

Part VII: Practice Exercises

Find the problems as indicated in the following sets of exercises. When you see an error, simply cross out the error and replace it with a correction. You do not need to rewrite any of the samples. In some cases, you may need to add some words.

1. Fragments

Add a main clause to fix these three fragments:

- * Anyone who wants to sign up for the trip.
- * Going to college on a limited budget.
- * For example, fried eggs, bacon and hash browns.
- * To save money.
- * Stunned by the results of the test.
- * Over the river and through the woods.
- * If he wants to run for re-election.
- * Fragments being one of the major errors in writing.

Fix the fragments in this paragraph:

The environment is a critical issue these days. Unfortunately, not enough people are aware of the magnitude of the problem. Or don't care. The naysayers blame the scientists. For using government money to fund their useless projects. Pessimists also need more proof. Facts that will show there is indeed a problem. The facts are there, but the proof is hard to detect. Once people get accustomed to pollution in the air. They don't actually see it. When flying into Los Angeles on a particularly bad air day. The pollution is obvious. Sometimes seeing is believing, but in this case, that isn't always an option.

2. Run-Ons

Fix the run-ons in the following sentences and in the paragraph. Use a variety of methods to correct them.

- * Oscar-winning movies aren't always the most popular ones often a really well-crafted movie will last only a week in some theatres.
- * Students must have computer skills if they are to succeed in college without the ability to use a word-processor, students will not be able to do even the most simple of tasks like writing an essay on a word-processor.
- * Salaries and retirement benefits for CEO's of large companies are often exorbitant for instance, an average salary for a manager may be as high as \$1,000,000 per year, while the average worker makes about \$40,000 per year.
- * Computers and printers invariably fail us when we are stressed for time that is why it is important to start our papers and written assignments well before their due dates.
- * Going on a diet is not easy changing our eating habits is.

Fix the run-ons in the following paragraph:

Throughout the years, trends in clothing have gone from daring and provocative, and comfortable and casual, to downright ridiculous for instance, in the decades of the 30's and 40's, women raised the length of their skirts to just above the knee and danced the Charleston the men, meanwhile wore heavy full-length fur coats in order to look cool. In the 50's, girls sported saddle shoes, full skirts with poodles glued on them and cashmere sweaters the young men wore tight jeans, black jackets and white t-shirts they carried their cigarettes rolled in their sleeves. By the 60's and 70's, young adults eschewed the spiked heels and stifling ties of their parents' generation and relaxed into sandals, layered clothes, beads and flowers now in the new millennium, it seems that anything goes.

3. Comma-Splices

Fix the comma-splices in the following sentences. Try to use several methods of correcting these errors.

- * Unlike the decades of the past, women are now able to decide for themselves what kind of lifestyle they want, they can become doctors, lawyers, mommies and den mothers, and they can make their own decisions as they see fit, not ones based on the dictates of society. Men, for the most part, no longer control women's minds, bodies and souls.
- * The park is closed due to rain and mud-slides, it will reopen in a week.
- * The restaurant is closed, it will reopen next week.
- * My desk is a mess, and I need to get rid of years of accumulated clutter, the problem is I don't have time to clean it, unfortunately, the longer I wait to clean up my desk, the messier it gets.

College students must adopt sensible life skills if they are to succeed, they need to manage their schedules, avoid excessive social entanglements, get enough sleep, and maintain a healthy diet. The first skill, scheduling, is perhaps the most important one, if students work, they must be realistic and not take on too many classes, they need to allot a certain amount of time for each subject they take, so the next rule, avoiding too many social commitments also becomes important. Night life and school nights need to be balanced sensibly, finally, sleep and healthy food habits will help students perform at their best. Managing to get eight hours of sleep and food that is high in protein and low on fats will help stall illness, depression and other barriers to success in college.

4. Plurals and Possessives

Fix the problems with the plurals and possessives in the following sentences.

- * Give the girls mother a permission slip to sign.
- * All of the students' were in class, on time, and prepared for the teachers questions.
- * If kid's today spent as much time on their school work as they do their hair and clothes, they would be much better prepared for their exit exam's.
- * Fix that boys bike as soon as possible.

5. Pronoun Antecedent Agreement

Fix the noun/pronoun disagreement in the following sentences:

- * A girl who reads fairy tales such as Cinderella and Snow White might get the impression that they must marry a prince when they grow up.
- * A person who breaks the law must face a punishment. However, they often try to avoid it.
- * Any police officer who is on duty should watch their consumption of donuts and coffee.
- * Tim O'Brien's essay, "The Things They Carried," is a descriptive view of the war in Vietnam.

O'Brien's style is easy going and fluid. They use short fragmented sentences such as "Like cement." They also use dialogue without quotation marks.

6. Point-of-View

Fix the informal YOU (second person) point of view in the following paragraph.

When students study Edgar Alan Poe's masterpiece, "The Cask of Amontillado," you don't realize how horrible the crime is because of the way the story is written. You have to stop to understand phrases such as "retribution overtakes its redresser" and ". . . from their sconces two flambeaux." Foreign words such as "roquelaire" and "foot d'or" also obscure your ability to comprehend the horror of what Montessor, the protagonist, is doing to his victim.

A message to my readers:

Good luck to you as you continue to work on your writing, reading, research, study and thinking skills. In this online workshop, I have focused on areas of concern to writing instructors, areas it seems that writers need to work on. Please feel free to email me with questions and concerns at mlittle@pacific.edu.

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Revised on June 29, 2009