

Beyond School: Writing about Careers and Professions

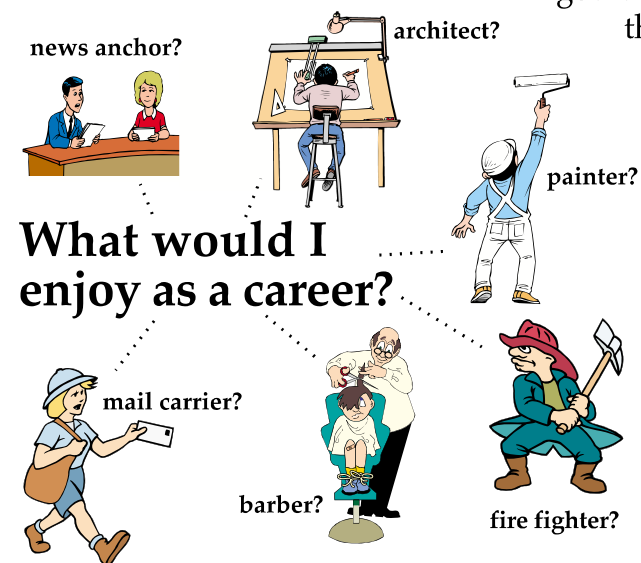
You may have known exactly what you wanted to do with your life since you were a small child. Or you might not have thought much about it. These years in school have been a training ground, preparing you for the future—but what the future holds is up to you.

In this section, you will create a list of possible career paths, select two of them, research them, and write a comparison and contrast paper. Writing this paper will enable you to learn more about the different career paths available to you and to discover what you might do in order to follow one of those paths. Most careers involve some sort of college or training. If you do some advance research, you may save yourself years of trial and error looking for the vocation which you find fulfilling.

Finding a suitable career means examining your talents, interests, and life goals. Before you begin your research, make a list of the things you enjoy doing, thinking about, and learning. What is your favorite subject in school? What are your hobbies? What clubs have you joined or would you like to join? What do you like to do in your spare time? For instance, are you a sports enthusiast? Do you enjoy shopping? Do you like to read or watch movies?

After you've made a list of the things you enjoy doing, make another list of your talents. Are you a good speaker? Do you know how to plan a party? Do you have computer skills? These talents and activities will not

guarantee you a good career, but they may point you in the right direction.



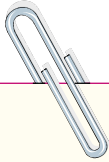
If you're having a difficult time figuring out where your talents lie, look back over your list of enjoyable activities. You may notice that your enjoyable activities and talents overlap.



Sample Lists

Enjoyable activities	Talents
being in the water	swimming
being with friends	making people feel comfortable
watching movies	analyzing movies
dressing up to go out	styling hair
reading comic books	drawing

Now look over your lists and write down all the careers that might make use of any of your talents or that might let you do the things you enjoy.



Career Possibilities

- swim coach
- therapist
- movie or television critic
- cosmetologist
- graphic artist

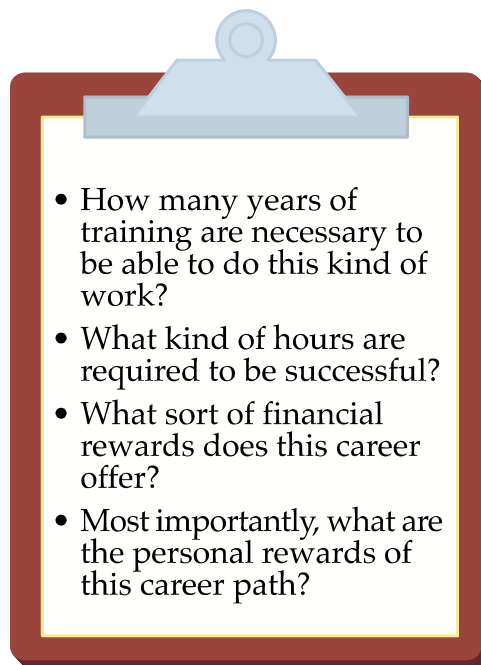
If you are having difficulty finding careers that match your talents and interests, then it is probably time for a trip to the library. By typing in the word “Career” under the subject heading of your online catalog or looking it up in the card catalog of subjects, you will be presented with a wealth of books dealing with career choices.

Even if you do have a list of suitable or interesting careers, books about searching for the right career can help you narrow it down by giving you some basic information about various career paths. Through your research, you will find out what sort of training is necessary, what opportunities are available and what sort of hours are required in the professions you've listed.

For instance, being a movie critic might have just the sort of hours that you'd like to put into work, and it may not seem to require much training, but after your research you would likely discover that movie critics usually have had quite a bit of college and may have taken specialized courses in film. You would also probably discover that there are not many job openings for movie critics. However, if you've started writing movie reviews for your school newspaper and are willing to put in the work and pay your dues, you might decide that it's worth pursuing as a career after all.

After you've created a list of careers, write down some questions to consider. These questions will help you narrow down your research to two careers. They may also become the **criteria** you use to judge the careers and develop your **thesis statement**.

A few of the pertinent questions you might ask with regard to your career choices are listed below.



Almost any career can be financially rewarding if you're willing to work hard, but only a few careers will make you happy. So choose wisely.

Once you've chosen two career paths to research fully, you will have several ways to find the answers to your questions. One good method is to interview someone who is already in the profession. People are often willing to talk about their careers and share their knowledge with a younger person.

For instance, suppose you chose the career of cosmetology as one of the careers to write about. Your first step would be to call up or visit a hair or nail salon and ask the manager if anyone would be willing to grant you 20 to 30 minutes for an interview. You might check first with a cosmetologist who is known to you or a family member.

Read and remember the interviewing tips listed below.

- Always be polite and prepared.
- Be at least five minutes early, and if you have to wait, be patient. Working people can get very busy without warning.
- Bring several pens and pencils and a legal pad or notebook to write in during the interview.
- Write down a list of 10 or more questions that pertain to the person's employment, but don't be bound by those questions. If your interviewee tells you something interesting, then feel free to follow up with a question that is not on your list.
- With your interviewee's permission, you may want to record the answers, in addition to writing down the answers in your notebook or notepad. This will help you to remember what is said and to pay attention to the answers rather than just focusing on your questions.
- When the interview is over, ask your interviewee if he or she has anything to add that wasn't covered in your questions.

You've probably read many interviews in newspapers and magazines. There are two ways to write an interview-essay. The first is simply the question and answer format (or Q & A). The question is written down and then the answer follows. But many interviews are integrated into a larger story through the use of **direct quotations** and **attributions**.

A direct quotation uses quotation marks and the exact words that the person said.

For example:

"I really like tree harvesting and find it to be enjoyable work," John Wilson said.

Notice that the comma goes inside the quotation marks. Whenever you use a quotation from a person, be sure to begin a new paragraph.

An attribution is an idea or thought that is attributed to, or acknowledged to come from, someone other than the writer. It might not use the person's exact words, but the meaning is the same.

For example:

John Wilson said that tree harvesting is enjoyable work.

Textual Research: Using Libraries and Associations

In addition to your interviews, you will need to get some literature or written information about your chosen fields. The first place to look is the library where you can usually find books about various careers. Look up your topic under the subject heading in the library online catalog or in the subject card catalog.

For instance, if you were to look up “cosmetology” under the Subject Heading at your local public library, you would see a list of subtopics on the screen. One of these subtopics would say, “Beauty Culture—Vocation.” After you typed in the number next to that subtopic, the following titles would appear on the screen:

1. Gearhart, Susan Wood. Opportunities in beauty culture. Skokie, IL: VGM Career Horizons. 1982.
2. Gearhart, Susan Wood. Opportunities in beauty culture careers, paper. Lincolnwood, IL: VGM Career Horizons. 1988.
3. Lerner, Mark. Careers in beauty & grooming. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Co. 1977.
4. Strazzabosco, Jeanne. Choosing a career in cosmetology. New York: Rosen Pub. Group. 1997.

Then, you would type in the number (1, 2, 3, or 4) of the publication you want to review and you would find the call numbers. The books you will be searching for will be located in the nonfiction shelves.

When researching a subject such as careers, you will want to review the most recent material. For instance, in the example above, the first book you would want to peruse, or look at, would be the last in the list because it was published in 1997.

It is not necessary to read the entire book pertaining to your topic. Skim the book first and then select those chapters or sections which you think will answer some of your questions.

As you find **sources**, you will want to keep a **working bibliography**, or a listing of your research sources. All the sources (books, chapters, articles, and interviews) that you use for your paper will need to be listed on a **Works Cited page** at the end of your paper.

Keep the information for each source on a separate index card or on a separate sheet of paper in your notebook, listing the following:

1. author's full name with the last name first
2. full title including any subtitle of the work
3. editor if there is one
4. edition if the book is a second or later edition
5. number of the volume and the total number of volumes if the book is part of a multivolume work
6. series name if the book is part of a series
7. city of publication (use only the first if several are listed)
8. publisher
9. year of publication

As with any research topic, useful information can also be discovered in articles and magazines that might deal with your subject area. Look in the *Reader's Guide to Periodicals* for articles on your subject, and go over the list of titles in the magazine section of your library to see if any of them are devoted to your topic. For instance, people interested in pursuing a career in journalism would want to preview a copy of *Editor and Publisher*.

