modifying words misplaced in the sentence and seem to codify the wrong thing.

MPM: Smashed against the pole, I saw my shiny new car.

(I am not smashed against the pole as this misplaced modifier indicates; the car is)

Correction: *I saw my shiny new car smashed against the pole*

MPM: *John almost jumped 2 feet in the air.*

(John didn't almost jump; he jumped almost 2 feet in the air)

Correction: *John jumped almost 2 feet in the air.*

MPM: I saw a large bear looking through my binoculars.

(bears do not look through binoculars)

Corrections: Looking through my binoculars, I saw a large bear.

(now I am looking through the binoculars)

DM

Dangling Modifier – missing something to modify

A group of words that is intended to modify something but doesn't.

DM: Running around all day, Jake's feet were tired.

(No one is running around)

Correction: Running around all day, Jake soaked his tired feet.

(Jake is now running around)

Exercises

MPM = misplaced modifier

DM = dangling modifier

OK = correct

- ___ 1. Folded into a tiny square, I could not read the message.
- ___ 2. Wading into the lake, tadpoles swirled around my ankles.
- ___ 3. Howard almost worked twenty hours overtime to pay some overdue bills.
- ___ 4. Hanging on the wall I saw a photograph of my mother.
- ___ 5. Settling comfortably into the chair, the TV captured my attention for the next hour.
- ___ 6. Driving home after a tiring day at work, the white line in the middle of the road became bleary.
- ___ 7. Threadbare and dirty, Martha knew it was time to replace the rug.
- ___ 8. After spending most of the night outdoors in a tent, the sun rose and we went into the house.
- ___ 9. I was attacked by a stray dog working in the yard.
- ___ 10. Having eaten several spicy tacos, my stomach began to do an Indian war dance.
- ___ 11. Being tired, my chores were not finished.
- ___ 12. She answered the ad in Sunday's paper for a clerk.
- ___ 13. While waiting for the bus, it began to rain.

	<p>___ 14. While practicing yoga exercises, a mail carrier came to the front door.</p> <p>___ 15. Containing dangerous chemicals, people are not swimming in the lake.</p> <p>___ 16. Falling heavily, Dan's arm was broken.</p> <p>___ 17. Just before finishing the book, the power failed.</p> <p>___ 18. They finally found a laundromat driving around in their car.</p> <p>___ 19. I read that Chuck Yeager was a pilot who broke the sound barrier in the library.</p> <p>___ 20. Evelyn was thinking about her chemistry book taking the elevator.</p> <p>___ 21. Lola selected a doughnut from the bakery filled with banana cream.</p> <p>___ 22. Hot and sizzling, we bit into the apple tart</p> <p>___ 23. Tickets have gone on sale for next week's game in the college bookstore.</p> <p>___ 24. I returned the orange socks to the department store that my uncle gave me.</p> <p>___ 25. He remembered he had to wash the windows with dismay.</p> <p>___ 26. I nearly earned two hundred dollars last week.</p> <p>___ 27. Mushrooms should be stored in the refrigerator enclosed in a paper bag.</p> <p>___ 28. Larry spotted the missing dog on his way to the lake.</p> <p>___ 29. Marie brought a new casserole to the new neighbors right out of the oven.</p> <p>___ 30. A cheerful man hopped onto the bus with one leg.</p> <p>___ 31. Debating about grading policies, the issue was finally resolved.</p> <p>___ 32. As a lover of French food, that restaurant is my favorite.</p> <p>___ 33. Lester's pocket was picked, while standing in a crowd.</p> <p>___ 34. The view was breathtaking, climbing to the top of the mountain.</p> <p>___ 35. By reading the poem carefully, the meaning becomes clear.</p> <p>___ 36. That is still my favorite movie, even after seeing it for the tenth time.</p> <p>___ 37. Stanley never finished his work loafing in the hammock.</p> <p>___ 38. Hitching a ride, a Mack truck picked me up.</p> <p>___ 39. She bought a dress from a little shop made of denim.</p> <p>___ 40. The cupcakes were given to the children that had vanilla icing on them.</p> <p>___ 41. I said when the class was over I would tell her about it.</p>
FG	<p>Sentence Fragment – incomplete sentence</p> <p>Missing either a Subject or Predicate booth necessary parts for a complete sentence.</p> <p>FG: <i>The guitar player on stage swinging his guitar.</i> subject only</p> <p>Correction: <i>The guitar player on stage swinging his guitar was good.</i> subject predicate</p>
MW	<p>Missing Word</p> <p>A word or group of words is missing which unclear or incomplete meaning..</p> <p>MW: The girl looked out the window.</p> <p>Corrections: The girl looked out <u>of</u> the window. (<u>of</u> is added to make the prepositional phrase to complete the thought).</p>
NSW	<p>No Such Word</p> <p>The word you are using is not a word in the English language. Use a real word. </p> <p>NSW: I have <u>a lot</u> of work to do, so I am <u>kinda</u> busy today.</p> <p>Correction: I have <u>a lot</u> of work to do, so I am <u>kind of</u> busy today.</p> <p>NSW: I'm <u>gonna</u> go to college after I finish <u>highschool</u>.</p> <p>Correction: I'm <u>going to</u> go to college after I finish <u>high school</u></p>
Pct	<p>Punctuation – missing or incorrectly used punctuation</p> <p>Use punctuation correctly.</p> <p>Statement . = A well punctuated sentence is understandable.</p> <p>Question Mark ? = How am I supposed to remember all these rules of grammar?</p> <p>Exclamation Point ! = Look out for that car!</p> <p>Command . = Get me a good seats for the movie.</p>