For newspaper or magazine articles, your bibliographical information will be slightly different:

1. author's name with last name first
2. title of the article

3. name of the magazine or newspaper
4. date of publication
5. page numbers of the article or the first page number followed by a plus sign if there are many pages

You can also find out about various professional associations in the library. Almost every profession has a local, state, or national association. For instance, if you were interested in cosmetology, you could find literature or written information in the form of booklets or brochures from the Florida Board of Cosmetology in the Bureau of Professional Regulation. You could also contact cosmetology schools for information on training requirements and job opportunities in the field.

The Internet: A Valuable Source

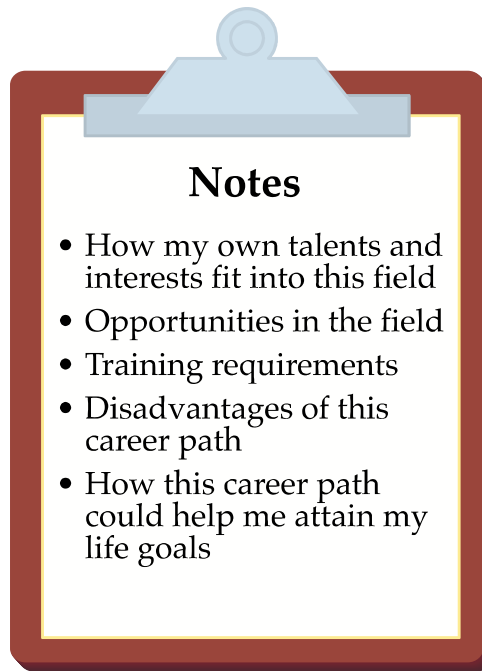
In addition to interviewing professionals in your career choices, searching through your library's catalogs, and contacting associations, you should also use the Internet to research the careers which interest you.

Use one of the search engines to look for your keyword. For example, if your keyword were cosmetology and your search engine were Yahoo!, you would find three categories and 24 sites. Many of the sites are web pages from various cosmetology schools around the world. These web pages can help you get an idea of the courses you would need to take, and the variety of opportunities in cosmetology. You would also find a web page for the National Cosmetology Association.

A search using the Alta Vista search engine would locate articles about the subject of cosmetology and biographical information about people in the cosmetology industry as well as information about schools and programs.

Discovery Drafts: Beginning the Paper

Once you have gathered your research information, you need to begin making detailed notes. In your notebook, make several different headings for both of your career choices:



You may write these as columns next to each other to make it easier to compare and contrast the two career paths. You may use these or other criteria which you feel is important.

As you read through your material, you are gathering and understanding facts. From these facts you will begin to form opinions. And from these opinions you will find your thesis—the conclusion that you have reached after examining the facts.

Thesis and Topic Sentences: Focusing Your Paper

Now that you have written discovery draft notes, you will have discovered what you want to say in your paper. You will have developed thoughtful opinions. As you look over your opinions and conclusions, pick out one that is important to you and which is worthy of development. This will become your thesis.

The thesis sentence formulates both your topic and your attitude or belief about the topic. After you write your thesis sentence, you should be able to focus the rest of your paper in a clear and coherent manner. Most likely, your thesis sentence, or that sentence which directs the rest of the paper, will favor one professional path over the other.

For example:

After examining the training required, the professional opportunities and the creative opportunities of both cosmetology and graphic arts, I have decided that the best career path for me is cosmetology.

If you have more than three variables or criteria, then you may make your thesis sentence more general:

For someone who is as creative as I am, cosmetology offers more rewards than graphic arts.

You may choose to write your paper from a personal or **subjective** perspective or from an **objective** or impersonal perspective. In other words, you may write the paper about your topic from your personal point of view, or you may write a more general paper that could apply to someone else. Depending on whether or not you choose to write an objective or a subjective paper, you will either write an objective or a subjective thesis sentence.

The subjective thesis sentence will contain the word “I,” allowing your reader to understand immediately that this is a paper about you and your reaction to the topic. Both of the examples above are subjective.

The objective thesis sentence may take a more general stance:

People who are creative, enjoy working with other people, and want to join the work force quickly will probably find that cosmetology is a better career choice than graphic arts.

Remember to differentiate between fact and opinion. An opinion used as a thesis sentence may seem to be true, but it usually requires



supports (facts, examples, and statistics) to be truly convincing. In other words, a thesis or **topic sentence**, which is similar to a thesis statement and yet narrower in scope, will need elaboration.

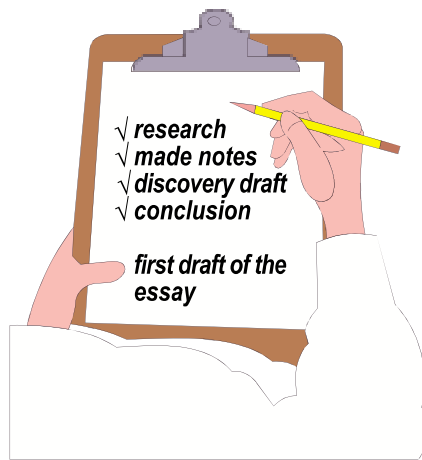
Topic Sentence: Learning to be a cosmetologist is hard work.

Support: In Florida, 1200 hours of training are required to be a cosmetologist.

A sentence that works well as a thesis or topic sentence will generally make some sort of judgment and will contain a least one word that reflects a judgment. For example, the word “hard” in the previous example reflects a judgment or opinion on the part of the writer.

The Introduction: Setting Up Your Paper

Now that you have done your research, made your notes, written a discovery draft, and come to a conclusion, you are ready to begin your first draft of the essay. A comparison and contrast paper shows how two people, places, or things are similar or different. Your paper will probably show similarities *and* differences between the two careers which you have researched. As with other essay forms which you have studied, the comparison and contrast paper needs an introductory paragraph.



The introductory paragraph should introduce both of your two career path choices and capture your reader's interest. It should set up a connection between the points of interest and thesis statement and create a set of expectations that will be fulfilled in the report. It will also indicate whether this is an objective or a subjective essay. (Refer back to page 130.)

The Body and Conclusion of the Paper: Providing Supports and a Finish

The body paragraphs that develop or support the thesis statement will examine your two career choices—their similarities and differences.

One way to organize your paper is to address each one of the criteria in a separate paragraph and to compare and contrast the two topics in each paragraph.

For example: Your topic sentence might be, “Both cosmetology and graphic arts offer many opportunities for employment.” The rest of your paragraph would discuss these different opportunities for employment.

Another organizational method is to discuss the advantages of one particular profession in the first body paragraph and the advantages of the other career path in the next body paragraph. Then your third body paragraph may deal with the disadvantages of the first topic, and the fourth body paragraph will deal with the disadvantages of the second topic.

Your final paragraph will sum up your conclusions about the two career paths and which one you think you might prefer or which one is more suited to your life goals. It will also contain some fresh information or a slightly different perspective that adds interest and excitement to your writing.

Documenting Your Sources: Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due

You will be using sources to help support your thesis statement and topic sentences. The content you take from these sources is not your own—it belongs to the person who wrote it. Therefore, you must give credit to the source. Writers give credit to their sources in two ways. First, you give credit to the source in the body or the text of your paper. The body or the text of your paper includes all the pages that contain your writing about your topic. The documentation you provide in the body of your paper is called *in-text citations*. The name, in-text citation, describes what you are doing: providing citations or documentation for any borrowed material *in the text* of your essay.

Second, you give a more detailed description of your sources after the body or text of your paper. This list of sources is called the *Works Cited page*. Both the documentation you do in the body of your paper and on the Works Cited page have a specific form.

In-Text Citations: Identifying the Source of Specific Information and Ideas

When you use in-text citations, you identify the source of a piece of information, an idea, or a quotation at the end of the sentences or passage. The citation identifies the source, just as a name card would identify you to a roomful of strangers.

The form you will use for in-text citations and your Works Cited page in this essay is from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. The MLA style for citing electronic resources is similar to that for nonelectronic resources. Please refer to pages 18-20 in “Unit 1: Integrating Multimedia Technology—Traveling the Information Highway.” There are also other forms available. Always ask your teacher which form you should use for a specific assignment.

The citation, or source of a piece of information or of an idea, is placed at the end of the sentence *but before the final punctuation*. The basic form includes the author’s name and the page number from which the information was taken. The following is a partial list of the in-text citations most commonly used in papers:

- If the author is named in the sentence, include only the page number:

In her book on becoming a salon professional, Louise Cotter writes that “some 200,000 thriving successful salon owners are scrambling for qualified employees” (4).

- If the author is not named in the sentence, include the author’s last name and the page number:

Cosmetology offers many opportunities. In fact, “some 200,000 thriving successful salon owners are scrambling for qualified employees” (Cotter 4).

- If the source was written by two or three authors, include all authors’ names and the page number:

The middle class can be defined as a “broad but not undifferentiated category which includes those who have certain attitudes, aspirations, and expectations toward status mobility, and who shape their actions accordingly” (Schneider and Smith 19).

- If the source was written by more than three authors, include only the first author’s name and the words *et al.*:

One action that government could take to revitalize social ecology would be to reduce the “punishments of failure and rewards of success” (Jencks et al. 8).

- If the source lists no author, include the name of the text and the page number:

In her controversial book *Silent Spring* (1962), she attacked the irresponsible use of insecticides. She warned that insecticides upset the balance of nature by destroying the food supply of birds and fish (*World Book Encyclopedia* 187).

- If you are using more than one source by the same author, include the author’s last name followed by a comma, the name of the source, and the page number:

“If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over all children, I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life” (Carson, *A Sense of Wonder* 42).

You must also document your interviews on your Works Cited page. This information includes the name of the interviewee, the type of interview (telephone or personal), and the date.

Penn, Richard. Telephone interview. 15 April 1998.

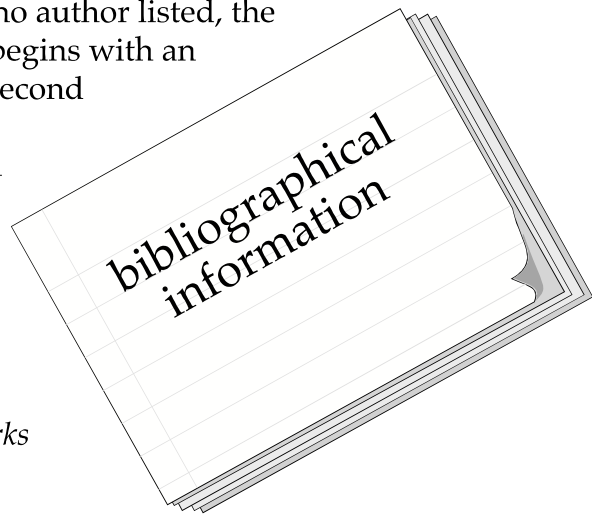
Silvers, Alice. Personal interview. 3 June 1998.

Now return to your draft. Insert all of the in-text citations. This should be a fairly easy process. Just use your notecards, notebook, or computer files to identify the source of each piece of information or idea. Then document your source.

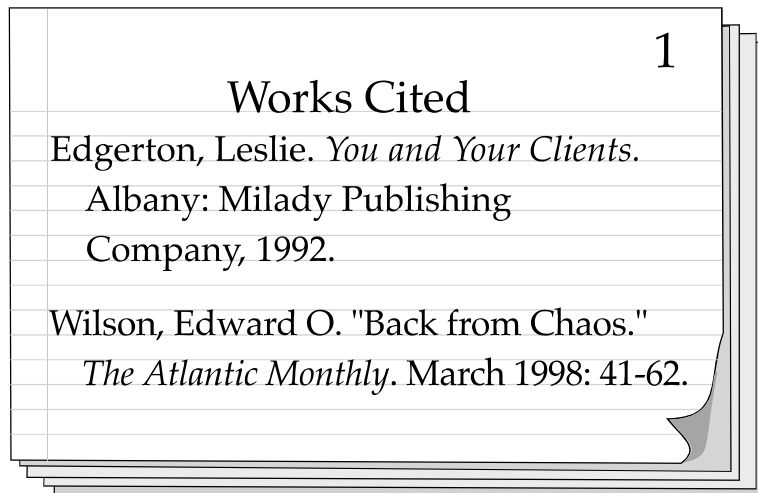
The Works Cited Page: Providing Detailed Information on All Sources Cited in the Text

The Works Cited page comes at the end of your essay. It lists all of the works you have cited in your essay. Do not include any sources you did *not* cite in the essay. Please refer to pages 18-20 in “Unit 1: Integrating Multimedia Technology—Traveling the Information Highway” for the MLA style for citations of electronic references.

Take your notecards that contain bibliographical information. Circle the first word of the entry. The first word will either be the author’s last name, or if there is no author listed, the first word of the title. If the title begins with an article (*A*, *An*, or *The*), circle the second word. Then alphabetize your notecards. If you have more than one entry that begins with the same letter, alphabetize according to the first and second letter. For example, *Ramirez* would go above *Reese*. Once you’ve ordered these notecards, enter them on the *Works Cited* page using the following guidelines:



- Type the page number in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top of the page.
- Center the title *Works Cited* one inch from the top.
- Double-space the entire *Works Cited* page.
- Align each entry with left margin. If the entry needs more than one line, indent additional lines five spaces.
- Double-space each entry.
- Double-space between entries.



Revision: The Art of Refining Your Paper

Now you have completed a good first draft of your comparison and contrast paper. But you aren't done yet. Imagine that you have just completed building a house. You've built the foundation, the outer and inner walls, the floors and ceilings, but now the walls need to be painted, and furniture, window treatments, and flooring need to be added so that it will look comfortable and attractive. Of course, you may discover that you want to rearrange the rooms a bit, but that's all part of building the house of your dreams—or writing the paper that says exactly what you want it to say.

The process of revising your paper includes reworking your organization, restructuring sentences, and refining your word choices. To revise means to revisit. In this case, you will revisit your paper and decide how it can best convey your message.

First of all, do you have a title for your paper yet? If not, this is the time to think of one. Your title should be short and catchy—something that offers a clue about the topic of the paper.

- Do not put your title in quotation marks or underline it. If you use the title of another work in your title, then you may use quotation marks, italicizing, or underlining for the second title only.
- Do capitalize all words in the title except for small common words such as “the,” “and,” “to,” or “of” unless they are the first word of the title.

Examples of titles:

Two Careers for Creative People




Nature Symbols in *The Old Man and the Sea*

Finding a Terrific Job

Paragraphs: Revising for Organization





After you make sure you have a strong and interesting title, the next thing you need to do is read over your paper. Many experienced writers believe it is best to put a piece of writing away without looking at it for a day or even a week before beginning the process of revising. If you have the time to do this, try it out. You may find that you can see the paper with a fresh eye.

After you've read the paper completely, ask yourself the following questions:

-  Have you accomplished your purpose in writing the paper?
-  Do all of your body paragraphs explain and discuss your topic?
-  Are your body paragraphs arranged in the best order?

After you have answered these questions, take a close look at each of your paragraphs, beginning with the introductory paragraph. Does the first paragraph hook the reader? Is the thesis statement clear and focused? In other words, your thesis statement should not try to cover too many ideas. In fact, it should make one clear point and that is the main point that all your body paragraphs will support.

Next, move on to your body paragraphs. Does each body paragraph have a topic sentence which states the main idea that the paragraph will develop and support? A good place to put the topic sentence is at the beginning of your body paragraph. Experienced writers may vary the position of topic sentences in paragraphs. In addition to a topic sentence, each body paragraph should have detail sentences which directly support or develop the topic sentence. Ask yourself the following questions:

-  Do you have enough supports for your topic sentence?
-  Are there additional explanations, examples, or facts and figures that would help the reader more clearly understand your point?
-  Are your detail sentences in the best order?
-  Does the concluding sentence summarize the point of your paragraph?

Finally, look at your concluding paragraph. This paragraph should summarize or retell your main points but without repeating sentences, phrases, or words you used in previous paragraphs. It should also present one new thing or new perspective on your topic.

Lastly, your concluding paragraph should end with a statement that closes your discussion of the topic.

Sentences and Words: Adding Style to Your Paper

Now that you have reworked your paper for organization, read the paper again. As you reread your paper, look at each sentence and each word carefully and answer the following questions.

- Are the sentences all about the same length?
- If they are, how can you vary the sentences?
- Can you combine some sentences?
- Can you eliminate others?
- Is the tone of the paper natural?
- Does each word fit the sentence and the paper?
- Is the paper wordy?

To keep readers alert and interested, a variety in sentence structure and length is necessary. Perhaps you've been trapped by a well-meaning person who goes on and on in sentences that are nearly identical. The effect can be quite boring. The same kind of effect can happen to the reader of a series of sentences that are similar in structure and length. Therefore, no matter how interesting your ideas, descriptions, or information, if you don't vary your sentence structures and lengths, your readers will find it difficult to stay alert and interested.

To understand sentences, we can break them into smaller parts—*clauses* and *phrases*. A *phrase* is a group of related words used as a single part of speech. It does not contain a verb and subject. A *clause* is a group of words that contains a verb and its subject and is used as part of a sentence. Clauses can be independent or dependent. An *independent clause* is one part of a sentence that can stand alone and expresses a complete thought. A *dependent clause* is a part of a sentence that cannot stand *alone*, does not express a complete thought, and needs an independent clause to make it complete.

Sentences are classified according to their structure—*simple*, *compound*, and *complex*. A *simple sentence* is a sentence with one independent clause and no dependent clause. It has only one subject and one verb. (Verbs are also referred to as *predicates*.) Both the subject and the verb may be compound.

A *compound sentence* is a sentence that has two or more independent clauses and no dependent clauses. Simply, it consists of two or more simple sentences joined by a semicolon, or by a comma and a coordinating conjunction—*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, or so* (fan boys*). For example—*“The wind blew softly outside, and the manatees swam near the water’s edge.”*

Be careful not to confuse a simple sentence having a compound subject or verb with an actual compound sentence.

Simple sentence with compound subject: Lisa and Tania went to the mall.

Simple sentence with compound verb: Sam found and returned Rachel’s book.

Compound sentence: Rachel opened her book, and she studied for the exam.