Quotation Marks " " = Bob said, "I really enjoyed that play."

Exercise

Put in semicolons, colons, dashes, quotation marks, Italics (use an underline), and parentheses where ever they are needed in the following sentences.

1. The men in question Harold Keene, Jim Peterson, and Gerald Greene deserve awards.
2. Several countries participated in the airlift Italy, Belgium, France, and Luxembourg.
3. There's no room for error, said the engineer so we have to double check every calculation.
4. Judge Carswell later to be nominated for the Supreme Court had ruled against civil rights.
5. In last week's New Yorker, one of my favorite magazines, I enjoyed reading Leland's article How Not to Go Camping.
6. Yes, Jim said, I'll be home by ten.
7. There was only one thing to do study till dawn.
8. Montaigne wrote the following A wise man never loses anything, if he has himself.
9. The following are the primary colors red, blue, and yellow.
10. Arriving on the 8 10 plane were Liz Brooks, my old roommate her husband and Tim, their son.
11. When the teacher commented that her spelling was poor, Lynn replied All the members of my family are poor spellers. Why not me?
12. He used the phrase you know so often that I finally said No, I don't know.
13. The automobile dealer handled three makes of cars Volkswagens, Porsches, and Mercedes Benz.
14. Though Phil said he would arrive on the 9 19 flight, he came instead on the 10 36 flight.
15. Whoever thought said Helen that Jack would be elected class president?
16. In baseball, a show boat is a man who shows off.
17. The minister quoted Isaiah 5 21 in last Sunday's sermon.
18. There was a very interesting article entitled The New Rage for Folk Singing in last Sunday's New York Times newspaper.
19. Whoever is elected secretary of the club Ashley, or Chandra, or Aisha must be prepared to do a great deal of work, said Jumita, the previous secretary.
20. Darwin's On the Origin of Species 1859 caused a great controversy when it appeared.

Practice Punctuation

Directions:

Read the following statements, then enter appropriate punctuation (colon, commas, periods, question marks, exclamation points etc.)

- There are at least two ways to punctuate this passage to get two distinctly different meanings. See if you can do it both ways.