A *complex sentence* has at least one independent clause and one dependent clause. The dependent clause *depends* on the independent clause to complete its meaning. For example, note the complex sentence, “Since she is a great golfer, she will compete in the golf tournament.” The dependent clause “Since she is a great golfer” leaves us wondering, “What about the fact that she is a great golfer?” The independent clause: “she will compete in the golf tournament” completes the meaning. Note that the clauses in a complex sentence can be reversed: “She will compete in the golf tournament, since she is a great golfer.” Dependent clauses are connected to independent clauses with subordinating conjunctions. Below are the most frequently used subordinating conjunctions:

The Most Frequently Used Subordinating Conjunctions			
after	before	rather than	until
although	considering (that)	since	when
as	even if	so long as	whenever
as far as	even though	so that	where
as if	if	than	whereas
as long as	in as much as	that	whenever
as soon as	in order that	though	whether
because	provided that	unless	while

*See *English IV Teacher’s Guide*, page 24.

Reading the paper out loud will help you identify sentences that are choppy or wordy and words that aren't appropriate. If you've written something that you would never say or hear, then you've probably overwritten. Make sure that you know the meaning of each word.

Wordiness means using too many words to say something simple. Too many unnecessary words clutter up a piece of writing and make it difficult to distinguish the meaning. And quite often words that are used for emphasis do not add emphasis at all. They simply take up space. One example of this is the word "definitely." Another is the word "very." They are often unnecessary to the meaning of the paper.

Sometimes papers can also be wordy by using too many verbs. Whenever you see the construction "it is" or "there are" or anything involving the verb "to be," look closely to make sure those words are really necessary.

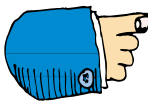



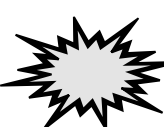
It is also usually not necessary to state "I feel" or "I think" in a sentence which states your opinion. Your reader should know by the way the sentence is written that it is an opinion.

Transitions: Linking Words

An essay or report may have great organization, excellent sentences, and good word choice but still not "flow." That's why **transitions** are important. Transitions are words that link ideas, sentences, and paragraphs together. Transitions help your reader follow your thought processes. They are the words that show time sequence, similarities, differences, and contradictions.

For a comparison and contrast paper, you will find the following transitions useful: "similarly," "on the other hand," and "however."

For a complete list of transitions and their uses, refer to the table below.

Transitions and Connecting Words		
Words that show <i>location</i>: at above away from beyond into over across behind by near throughout against below down off to the right along beneath in back of onto under among beside in front of on top of around between inside outside   	Words that show <i>differences</i>: but otherwise although on the other hand however yet still even though	Words that show <i>time</i>: about first meanwhile soon then after second today later next at third tomorrow afterward as soon as before till next week immediately when during until yesterday finally 
	Words used to <i>clarify</i>: in other words for instance that is put another way	Words used to add <i>information</i>: again another for instance finally also and moreover as well additionally besides next along with in addition for example likewise equally important
	Words that show <i>similarities</i> (likenesses): in the same way likewise as similarly like also	
Words to <i>conclude</i> or <i>summarize</i>: as a result finally in conclusion to sum up therefore last in summary all in all	Words that show <i>emphasis</i> (stress a certain point or idea): again for this reason truly to repeat to emphasize in fact 	

Review the Rules: Editing and Proofreading







Everything you write, whether it is an essay, a résumé, or a letter, needs to be carefully edited for spelling, grammar, and typographical errors. Even if you have a spell checker on your computer, you should carefully proofread your paper because the computer only checks the spelling. It does not make sure that you're using the correct word.

For example, "There going to be at they're wedding anniversary, two" should be written "They're going to be at their wedding anniversary, too." But your computer's spell checker would find nothing wrong with the first sentence.

Editing: Check Your Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling

After you have edited your draft for style, you are ready for the second step of editing. This is the process of checking your writing for any errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

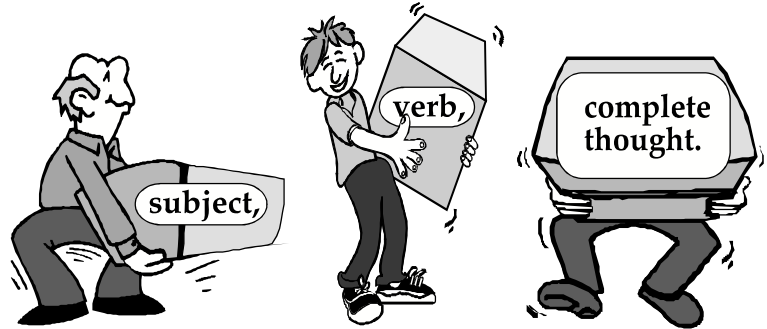
First, begin by checking the grammar of your writing. In this section of the unit you will learn or review the correct way to use the following:

-  sentence formation
-  subject and verb agreement
-  regular and irregular verbs
-  singular and plural nouns
-  noun and pronoun agreement
-  possessives

Sentence Formation: Build Complete Sentences

When we write, our sentences need to convey whole messages. A *complete sentence* has a subject, has a verb, and expresses a complete thought. Complete sentences can come in a variety of lengths.

A complete sentence has a:



However, the two most common mistakes that writers make when forming sentences are *sentence fragments* and *run-on sentences*. Neither the sentence fragment nor the run-on sentence is a correct complete sentence.

The sentence that seems to go on forever is called a *run-on sentence*. A run-on sentence consists of two or more sentences incorrectly written as one. It is unclear where one idea ends and the next one begins. To correct a run-on sentence, read the sentence to yourself and notice where you naturally pause between ideas. The pause usually indicates where you should place punctuation.

Kinds of Complete Sentences: Declarative, Exclamatory, Imperative, and Interrogative

There are four kinds of complete sentences—*declarative sentences*, *exclamatory sentences*, *imperative sentences*, and *interrogative sentences*. Each kind of complete sentence ends in a particular punctuation mark. Using these four kinds of sentences and the correct end marks adds meaning to what you are writing.

Study the types of complete sentences and their examples in the chart below.

Types of Sentences		
Sentence Type	Definition/Example	End Mark
Declarative	A sentence which makes a statement. <i>I plan to study every night this week.</i>	•
Exclamatory	A sentence which expresses strong emotion. <i>Don't be a litterbug!</i>	!
Imperative	A sentence which gives an order. <i>Watch out for that car!</i>	• or !
Interrogative	A sentence which asks a question. <i>When will rehearsals for the play begin?</i>	?

Incomplete Sentences: Finish the Thought

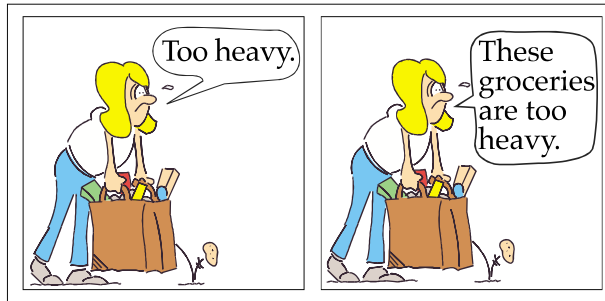
The sentence that is missing some information or is *incomplete* is a *sentence fragment*. For example, “The driver having a poor memory for directions.” Fragments cannot stand alone because they are missing important information that the reader needs to make meaning from the sentence. Correct sentence fragments by adding the missing subject, verb, or both to complete the thought. For example, “The driver having a poor memory for directions had all directions handwritten by his friends.”

Correcting sentence fragments is part of revising and editing. In order to correct sentence fragments, you must be able to identify them and then rewrite them so they are complete thoughts. Ask yourself the following questions to help you identify and correct sentence fragments.

1. Does the sentence express a complete thought? If it does not, add the necessary words to make the thought complete.
2. Does the sentence have a subject? Do you know *who* or *what* is performing the action? If the sentence does not have a subject, insert one.
3. Does the sentence have a verb? Do you know what is the *action* or *state of being* of the subject? If the sentence does not have a verb, add one.

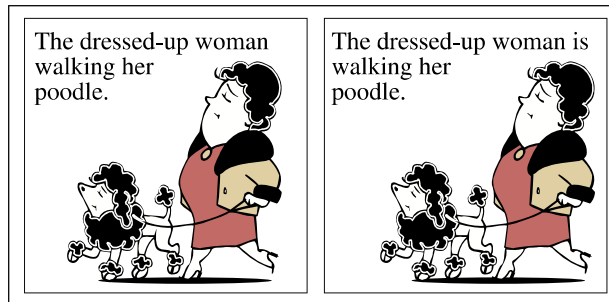
What's wrong with this statement?
It is a sentence fragment because
the subject and verb are missing.

One way to fix the sentence
fragment could be...



What's wrong with this statement?
It is a sentence fragment because
the verb is missing.

One way to fix the sentence
fragment could be...



Correcting Run-on Sentences: Know When to Pause

There are four ways to correct run-on sentences. Here is an example of a run-on sentence and how it can be transformed into a complete sentence using each of the four ways.

Run-on sentence: School is closed there is a hurricane warning.

1. **You can make two (or more) sentences from the original run-on.** School is closed. There is a hurricane warning.
2. **You can use a semicolon.** School is closed; there is a hurricane warning.
3. **You can make a compound sentence using connecting words.** There is a hurricane warning, and school is closed.
4. **You can make a complex sentence using independent and dependent clauses.** *Because of the hurricane warning* (dependent clause), school is closed.

What's wrong with this statement?
The statement is a run-on sentence.

One way to fix the run-on sentence
could be...

A lot of people think that bats are scary, bats are actually good for the environment because most bats go after insects not people, they are considered environmental bug catchers all bats are nocturnal some have large eyes adapted for night vision, while others use sonar.



A lot of people think that bats are scary; bats are actually good for the environment. Because most bats go after insects not people, they are considered environmental bug catchers. All bats are nocturnal. Some have large eyes adapted for night vision, while others use sonar.



Subject and Verb Agreement: Matching Plural and Singular

Most of us learn to speak English by copying what we hear at home. Because you learn to speak from listening to your family members or others, you might find yourself using words or phrases that others don't completely understand.

A local dialect might include mismatching the subject and verb of a sentence. You might have heard someone say, "*They was tired*," instead of "*They were tired*," or "*She don't know*," instead of "*She doesn't know*." In order to make sure that your audience understands what you are saying, it is important to use language that will not be misunderstood by your readers.

One way you can make sure that what you are writing is not misunderstood by your audience is to follow the rule of subject and verb agreement. If the subject is singular, the verb must be singular. Additionally, if the subject is plural, the verb must be plural. This is known as *subject/verb agreement*.

In some sentences, you may find it difficult to tell if a subject is singular or plural, which in turn makes it difficult to make the verb agree. For example, read the following sentence:

The owner of the cars drives only one of them.

Is the subject the singular noun *owner* or the plural noun *cars*? The subject is *owner*—not the cars. Do not let the phrase or clause between the subject (owner) and its verb (drives) confuse you.

What is the subject in the following example?

Cars in the parking lot are not for sale.

The subject is the plural noun *cars*. It is the cars, *not* the parking lot, that are not for sale. In this example, the phrase *in the parking lot* simply modifies or describes cars.

It is fairly easy to determine that pronouns such as *I*, *he*, and *she* are singular, but what about the pronouns *anyone* or *few*? Study and remember the “Rules about Pronouns” below and “The ‘S’ Rule” on the following page.

Rules about Pronouns

1. A phrase that follows a subject does not change the number of the subject.
2. The following are singular pronouns and require singular verbs: *each*, *either*, *neither*, *one*, *no one*, *everybody*, *someone*, *anyone*, *everyone*, *nobody*, *somebody*, *everything*, and *anything*.
3. The following are plural pronouns and require plural verbs: *several*, *many*, *both*, and *few*.
4. The following are singular *or* plural pronouns depending on the sentence: *some*, *all*, *most*, *any*, and *none*.

If these words refer to a singular noun, then they are also singular. For example—**Some** of the **pie** *was* still frozen.

If the words refer to a plural noun, then they are also plural. For example—**Some** of the **pieces** of pie *were* still frozen.

The 'S' Rule

Most **verbs** ending in an **s** are **singular**.
Most **nouns** ending in an **s** are **plural**.

Therefore, if your *subject* and *verb* **both end in s** or **neither ends in s**, you should check their agreement.



Regular and Irregular Verbs: Forming Principal Parts

Verbs tell what the action is in a sentence and when the action happened. The action of a sentence can happen in the past, in the present, or in the future. These time frames are called the *tense* of a verb.

Verbs have four principle tenses.

Present	Present Participle	Past	Past Participle
laugh	laughing	laughed	have laughed
shout	shouting	shouted	have shouted
love	loving	loved	have loved

All the verbs above are regular. The past tense of a regular verb is made by adding **-ed** to the basic (present) form. The past participle of a verb is made by adding **-ed** to the verb itself and then pairing it up with *have*, *has*, or *had*.

The cheerleaders **shout**. (present)

The cheerleaders are **shouting**. (present participle)

The cheerleaders **shouted**. (past)

The cheerleaders **have shouted**. (past participle)

Irregular verbs do not follow this rule. The best way to learn and spell irregular verbs is to memorize them. Study the “Principal Parts of Irregular Verbs” chart below.

Principal Parts of Irregular Verbs					
Present	Past	Past Participle	Present	Past	Past Participle
be	was	been	lose	lost	lost
become	became	become	make	made	made
begin	began	begun	mean	meant	meant
blow	blew	blown	meet	met	met
break	broke	broken	pay	paid	paid
bring	brought	brought	put	put	put
buy	bought	bought	read	read	read
catch	caught	caught	ride	rode	ridden
come	came	come	ring	rang	rung
cost	cost	cost	run	ran	run
do	did	done	say	said	said
drink	drank	drunk	see	saw	seen
drive	drove	driven	sell	sold	sold
eat	ate	eaten	send	sent	sent
fall	fell	fallen	shake	shook	shaken
feel	felt	felt	shoot	shot	shot
fight	fought	fought	shut	shut	shut
find	found	found	sing	sang	sung
fly	flew	flown	sit	sat	sat
forget	forgot	forgotten	sleep	slept	slept
get	got	gotten	speak	spoke	spoken
give	gave	given	spend	spent	spent
go	went	gone	stand	stood	stood
grow	grew	grown	steal	stole	stolen
have	had	had	sweep	swept	swept
hear	heard	heard	take	took	taken
hold	held	held	teach	taught	taught
hurt	hurt	hurt	tell	told	told
keep	kept	kept	think	thought	thought
know	knew	known	throw	threw	thrown
lay	laid	laid	understand	understood	understood
leave	left	left	wear	wore	worn
lend	lent	lent	win	won	won
lie	lay	lain	write	wrote	written

Nouns: Plural or Singular?

A *noun* is a word that names a person, a place, a thing, or an idea. Writers use nouns to describe the details of lives as well as the hopes, fears, and ideals of generations. A *common noun* is the general name of a person, place, thing, or idea. A *proper noun* is the name of a particular person, place, thing, or idea.

Read this sentence that includes common nouns.

While walking along the street, the boy was eating a candy bar.

Read the same sentence in which the common nouns have been replaced with proper nouns.

While walking along Park Street, Juan Rivera was eating a Snickers Bar.

Compound nouns are made up of two or more words joined together. The words may be hyphenated, joined together, or written separately. *Runner-up*, *brother-in-law*, *track meet*, *brake lining*, and *brainpower* are all compound nouns.

Collective nouns are singular nouns that name a group. *Class*, *herd*, *congregation*, *chorus*, and *team* are all collective nouns.

All of these nouns—common, proper, compound, and collective—can be singular or plural depending on their meaning in a sentence. Plurals are formed in various ways. Typically, we add *s* or *es* to the ends of nouns to make them plural. However, some plurals are formed by changing the spelling of the noun, while still others may remain exactly the same as the singular form.

Study the rules for forming plurals of nouns in the chart below.

Rules of Pluralization	To make a noun plural...		
	add s to most nouns.	<i>car</i>	<i>cars</i>
	add es to nouns ending in s, sh, ch, x, and z.	<i>branch</i>	<i>branches</i>
	change the y to i and add es to nouns ending in a consonant followed by a y.	<i>pony</i>	<i>ponies</i>
	add s to nouns ending in a vowel followed by a y.	<i>boy</i>	<i>boys</i>
	add s to nouns ending in f or ff.	<i>chief</i> <i>puff</i>	<i>chiefs</i> <i>puffs</i>
	change the f to v and add es to nouns ending in fe or lf.	<i>knife</i> <i>wolf</i>	<i>knives</i> <i>wolves</i>
	add s to nouns ending in a vowel followed by o.	<i>rodeo</i>	<i>rodeos</i>
	add es to nouns ending in a consonant followed by o.	<i>tomato</i>	<i>tomatoes</i>
	change the basic spelling of certain words.	<i>ox</i>	<i>oxen</i>
	spell certain words the same way in singular and plural form.	<i>deer</i>	<i>deer</i>
	add s or es following appropriate rules, if the number is spelled out.	<i>three</i>	<i>threes</i>
	add s or es to compound nouns to make compound nouns plural.	<i>leftover</i> <i>eyelash</i>	<i>leftovers</i> <i>eyelashes</i>
	add s to the noun and leave the modifier in hyphenated compound nouns unchanged.	<i>son-in-law</i> <i>runner-up</i>	<i>sons-in-law</i> <i>runners-up</i>

Noun and Pronoun Agreement: Matching Case, Gender, and Number

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun or even another pronoun. Pronouns allow you to avoid unnecessary repetitions when you write or speak. Consider the following examples:

- (a) The *girl* knew *she* could win the top prize.
- (b) The *girls* knew *they* could win the top prize.

In sentence (a), the word *she* is a pronoun. It stands in for the noun, *girl*. Both are singular. In sentence (b), the word *they* is a pronoun. It stands in for the noun, *girls*. Both are plural. The noun to which a pronoun refers is called an *antecedent*. In the examples above, the antecedents are *girl* and *girls*. Wherever you use a noun (antecedent) and pronoun, they must match. This is called *noun and pronoun agreement* or *pronoun-antecedent agreement*.

Imagine you are reading and you find this sentence: “The *students* wished *she* had studied longer for the test.” You would be left to wonder where the *she* in this sentence came from or where *she* belongs. You would know *she* could not be the students—because there are many *students* but only one *she*. When a noun and pronoun do not agree, the reader is left a little confused.