Dear John I want a man who knows what love is all about you are generous kind thoughtful
people who are not like you admit to being useless and inferior you have ruined me for other
men I yearn for you I have no feelings whatsoever when we're apart I can be forever happy will
you let me be yours Gloria

One way

	<p>Another way</p>
PL	<p>Plural - A plural should be used; it is not.</p> <p>Plurals indicate more than one. When referring to more than one, typically an “S” should be put at the end of the word.</p> <p>Incorrect: There are many <u>girl</u> on the team (girl is singular but “many” indicates more than one – a plural should be used).</p> <p>Correction: There are many <u>girls</u> on the team. (plural indicating more than one)</p> <p>Incorrect: The dinner charged me 40 <u>dollar</u> for a small breakfast. (40 indicates many, dollar indicates one)</p> <p>Correct: The dinner charged me 40 <u>dollars</u> for a small breakfast. (40 indicates many, dollars indicates many)</p>
Pos	<p>Possessive - missing or used incorrectly</p> <p>Possessives shows ownership = ‘s</p> <p><i>Singular possessive</i> = John's Ex: I borrowed <u>John's</u> pencil for the test. (apostrophe S after the word showing possession)</p> <p><i>Plural possessive</i> = the girls' Ex: The <u>girls'</u> team won the game. (apostrophe S after the S for the word showing possession)</p> <p>Incorrect: I had lunch at my <u>brother</u> house yesterday. (the house is a possession of your brother – brother should be a possessive)</p> <p>Correct: I had lunch at my <u>brother's</u> house yesterday. (the house is now a possession of your brother)</p> <p>Incorrect: My Aunt Tisha son won a gold medal at the Olympics. (the son is a possession of Aunt Tisha – Tisha should be a possessive)</p> <p>Correct: My Aunt Tisha's son won a gold medal at the Olympics. (the son is a now possession of Aunt Tisha)</p>
Pro	<p>Pronoun Usage</p> <p>confuse\incorrectly used pronouns</p> <p>Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns. They must agree with the antecedent, (the noun they are taking the place of in : gender, case, number.</p> <p><u>Gender:</u> Ex: <u>Jason</u> liked <u>Mary</u> so much that <u>he</u> asked <u>her</u> for a date.</p> <p><u>Number</u> Ex: I must go to the <u>mall</u> early this Saturday because <u>it</u> is having a sale on camping equipment.</p> <p><u>Case</u> <i>Subjective case</i> - used as subjects. (I, you, we, she, it, they, who) Ex: Conrad and <u>she</u> went to the movies.</p> <p><i>Objective Case</i> - not subjects (me, you, us, it, him, her, them, whom) Ex: Sam gave his baseball tickets to <u>us</u> because he couldn't attend the game.</p>

Exercises

Circle the correct pronoun

1. After reading the account of the new project, I still don't find (it, them) sufficiently detailed.
2. I was not surprised to hear of (his, him) being elected.
3. Bobby, Earl, and (me, I) are best friends.
4. An individual should always meet (their, her) responsibilities.
5. (Him, His) playing disturbed everyone in the house.
6. Someone from my English class called last night and left (their, his) telephone number.
7. This vacation is necessary for you and (me, I).
8. The plane crash scared (she, her) and the two children.
9. I baby-sit so often, that when someone visits me (they get, he gets) the impression that I am running nursery.
10. Neither one of the players wants to admit that (they, he) made a mistake.
11. (It is, They are) the types of movies that everyone loves.
12. If anyone objected to the rules, (he, they) should say so.
13. Each teacher is responsible for (their, her) own class.
14. Although we had a great vacation, (you, we) are always glad to get home.
15. If a person plans to make a complaint (he, you) should check all of the facts first.
16. I buy clothes at the outlet store because (they have, it has) great sales.
17. If a person drives defensively (he, they) will constantly be aware of other's actions on the road.
18. Once we were deep into the woods (you, we) could hear a pin drop.
19. Neither Thelma nor Sue wore (their, her) own clothes to the party.
20. In our office, we can have a coffee break anytime (we, you) want.
21. After I have a good work-out in the gym, my muscles feel tight and (you, I) feel great.
22. Uncle Timmy offered my brother and (me, I) a ride home.
23. The team has gotten (themselves, itself) a great yearly record.
24. Grandmother knitted beautiful red sweaters for Lilly and (she, her).
25. (We, Us) basketball players have a hard time finding guys tall enough to play with.
26. Beth and (he, him) switched classes yesterday without permission.
27. Each of my friends gave me (her, their) phone number.
28. One of the books had lost (its, their) cover.
29. My mother only buys cars small enough for (you, her) to park in tiny downtown parking spaces.
30. At football games everyone gets excited because each hopes that (his, their) team is going to win.
31. Neither Barbara or Pam finished (her, their) paper on time.
32. Did your truck or your trailer fail (their, its) inspection ?
33. Either the wind or the rain had (their, its) effect on the new grass.