Pronouns must match their antecedents in case, gender, and number.

Case refers to the way a pronoun is used in a sentence.

- A pronoun can be used as a subject:
She has always wanted to be a race car driver.
- A pronoun can be used as an object:
Being a race car driver has always appealed to *her*.
- A pronoun can be used as a possessive:
Her desire to be a race car driver is great.

Gender refers to the sexual category of a noun or proper noun.

- Pronouns that refer to masculine antecedents must also be masculine:

Jorge would like to become a landscape artist. *He* has been working with his uncle every summer.

That *man* would like for someone to help *him*.

Jorge knows *he* still has much to learn.

- Pronouns that refer to feminine antecedents must also be feminine:

Regina is one of the best artists in the class. *She* loves to draw and paint.

That *girl* is bringing some friends with *her*.

Regina believes *she* can design a new mural.

- Pronouns that refer to antecedents of neither sex must also be neuter:

The *car* is not running. *It* needs a new transmission.

The *bird* is looking for *its* nest.

Number refers to whether the noun is singular (for example, *the boy* or *the table*) or plural (for example, *the boys* or *the tables*).

- Pronouns that refer to singular antecedents must also be singular:

Take the *exam* and do *it* at home.

- Pronouns that refer to plural antecedents must also be plural:

Take the *exams* and do *them* at home.

- Some words seem to be both singular and plural. They are *each*, *either*, *neither*, *one*, *everyone*, *everybody*, *no one*, *nobody*, *anyone*, *anybody*, *someone*, and *somebody*. When referring to these antecedents, use a singular pronoun such as *he*, *him*, *his*, *she*, *her*, *hers*, *it*, *its*:

Each person should do *his* homework.

Everybody can bring a snack with *her* to the picnic.

- When two singular antecedents are joined by *or* or *nor*, the pronoun should be singular:
Either Jill or Felicia will give a speech *she* has written.
Neither Robbie *nor* Daniel has a job *he* wants to do.

- When two or more antecedents are joined by *and*, the pronoun should be plural:
Jill *and* Felicia have prepared well for class. *They* both plan to give a speech on economics.
Robbie *and* Daniel have decided to go into business for *themselves*.

Possessives: Showing Ownership

Possessives are used to show ownership or relationship. For example, the clause, *That is the girl's car*, shows that the car is owned by the girl. Possessives are also used to show the relationship between one thing and another. For example, the question, *Who is performing in this evening's program?*, asks a question about the program that is being presented today. Possessives are shown by an apostrophe and an *s*, or in some cases, by just adding an apostrophe:

the dancer's shoes (one dancer)

the dancers' shoes (more than one dancer)

the children's bus (children)

the teachers' lounge (more than one teacher)

In most cases, it is easy to tell whether a word should be made possessive, as in the examples above. However, some cases are more difficult. Would you add an apostrophe to the word *days* in the phrase *a days work*? If you are uncertain, simply rewrite the phrase using the word *of*: *the work of a day*. If the *of* fits, then use an apostrophe: *a day's work*.

Study the rules for forming possessives in the chart below.

Rules for Forming Possessives	
► To form the possessive of a singular noun, simply add an <i>apostrophe</i> and an <i>s</i> .	
the notebook that belongs to Brita	➡ Brita's notebook
the cat that belongs to the boy	➡ the boy's cat
the eyes that belong to the monster	➡ the monster's eyes
► To form the possessive of a plural noun ending in <i>s</i> , simply add an <i>apostrophe</i> .	
the manes that belong to the horses	➡ the horses' manes
the discoveries that belong to the students	➡ the students' discoveries
► To form the possessive of a plural noun that does not end in <i>s</i> , simply add an apostrophe and an <i>s</i> .	
the clubhouse that belongs to the children	➡ the children's clubhouse
the antiques that belong to the men	➡ the men's antiques

Pronouns present a special case. The possessive case of a pronoun is not formed by adding an apostrophe or an *s*. Study the chart below.

Pronoun	-----➡	Possessive
I	-----➡	my, mine
you	-----➡	your, yours
he	-----➡	his
she	-----➡	her, hers
it	-----➡	its (not "it's," which means <i>it is</i>)
we	-----➡	our, ours
they	-----➡	their, theirs
who	-----➡	whose

Capitalization: Rules of Upper Case

Capital letters are used for two main reasons. First, they are used to signal the beginning of a sentence or quote. Second, they are used to signal words that refer to some particular person, place, or thing rather than to a general class. Custom also determines the use of capital letters. Study the chart below and the one on the following page for the rules of capitalization.

RULES OF CAPITALIZATION	Always capitalize...	
	the first word of every sentence.	The coffee grounds were in my cup.
	a person's name and any initials.	John F. Kennedy
	titles of people.	Dr. Jones, Mrs. Fisher
	I and O when they are used as words.	It's the duck that I saw. "Exult O shores! and ring O bells!"
	days of the week and months of the year.	Tuesday, March
	religions, creeds, denominations, names applied to the Bible and its parts, other sacred books, and nouns and pronouns referring to a deity.	Christianity, Old Testament, God, the Almighty
	countries, nationalities, races, and languages.	Spain, Spaniards, Spanish, Spanish rice, English
	names of specific cities, states, avenues, streets, routes, and other geographical and place names.	North America, Atlanta, Chicago, Route 66
	names of special organizations—government, businesses, schools, professional, and social.	Amtrak, the Jaycees, Sears, Sandalwood High School
	names of special buildings and other man-made structures, ships, and planes.	Southpoint Mall, the <i>Titanic</i> , the Gulf Life Building
	brand or trade names.	Goodyear tires, Kleenex, General Electric
	holidays, special or famous events, historical periods or eras, and famous documents.	Labor Day, the Boston Tea Party, the Gold Rush, the Declaration of Independence
	the first word and all important words in the title of a book, magazine, movie, television show, and songs.	<i>Family Circle</i> , <i>Home Alone</i> , <i>General Hospital</i> , "America, the Beautiful"
	words that come from names that are capitalized.	San Francisco, San Franciscan
	the first word of quoted sentences.	Tom said, "We won the game!"

Do *not* capitalize...

the name of a school subject, unless it is the name of a specific course or language.

My favorite science course is Biology 101.
Sue made low grades in algebra, history, and French.

the names of seasons or directions.

The flowers are lovely in the spring.
Turn west after you pass the bank.

the name of trees, fruits, vegetables, birds, or flowers.

roses, robins, oak, mahogany, corn

the names of games or sports, unless the name is a trademark.

Tables were arranged for checkers, Scrabble, Monopoly, bridge, and dominoes.
Our football team went to see the Dolphins in the playoff.

the name of a disease, unless it is named for a person, and then do not capitalize the word *disease*.

measles, pneumonia, Hodgkin's disease

the names of musical instruments.

violin, drums, Baldwin piano

Punctuation: Make the Meaning Clear

The purpose of punctuation is to make clear the meaning of what you write. When you speak, the sound of your voice, the rise and fall of your tone of voice, your pauses and hesitations—all serve as a kind of punctuation to indicate precisely what you mean. Even your body plays a part in the unwritten punctuation. In written language, there are none of these hints. The reader needs a type of sign to make sense of your writing. Where should the reader stop, pause, or read your sentence as a question rather than as a command?

We use punctuation to help make our writing clearer and easier to understand. Read the examples below.

Let's drive James.

Now look at this sentence.

Let's drive, James.

Can you see the difference that one comma makes? Was *James to be driven*? Or was *James being invited to drive*? Without the comma in the second example, the reader might think that James was going to be driven. Commas and other punctuation marks help the reader understand what is written.

Study the “Rules of Punctuation” below.

Rules of Punctuation		
Punctuation Mark	Rules	Examples
Apostrophe /	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apostrophes are used to show possession or ownership. 2. Apostrophes are used to form contractions (they go where the missing letter would have been). 3. Apostrophes are used to form plurals of letters, numbers, and symbols. 	Joel’s sneakers women’s clothes it’s can’t you’ve p’s and q’s
Quotation Marks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quotation marks are used to show the beginning and end of a direct quotation or a person’s exact words. 2. Quotation marks are used to enclose the titles of magazine articles, chapters, short stories, essays, poems, short pieces of music, and single episodes of a TV series. 	“You can learn punctuation,” said the teacher. “The Masque of the Red Death” “The Enemy” “Stairway to Heaven”
Comma ,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commas are used to separate items in a series. 2. Commas are used to separate two or more adjectives before a noun. 3. Commas are used before the conjunctions <i>for</i>, <i>and</i>, <i>nor</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>or</i>, <i>yet</i>, or <i>so</i> when they join independent clauses. (A mnemonic device to remember the words is <i>fan boys</i>,* standing for the first letter of each of the conjunctions listed above.) 4. Commas are used to set off the name of a person spoken to directly or an introductory word. 5. Commas are used to set aside a descriptive phrase which is not essential to the sentence. 6. Commas are used to separate items in dates and addresses. 7. Commas are used after the greeting and close of a friendly letter. 	Lindsay forgot her pencil, paper, and textbook. She is smart, kind, and cheerful. School was awesome, for I had biology. James, can you lend me a quarter? Yes, I can help. Spike, my naughty puppy, ate my sandals. I was born in Tallahassee, Florida, on April 30, 1977. Dear Mom, Love, Max
Semicolon ;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Semicolons are used between independent clauses not joined by <i>for</i>, <i>and</i>, <i>nor</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>or</i>, <i>yet</i>, or <i>so</i>. (<i>fan boys</i>*) 	Stretch your mind every day; you’ll never regret it.
Colon :	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colons are used before a list of items (unless there is a verb right before the list). 	I enjoy many arts: music, painting, photography, and sculpture.
Underlining or Italics _____ <i>Italics</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Underlining is used for the titles of books, magazines, works of art, ships, plays, movies, and TV series only when handwritten. 2. <i>Italics</i> are most often used in printed material or when using a computer for composition. 	<u>To Kill a Mocking Bird</u> <u>Newsweek</u> <u>Mona Lisa</u> <u>Titanic</u> <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> <i>Star Wars</i> <i>The Oprah Winfrey Show</i>

*See *English IV Teacher’s Guide* page 24.

Spelling: Write It Right!

Our English language owes its richness to the many words it has borrowed from different sources. The payment for this diversity is a wide variety in spelling and spelling rules.

Good spelling is expected of every writer. Spelling mistakes are certain to jolt your readers and may even prejudice them against what you have to say. In job or college applications, poor spelling can have even more serious outcomes.

You may find that you make the same spelling mistakes over and over again. If this is the case, you might find it helpful to keep a notebook of your personal writing mistakes. Record commonly made mistakes in your notebook and refer to them while you are proofreading. An example is given below. The mistakes used in the example are common ones.

	Mistakes	Corrections
○	alot	a lot
	quite vs. quiet	<i>quite</i> means “to an extreme” <i>quiet</i> means “silent”
	to vs. too	<i>too</i> means “also” or “more than enough”
	Febuary	February
	Wensday	Wednesday
○	its vs. it's	<i>it's</i> is short for “it is” <i>its</i> is possessive
	there vs. they're	<i>they're</i> is short for “they are”
	whose vs. who's	<i>who's</i> is short for “who is”
	your vs. you're	<i>you're</i> is short for “you are”
○	knowlege	knowledge
	necesary	necessary
	truely	truly
	enviroment	environment

Spelling Rules and the Exceptions

Learning to spell requires us to memorize the sequence of letters in a word. Some sequences are more difficult to remember than others. And the English language has many exceptions to the rules—letter combinations have different sounds in different words. For example, *ou* has one pronunciation in *trouble*, another in *could*, another in *cloud*, and still another in *though*. This makes it difficult to generalize our information—using what we know to spell other words without having to resort to the dictionary. When we have access to specific spelling rules, either in our heads or on a handy chart, we can learn to generalize and improve our spelling skills. The following charts of spelling rules are good references and will help you to improve your spelling skills. However, when in doubt, check a dictionary or spell checker. (Caution when using a spell checker: the word may be spelled correctly, but it's the incorrect word.)

Rules of Spelling

Write *ie*, except after *c*; or when sounded like *a*, as in *neighbor* and *weight*.

	<i>i before e</i>	<i>except after c or when sounded like a</i>
Examples	<div>believe field</div> <div>thief brief</div> <div>achieve shriek</div>	<div>receive</div> <div>receipt</div> <div>conceit</div> <div>ceiling</div> <div>eight</div> <div>reign</div> <div>freight</div> <div>vein</div>
Exceptions	<div>their</div> <div>seize</div> <div>height</div> <div>leisure</div>	<div>science</div> <div>conscious</div> <div>weird</div> <div>foreign</div> <div>neither</div> <div>counterfeit</div>

Only one English word ends in *-sede*; only three words end in *-ceed*; all other "seed" words end in *-cede*.

	<i>-sede</i>	<i>-ceed</i>	<i>-cede</i>
Examples	supersede	<div>succeed</div> <div>exceed</div> <div>proceed</div>	<div>precede</div> <div>recede</div> <div>concede</div> <div>accede</div> <div>secede</div> <div>intercede</div>

When a prefix is added to a word, the spelling of the word itself remains the same.

Examples	<div>il + literate = <u>ill</u>iterate</div> <div>in + numerable = <u>in</u>numerable</div> <div>im + mortal = <u>im</u>mortal</div> <div>un + certain = <u>un</u>certain</div> <div>dis + approve = <u>dis</u>approve</div> <div>mis + step = <u>mis</u>step</div> <div>re + organize = <u>re</u>organize</div> <div>over + rule = <u>over</u>rule</div>
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When the suffixes *-ness* and *-ly* are added to a word, the spelling of the word itself is not changed.

Examples	<div>sure + ly = <u>surely</u></div> <div>real + ly = <u>really</u></div> <div>usual + ly = <u>usually</u></div>	<div>useful + ness = <u>usefulness</u></div> <div>polite + ness = <u>politeness</u></div> <div>stubborn + ness = <u>stubbornness</u></div>
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Exceptions	<div>y to i</div> <div>—</div> <div>empty = <u>emptiness</u></div> <div>easy = <u>easily</u></div>	<div>true and due</div> <div>—</div> <div>true = <u>truly</u></div> <div>due = <u>duly</u></div>
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More Rules of Spelling

Drop the final e before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

Examples	share + ing = <u>sharing</u>	fame + ous = <u>famous</u>
	hope + ing = <u>hoping</u>	imagine + ary = <u>imaginary</u>
	care + ing = <u>caring</u>	admire + ation = <u>admiration</u>
	love + able = <u>lovable</u>	force + ible = <u>forcible</u>
Exceptions	mile + age = <u>mileage</u>	dye + ing = <u>dyeing</u>
	singe + ing = <u>singeing</u>	change + able = <u>changeable</u>
	peace + able = <u>peaceable</u>	advantage + ous = <u>advantageous</u>

Keep the final e before a suffix beginning with a consonant.

Examples	nine + ty = <u>ninety</u>	care + ful = <u>careful</u>
	hope + less = <u>hopeless</u>	use + less = <u>useless</u>
	sure + ly = <u>surely</u>	pave + ment = <u>pavement</u>
Exceptions	whole + ly = <u>wholly</u>	nine + th = <u>ninth</u>
	due + ly = <u>duly</u>	awe + ful = <u>awful</u>
	true + ly = <u>truly</u>	judge + ment = <u>judgment</u>

Words ending in y preceded by a consonant, change the y to i before any suffix not beginning with i.

Examples	fifty + eth = <u>fiftieth</u>	worry + ed = <u>worried</u>
	lazy + ness = <u>laziness</u>	mystery + ous = <u>mysterious</u>
Exceptions	one syllable words	shy + ness = <u>shyness</u>
		spry + ly = <u>spryly</u>
		sky + ward = <u>skyward</u>

Double the final consonant before a suffix that begins with a vowel if both of the following conditions exist: 1) the word has only one syllable or is accented on the last syllable, and 2) the word ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel.

Examples	drop + ing = <u>dropping</u>	occur + ence = <u>occurrence</u>
	plan + ed = <u>planned</u>	propel + er = <u>propeller</u>
	sit + ing = <u>sitting</u>	control + ed = <u>controlled</u>
Exceptions	box + ing = <u>boxing</u>	tunnel + ing = <u>tunneling</u>
	appear + ance = <u>appearance</u>	travel + er = <u>traveler</u>

Proofreading Your Work: The Last Step

After you have finished revising and editing your research paper and are satisfied with its overall quality, you are ready to prepare a final version of it—to proofread. Proofreading is when you check your work for misspellings, typing or word processing mistakes, omitted words, and any other problems you have not yet caught.

Use the techniques below when you proof your writing.

Proofreading Tips

1. Say each word slowly and aloud. Don't rush through your proofreading or you will read what you think you wrote rather than what is actually on the paper.
2. Keep a list of your common spelling mistakes. Glance at these before you proofread and then double-check these words when they appear.
3. Read backwards to check your spelling. Start at the end of your report or paragraph and read to the beginning. This will force you to look at each word. Study the examples below.

Use these professional copyediting symbols as you proofread your writing. Use them for every piece of writing you do or when you are editing someone else's work.

¶ Television has become the center of many americans' lives. Some people watch four to six hours a day.

[○] [People worry more about the ups and downs of soap opera charakters than about there own family members.

[Family conversations center around which program (two) watch. No ^{one} knows the long-term effects of ~~X~~television on the American family.

Before Editing and Proofing

A+

Television has become the center of many Americans' lives. Some people watch four to six hours a day. People worry more about the ups and downs of soap opera characters than about their own family members. Family conversations center around which program to watch. No one knows the long-term effects of television on the American family.

After Editing and Proofing

Copyediting Symbols

Type of Correction Needed	Margin Mark	Editor's Mark
Insert missing item	^	Proofre ^a ding is fun.
Insert space	#	Proofreading [#] is fun.
Insert period	⦿	Proofreading is fun⦿
Delete	↗	Proofreadings↗ is fun.
Close up extra space	⌒	Proofreading is fun.
Make lowercase	lc	Proofreading is Fun.
Capitalize	cap	proofreading is fun.
Use italics	ital	<u>Proofreading is fun.</u>
Underline	underline	<u>Proofreading is fun.</u>
Transpose	tr	Proofreading fun is.
Don't abbreviate	wo	The class is 3 credit hrs.
Abbreviate	abbr	The stool is 3.5 feet high.
Check spelling	sp	Proofreeding
Leave it as it was; ignore editing marks which appear above the dots	stet	The stool is 3.5 ⁴ feet high. ...
Enclose in quotation marks	“ ”	“Proofreading is fun,” she said.
Enclose in parentheses	parens	This (proofreading) is fun.
Center] [] Proofreading is fun. [
Move left	[[Proofreading is fun.
Move right]] Proofreading is fun.
Fix this sentence fragment	frag	Because the stool is 3.5' high.
Equalize spacing	spacing	Proofreading is fun.