RO

Run On = 2 MC in the same sentence not punctuated or coordinated correctly

CSP

Comma Spliced Sentence = 2 MC in the same sentence separated by a comma

The Golden Rules of Clauses:

MC, cc MC

MC DC MC = Main Clause

DC, MC DC = Dependent Clause

MC; MC cc= coordinating conjunction (and, so, but, yet)

MC: sc, MC sc = subordinating conjunction (however, henceforth, etc...)

MC. MC

Ex: John loves Stephanie he thinks she is a wonderful woman. = **(RO) not correct**

MC

MC

Ex: John loves Stephanie, he thinks she is a wonderful woman = **(CSP) not correct**

MC

MC

	<p>Corrections (as per the Golden Rules of Clauses) below are all good corrections.</p> <p>MC,cc MC. = <u>John loves Stephanie</u>, <u>but she doesn't love him</u>. MC , cc MC</p> <p>MC . MC. = <u>Jon loves Stephanie</u>. <u>She doesn't love him</u>. MC . MC</p> <p>DC , MC. = <u>Because John loves Stephanie</u>, <u>she is flattered</u>. DC , MC</p> <p>MC DC = <u>John loves Stephanie because she is a wonderful woman</u>. MC DC.</p> <p>MC ; MC = <u>John loves Stephanie</u>; <u>he is going to ask for her hand in marriage</u>. MC ; MC.</p> <p>MC; sc.MC. = <u>John loves Stephanie</u>; <u>however</u>, <u>she doesn't love him</u>. MC; sc, MC.</p> <p>Exercise:</p> <p>F = Fragment CSP = Comma Spliced RO = Run-On OK = Correct</p> <p>___ 1. I asked for her phone number but I never got it.</p> <p>___ 2. This year's party was not a success, it didn't attract a large crowd?</p> <p>___ 3. Harold always finishes his work first then he relaxes.</p> <p>___ 4. I was falling asleep in a hurry I couldn't keep my eyes open.</p> <p>___ 5. Junk food is older than you think, popcorn has been found long ago.</p> <p>___ 6. Tim tossed the books into the back seat he had minutes to get to class.</p> <p>___ 7. Since cooking in bulk saves money. I do.</p> <p>___ 8. On long trips, my little brother drives me crazy he insists on stopping every few miles to rest.</p> <p>___ 9. I am not very thirsty, Tim is.</p> <p>___ 10. The concert on Friday was great, I really enjoyed it.</p> <p>___ 11. Vandals had stripped the abandoned car and set it on fire.</p> <p>___ 12. Sandy ran all the way to school and was still not in time to beat the loud clang of the late bell..</p> <p>___ 13. Helen is on a diet and refuses to eat anything that has more than 300 calories worth of fats. Although she really likes to.</p> <p>___ 14. After you finish painting the garage and washing the floor, I want you to clean out the cellar and polish my Corvette, or I will not pay you for yesterday's job.</p> <p>___ 15. What time are you going to let me know?</p> <p>___ 16. Is your cousin arriving tomorrow night or is she getting here in the morning?</p> <p>___ 17. Money is the root of all evil and causes many people to go astray, even though they try not to.</p> <p>___ 18. Stan lied, I didn't.</p> <p>___ 19. Even though Stacy really would like to go to the party on Saturday night with all of the people she just met at the pool today. She can't because her mother won't let her.</p> <p>___ 20. Give her an inch and she will take a mile.</p> <p>___ 21. Leave my sister alone or I will give you a black eye.</p> <p>___ 22. Jump on the train before it leaves, I'll pay the conductor later.</p> <p>___ 23. As soon as I save enough money to get a new car, I will.</p> <p>___ 24. I hate noodles. They always stick together.</p> <p>___ 25. If ever I should a dog who is playful, obedient, full of spunk. and healthy. I will adopt him for a pet.</p>
SL	<p>Sexist Language</p> <p>Using inappropriate gender language to represent everyone.</p> <p>SL: If a person eats a lot, <u>he</u> will gain weight. (this pronoun does not represent everyone.)</p> <p>Corrections: If people eat a lot, they will gain weight. (represents everyone)</p>
Syn	<p>Syntax - The words are not in correct\understandable order – The meaning is confused.</p> <p>SYN: Learning the game was in the best interest of Marco who loved baseball.</p> <p>Correction: Learning baseball was in Marco's best interest.</p>
VB	<p>Verbs</p> <p>Verb Error - Verbs are shifting tenses or do not agree.</p>