Editing Tips

1. **Wait a while before you edit** to get some distance from the content.
2. **Reread the writing as if it were someone else's.** We tend to be overly critical of our own work.
3. **Identify strong aspects of the writing.** It is important to acknowledge what you're good at, as well as what you need help with.
4. **Ask questions** if you're not sure whether you've made a mistake. Even if you were right, you'll feel more confident the next time.
5. **Read your writing aloud.** Hearing your words helps you identify mistakes you might overlook reading silently.
6. **Point to your words as you read them.** This will help you read what is actually there, instead of what you think is there.
7. **Write clear copies for yourself** and your other proofreaders. A paper covered with corrections is hard to proofread.
8. **Read for one type of error at a time**—spelling, sentence structure, or grammar.
9. **Keep a record in a notebook of your common mistakes** and how to correct them.
10. **Use all of the tools available to help you edit**—spell checkers and grammar checkers, dictionaries, knowledgeable people, etc.

Résumés: Putting Your Best Self on Paper

A **résumé** is a written document of your education, skills, and work experience. Prospective employers need to know your qualifications, and they need to find this information quickly and easily. Your résumé should be clear and easy to read. The information is given in phrases rather than in complete sentences. Your résumé identifies those aspects of your life that matter in the workplace.

Each résumé will be different, but most of them contain the following information:

- personal data (name, address, phone number, and e-mail address if you have one)
- your objective (the kind of work you'd like to do)
- your education (any diplomas, special training courses)
- your work experience
- your skills

Education and work experience are usually listed in chronological order, beginning with the most recent.

In addition to the above listings, at the top of your résumé, write the word **résumé** using a capital letter. At the bottom, write that references are available upon request, but do not include names of references. When selecting references, choose people who can honestly and fully describe your qualifications. Be sure to have a list, complete with phone numbers and addresses, ready before your interview.

There are many other résumé styles. It is a good idea to look at several before writing your own résumé. On the following page is one example of how to write a résumé.

Read the sample résumé below.

Résumé

Robert Sheffield
411 Redwood Drive
Orlando, Florida 33333
(407) 555-1212



mail
résumé
today!

- **Objective:** Position as a Staff Assistant in Parks and Recreation with eventual promotion to Park Manager.
- **Skills:** Swimming, coaching, working with people of all ages.
- **Education:** 1996-1999, Central Florida High School, Orlando, Florida. Swim Team, came in first place in 1998 and 1999 Statewide Tournaments in two events.
- **Experience:** 1998, Assistant Coach, Junior Varsity Team. Summer, 1998, Senior Camp Counselor, YMCA Camps of America, Orlando, Florida. Worked with teenagers ages 12 to 16 on improving swimming, canoeing and water safety skills. Also taught archery and coordinated Parents' Day Event.

Summer, 1997, Junior Camp Counselor, YMCA Camps of America, Orlando. Worked with children ages 8 to 12 in swimming, canoeing and water safety.
- References available on request.

Cover Letters: The Art of Introduction

When you mail or fax in your résumé or even if you drop it off in person to a prospective employer, you will need to include a **cover letter**. The cover letter explains why you are submitting your résumé. Perhaps you saw an advertisement in the paper, or perhaps a friend told you about the position.

A cover letter gives you the opportunity to introduce yourself and your résumé. It should be typed or written on a word processor using a standard font and printed on good quality paper. The style of the letter should be formal and businesslike with no grammatical mistakes. Most importantly, the cover letter should be brief and to the point.



Cover Letter Check List

- ✓ **return address** (right-hand corner)
- ✓ **name** (or title), **company name**, and the **address** of the person
- ✓ **salutation** (Dear Mr. Jones: or Dear Sir or Madam:)
- ✓ **body of letter** (brief and to the point)
- ✓ **close of letter** (Sincerely,)

Be sure to put your return address in the right-hand corner of the letter about 10 spaces from the top of the page. Then five spaces down on the left-hand side, you should type the name (or title), company name, and the address of the person to whom you are writing if you know the name of that person. If not, then use the appropriate title, for instance “Personnel Director.”

Most business letters begin with the standard salutation, “Dear Mr. Jones:” or “Dear Sir or Madam:.” Note that the proper punctuation for a salutation is a colon. Then the body of the letter will be written in block style, that is with no indentations for paragraphs. Instead, double space between paragraphs.

The first paragraph of your letter should state your motivation for writing the letter, in other words, what is the exact job for which you are applying and how did you learn about the job. The first paragraph should also say what you have to offer the company.

In the second paragraph, your cover letter should briefly summarize the highlights of your résumé. You should also take the opportunity to add those qualities that would not be included in your résumé but would make you a good employee, for instance, enthusiasm for your work, the ability to meet deadlines, or a statement of your future goals.

You may add a third paragraph which goes into more detail than the second one and offers an amplification of your background and experience. This experience may come from work you have done at school or in the community, and describe any special honors you have received, your scholastic record, or anything that will help show your best qualities.

Your final paragraph serves as a summary statement to your cover letter. It tells the potential employer what you have enclosed and how he or she may get further information. It also opens the door for an interview.

The Body of the Letter
Paragraph #1: state your motivation for writing the letter and what you have to offer the company
Paragraph #2: briefly summarize the highlights of your resume, noting the qualities that would make you a good employee
Paragraph #3: more detail than second paragraph and offer an amplification of your background and experience

Be sure to close your letter with the word “Sincerely” followed by a comma, and then type your name, leaving three lines for your signature above your name.

There are a few things you should avoid when writing a cover letter.

Don't...

- ▶ include a picture of yourself unless asked for one.
- ▶ include the name of someone as a reference unless that person gives permission.



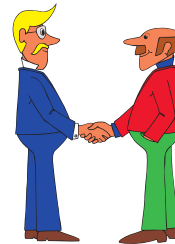
- ▶ be too aggressive.
- ▶ make any negative comments about a past or current employer.



There are also a few things you should keep in mind.

Do...

- ▶ type your letter on white or light-colored paper and use black ink.
- ▶ review your paper for correct spelling and grammar.
- ▶ proofread for typographical errors.
- ▶ be positive, honest, and natural.
- ▶ read your letter aloud.



Read the sample cover letter below.

411 Redwood Drive
Orlando FL 33333
June 18, 1998

Ms. Dale Rogers
Recreation Manager,
Parks and Recreation
2222 Playing Avenue
Orlando FL 33333

Dear Ms. Rogers:

I read your advertisement for an Assistant Swimming Coach in the *Orlando Sentinel*, and I would like to be considered for the job. I have recently graduated from Central Florida High School where I was the captain of the swim team this past year and a member of the swim team for two years before that.

I have worked with swimmers of all ages and at many different skill levels, including serving as assistant coach for our Junior Varsity Team at Central Florida High School. As you can see from my resume, I have worked the past two summers at YMCA Camps of America. Because I enjoy swimming and coaching, I bring enthusiasm to my work. This enthusiasm helps my students have fun, as well as learn how to be good swimmers.

In addition to my experience as an assistant coach and as a swimmer, I have taken two safety courses from the Red Cross. I am planning to complete a more advanced course this year. I plan to have a career in public recreation, and health and safety are important to me.

I am enclosing my resume for your reference. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and discuss the position with your department. I will also provide any more information that you may need.

Sincerely,

Robert Sheffield

Robert Sheffield

College Application Essays: Showing and Telling Who You Are

Many colleges and universities require an essay as part of the application process. The essay allows you to present a side of yourself that is impossible to do with test scores and in application forms. The best college-entrance essays are well written, natural, and interesting.

Here are some rules to follow when writing a college-entrance essay:

1. If a topic is provided, make sure you address it. If a topic is not provided, pick something that is interesting and meaningful to you. Be genuine. Do not try to “wow” the reader with what you think they want to hear. Let your personality shine through your essay. Do not simply list what is already on your application.
2. Show yourself in the best possible light without being pretentious or boastful. Pretentious essays are those that may have a lot of difficult words when ordinary words would do. Pretentious writers “pretend” to be something they’re not. You can, however, still show the very best side of yourself by using specific words, rather than vague words, and providing examples and facts to back up your claims.
3. Choose a topic that really interests you. If you are excited about a topic, then your reader will most likely also find it interesting or exciting. Sometimes people think that what they do or the activities they enjoy are not interesting to other people, but usually just the opposite is true. Each person has special talents and interests that are unique to him or her. Quite often, we know a lot about certain things. If you choose a topic about which you are well informed, then you will have ample details to make the essay a good one.
4. Remember what you have learned from all your previous essay writing assignments. Have a good, clear thesis. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence and detail sentences which pertain to the topic sentence. The concluding paragraph should both summarize your main points and present one new perspective on your topic.