Verb Tense

	Past	Present	Future
<i>Simple</i>	worked	work	will work
<i>Perfect</i>	had worked (before something else)	have been working (may/may not continue)	will have been working (will occur before some other event)
<i>Progressive</i>	was working (continuing)	am working (continuing)	will be working (continuing)

Do not shift Verb Tenses

Verbs for the most part must remain in the same tense. Verbs should not shift between past, present, future etc.

VB (incorrect) : The boys want ice cream, and the girls wanted popcorn.
present tense past

Correction: The boys want ice cream, and the girls want popcorn.
present tense present tense

VB (incorrect) : She watered the plants and gives them food.
past tense present tense

Correction: She waters the plants and gives them food yesterday.
present tense present tense

OR

Another Correction: She watered the plants and gave them food.
past tense past tense

Verb Agreement

Subject & Verb Must Agree

Plural subjects (s) go with plural verbs (no s).

Singular subjects (no s) go with singular verbs (s).

Incorrect

My sister Tabatha want to go to church.
singular noun
plural verb

Correct

My sister Tabatha wants to go to church.
singular noun
singular verb

Incorrect

The players on the winning team wants pizza.
plural subject singular verb

Correct

The players on the winning team want pizza.
plural subject plural verb

Exercise:

VS = verb shift (make corrections) **OK** = correct

1. Dana swabbed the inside of her cheek with a Q-Tip, smears the cell on a glass slide, and then looked at them through the microscope.

2. Debbie, a moody adolescent. threw the blouse down, shouted at her mother, and then starts to cry.
3. On the highway, one rescuer rolled the unconscious man onto his back, pinched his nostrils shut, and then breath into his mouth.
4. In the neighborhood, the kids play stickball; they sawed off the handles for bats and borrow garbage can lids for bases.
5. Unknowingly, Mary picked a box of detergent with a hole on it. She left a thin trail of white powder as she rolls her cart around the store.
6. To get a clear picture, Vernon jiggles the television tuning knob, adjusts the horizontal control, and pointed the antenna out the window.
7. While Dan searches for the pizza cutter in the kitchen drawer, Tony picks the pepperoni slices off the pizza and quickly swallowed them.
8. Tom lunged for the child and pushes him to safety as the speeding car whizzed by.
9. Because the kitchen lacks an exhaust fan, cooking fumes fill the house and thin layers of grease coated the ceiling.
10. As she unpacks the wall planking, Becky discovers large knotholes on some of the boards and noticed one piece with a long vertical crack.
11. When my doctor told me I needed an operation, I swallow hard and my stomach churned.
12. Fred is so timid that when a clerk overcharged him he pays the money and makes no comments.
13. When Norman peeled back the old shingles, he discovers the roof was rotted through.
14. The first thing Jerry does every day is weigh himself. The scale informed him what he can eat that day.
15. I grabbed the bag or pretzels off the super market shelf, but when I pick it up I discovered it was outdated.

Verb Agreement

Subject - Verb agreement

Choose the correct verb

15. Under a pile of old rags in the corner of the basement (is, are) a mother mouse and her family.
16. Hard work together with intelligence, initiative, and some good luck (explain, explains) the success of many wealthy business people.
17. Far beyond the powers of speech (is, are) a lover's touch.
18. The myth, legend, prayers, and ritual of primitive religions (contain, contains) many common themes.
19. Each person (enjoy, enjoys) the rights established in the Constitution of the United states.
20. Unfortunately, neither of the interviewers from the local TV station (has, have) read any of her works.
21. (Does, Do) one of the students still have my notebook?
22. One of the students who (is, are) trying out for the play (want, wants) to become a professional actor.
23. All of the cake (were, was) eaten last night.
24. Why (isn't, aren't) there any more crackers left on the table?
25. Some of the boys (has, have) decided to go dancing.
26. The beautiful young horses that are in the race today (gallop, gallops) along the track.
27. The committee (is, are) writing individual letters to the judge.
28. Neither of the girls (want, wants) to work tonight.
29. That row of houses (is, are) in a flood zone.
30. Each teenager who goes to school (want, wants) a car.
31. The flock of geese who are being approached by the big dog (seem, seems) nervous.
32. This year the team with its new group of rookies (has, have) practices more than ever.
33. Fifteen gallons (is, are) all my tank will hold.
34. Most people who work for the better part of a year (like, likes) a vacation.
35. For young adult males, mumps (is, are) a dreaded disease.
36. The need for long hours of rest (become, becomes) essential.
37. The working conditions, my coworkers, and the atmosphere (brighten, brightens) my view of the job.
38. Measles (is, are) no longer considered the scourge of humanity that it once was.
39. Financial setbacks and responsibilities of caring for a home (is, are) tremendous compared to renting.
40. Pool services and gardening (is, are) provided for tenants.
41. There (is, are) some disadvantages, such as working outdoors.
42. Federal law (has, have) required smog and gasoline limitations that (has, have) had an effect on car performance.
43. There (is, are) certain students behaviors that (disrupt, disrupts) the class.
44. Both kinds of entertainment (depend, depends) on individual preferences.
45. The right amount of rest, play, and good eating habits (is, are) extremely important.
46. The school as well as the participants (prosper, prospers) from the athletic program.
47. One of the changes she has seen (is, are) household appliances.
48. The one thousand strong member union (vote, votes) tomorrow.
49. My cousin Teasha (has, have) really smooth skin.
50. One hundred pounds of potato salad (is, are) a lot to make each week.

51. Jack and Marsh (want, wants) to get married.
52. Neither the workers or the foreman (want, wants) to go on strike.
53. My friend and her husband (has, have) slipped into alcoholism.
54. Last year the herd of cattle (was, were) severely depleted by disease.
55. Apple pie and peanut butter just (doesn't, don't) seem to go together.
56. Luke and Melissa (believe, believes) that one day they will be able to buy a new car.
57. The problem of teenage pregnancies (is, are) becoming more and more prevalent.

W

Wordiness - using too many unnecessary words, useless verbiage.

Don't be unnecessarily wordy. When the meaning is obvious, don't say it.
If you can remove words with no loss of meaning DO IT!

Wordiness: I was driving my car on the road. Suddenly my passenger next to me got sick.
where else? a passenger is next to you

Correction: I was driving my car. Suddenly my passenger got sick.

Wordiness: The sun brightly shone in the sky, and I got tan all over my body.
it is always in the sky where else?

Correction: The sun brightly shone, and I got tan.

Wordiness : In conclusion, I will summarize how dogs make good pets.
Don't advertise just say it.

Correction: Dogs make good pets.

Wordiness: Every piece of information that is learned helps .
Better: Every piece of information helps.

Wordiness: In order to be a productive human being in this lifetime, be open to all new ideas..
Better: To be productive be open to ideas.

Wordiness: We as students believe and are interested in furthering our education to get ahead in life.
Better: We students are interested in getting ahead.

Some examples Wordiness - Unnecessary Verbiage

In my opinion	In the present day and age	The world that we live in today
In my honest opinion	In order to make it in the real world	I guess what I'm saying
In my life	In the real world	What I am trying to say
At this time	We as people	As I said earlier
In this society	We as students	Food to eat on the table
In this crazy world	In this changing world	Honestly
In this crazy world we live	Its purpose and aim	Due to the fact
In the real world	Personally, I think	I think

Exercise: Eliminate unnecessary words, or rewrite to make less wordy.

1. The reason I am happy is because today is my birthday.
2. In my opinion, I feel television is playing an important role in our modern society.
3. Through the years bikes have been improved and made better.
4. Many violent films are rated R because of their violence.
5. Rembrandt, he was the greatest art painter of all time.
6. Do not hold or depress the tongue down.
7. If that lamp has no use, no purposes, and no reason for being, then please remove it from the room.
8. When I practiced my speech, some of the contents of my speech were twisted, which caused distortion in the development of my speech.

9. Champ can catch a ball in his mouth and return it back to you.
10. Where is the registrar's office at?
11. I always obey my feeling and emotions.
12. The significance of the title "The Abyss," is very important.
13. Put the jack in a position where it will lift the car in a way so that you can change the tire.
14. To me, I believe that the jet plane has changed the entire course of existence in this modern world in which we now live.
15. I was wondering what it was possible for me to do about the problem I was having deciding whether to go back to school or to look for some kind of job.
16. The snow began to reach a higher level on the ground on which it lay.
17. When I was in high school, I never studied enough to accumulate the knowledge of the many and varied important things I needed to know.
18. Quite a few people have the limited amount of time to engage in shopping. Most of those individuals find that a large part of this time is spent searching for desired yet hard-to-locate bargains in the many stores that line the streets of our major cities.
19. Mismanagement of money causes it to be used up sooner than is desirable resulting in a loss of ability to buy more items until more money is accumulated.
20. College prepares you for the field you may be entering, or if you aren't planning to work, it still helps you to talk about things in a conversation that are interesting to you and other people

Eliminate all unnecessary repetition in the following passages by writing the essential ideas in one or two sentences.

1. Many people find commercials on TV very vexing because they interrupt the programs. Some programs have commercial breaks eight to ten times every half hour. A viewer watching pay TV is not distracted by continual advertising urging him to buy a special cleaner or to hear about the heartbreak of hemorrhoids. Quite a few people have a limited time to watch TV, they could watch more programs without the wasted time of commercials.

2. If I could change my life, the first thing that I would change is that I would continue my education. Next I would choose a career that is fulfilling and rewarding. My present job is routine and boring. Finally, I would travel across the United States to experience and expose myself to various cities and cultures

Trite Expressions to avoid

Trite = stale, corny, overused, dull, ordinary

If you want to be an interesting writer, avoid using these & similar terms

Some examples Trite, Boring, Overused, Tedious, Repetitious Phrases

add insult to injury
better late than never
cool, calm, and collected
crushing blow
cut as a button
easier said than done
face the music
few and far between
green with envy
hard as a rock

hard header
heavy as lead
hit the nail on the head
hour of need
moving experience
a needle in a haystack
point of pride
ripe old age
rude awakening
sadder but wiser

shoulder the burden
shoulder to cry on
sneaky suspicion
stand in awe
stand in my way
strong as an ox
thin as a rail
tried but true
wise old owl

WC	Word Choice																					
	Incorrect word was used; pick words more carefully																					
	Incorrect: I would <u>of</u> entered the race if only I could <u>a</u> got off from work. Correct: I would <u>have</u> entered the race if only I could <u>have</u> got off from work.																					
	Incorrect: <u>There</u> parents <u>past</u> the exit on the highway. Correct: <u>Their</u> parents <u>passed</u> the exit on the highway.																					
	Incorrect: I have to <u>right</u> a term paper for my Science class. Correct: I have to <u>write</u> a term paper for my Science class.																					
	Words Commonly misused																					
	<u>Some examples</u> of words often used incorrectly																					
	<table><tr><th>Word</th><th>correct usage</th><th>example</th></tr><tr><td>there</td><td>direction, location</td><td><i>There</i> are sixty minutes in an hour. I put my coat there in the corner, but now I can't find it.</td></tr><tr><td>their</td><td>plural possessive pronoun, takes the place of plural noun</td><td>My mother and father renewed <i>their</i> wedding vows last year. <i>Their</i> teacher gets very annoyed when they use improper grammar.</td></tr><tr><td>they're</td><td>contractions for they are</td><td><i>They're</i> going to big game this Saturday. When <i>they're</i> playing well, the team is unstoppable.</td></tr><tr><td>your</td><td>possessive pronoun</td><td>Yesterday, we met <i>your</i> cousin at the mall</td></tr><tr><td>you're</td><td>contraction for you are</td><td>When <i>you're</i> smiling, the whole world smiles with you.</td></tr><tr><td>used</td><td>verb (not to be used with other verbs)</td><td><u>incorrect</u> When we were young, my brother and I <i>used to skip</i> class <u>correct</u> When we were young, my brother and I <i>skipped</i> classes. <u>correct</u> I <i>used</i> all of the ink, so now I must buy a new cartridge</td></tr></table>	Word	correct usage	example	there	direction, location	<i>There</i> are sixty minutes in an hour. I put my coat there in the corner, but now I can't find it.	their	plural possessive pronoun, takes the place of plural noun	My mother and father renewed <i>their</i> wedding vows last year. <i>Their</i> teacher gets very annoyed when they use improper grammar.	they're	contractions for they are	<i>They're</i> going to big game this Saturday. When <i>they're</i> playing well, the team is unstoppable.	your	possessive pronoun	Yesterday, we met <i>your</i> cousin at the mall	you're	contraction for you are	When <i>you're</i> smiling, the whole world smiles with you.	used	verb (not to be used with other verbs)	<u>incorrect</u> When we were young, my brother and I <i>used to skip</i> class <u>correct</u> When we were young, my brother and I <i>skipped</i> classes. <u>correct</u> I <i>used</i> all of the ink, so now I must buy a new cartridge
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You																						
You = 2nd person – not acceptable.																						
<p>You is a pronoun that refers to the reader. It should be used only when specifically addressing the reader To avoid 2nd person focus on the subject of your sentence, not the reader</p> <p><i>Incorrect:</i> Even if <u>you</u> enter the theater after the movie begins, <u>you</u> can watch it. (only the reader) (only the reader)</p> <p><i>Better:</i> <u>Those entering</u> the theater after the movie begins can also watch the movie. (everyone entering)</p>																						

Exercise**Rewrite each sentence avoiding 2nd person.**

1. On your first date you will be nervous and probably have butterflies in your stomach.

rewrite_____

2. Here are some helpful tips to ensure that your date goes smoothly.

rewrite_____

3. While on a date you want to have the person interested in you throughout the night.

rewrite_____

4. Therefore, by follow a few tips; you can make your date go well and possibly get another.

rewrite_____

5. The day of your date you need to plan your time wisely.

rewrite_____

6. When your date arrives, don't keep him waiting.

rewrite_____

7. You must be ready on time.

rewrite_____

8. You also want your date to be attracted to you, so you must look your best.

rewrite_____

9. While your appearance matters greatly, you must also smell good. Fruit sprays make you smell good.

rewrite_____

10. The key to survival when working at Daisy Summer Camp is never loose your cool.

rewrite_____

	<p>11. Always remain calm and never blow your top.</p> <p>rewrite_____</p>
	<p>12. If they see you starting to get agitated, the campers will do whatever is bothering you more.</p> <p>rewrite_____</p>
	<p>13. They love getting a rise out of you.</p> <p>rewrite_____</p>
	<p>14. Another thing, you should never do is hit an officer. If you raise a hand to an officer you will be arrested.</p> <p>rewrite_____</p>