


Beginning WRITING

TAKING NOTES



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MAIN IDEAS

Recognizing Misplaced Modifiers



PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION

Linking Related Thoughts



CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER





UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: NOUNS

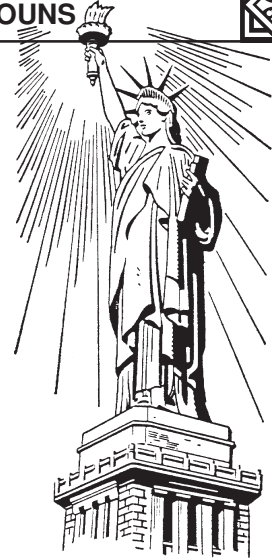


- ◇ A *noun* is a word that names a person, place, thing, or idea.
 A *common noun* names any person, place, thing, or idea.
 A *proper noun* names a specific person, place, thing, or idea.

EXAMPLES:

COMMON NOUNS: **student, forest, pencil, confusion**

PROPER NOUNS: **Howard, Everglades, Statue of Liberty**



- A.** First underline all the nouns in the following sentences. Then write **CN** above each *common noun* and **PN** above each *proper noun*.

1. Emily was training herself to become a spy.
2. The teenager anxiously prepared to complete her first mission.
3. Emily took off her shoes and tiptoed across the carpet.
4. The young spy quietly opened the door and peeked into the bedroom.
5. "Margo isn't doing her homework!" Emily yelled to her mother.
6. "I hate sneakiness!" Margo shouted at her sister.

- B.** Rewrite each sentence. Replace the **boldface** common noun with a specific proper noun. The first sentence has been done for you.

1. The **seashore** is my favorite vacation spot.

Waikiki Beach is my favorite vacation spot.

2. The **teacher** carefully explained the rules.
-

3. Passengers were upset when the **airline** canceled flights.
-

4. The **store** offered a refund to every unhappy customer.
-

CHALLENGE: Select one of the proper nouns from Part B. On the back of this sheet, write three sentences telling about that person, place, or thing. For example, you might write three sentences about Waikiki Beach. Circle each noun you use.



UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: VERBS



◇ *Verbs* are words that express an action or a state of being. Action verbs (run, talked, went) tell what people *do*. Other verbs (is, am, are) express a *state of being*.

A. Add a verb to complete each sentence. Then, on the line before the sentence, tell what the verb expresses. Write **A** for *action* or **S** for *state of being*.

1. _____ Many people _____ the taste of chocolate.
2. _____ Montezuma, a ruler of the ancient Aztecs, _____
50 cups of hot chocolate a day.
3. _____ Hot chocolate _____ still a favorite drink.
4. _____ Chocolate, however, _____ quite high in calories.
5. _____ Do you _____ chocolate or vanilla?

Most verbs change form to show the *time* something is happening. The form of a verb shows whether something is happening now, has happened in the past, or will happen in the future.

EXAMPLES: The car needs a tune-up. (present)
 The car needed a tune-up last month. (past)
 The car will need a tune-up in three months. (future)

B. The action in the following paragraph takes place in the present. First underline each verb. Then rewrite the paragraph on the back of this sheet. Replace each present-tense verb with a past-tense verb. The first one has been done for you.

was

In my grandma's living room is a portrait of Elvis Presley on black velvet. Everyone in the family voices an opinion about the picture.

Uncle Leo calls it hideous. Aunt Sally groans when she looks at it. When I look at the picture, I feel happy. I believe it is the most beautiful thing in Grandma's house.





UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: VERB PHRASES



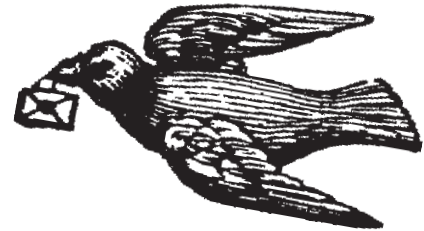
- ◇ One or more *helping verbs* are often used along with the *main verb* in a sentence. Together, the helping verb or verbs and main verb make up a *verb phrase*. A helping verb can show time or add meaning to the main verb.

EXAMPLES: The mechanic *will* check the tires before we leave.
 The mechanic *should* check the fluid levels too.
 The mechanic *has been* working for an hour.

Sometimes the words in verb phrases are separated by other words.

EXAMPLES: You *should not pay* your bill until the work is completed.
 I *had never seen* such a big repair bill!

Find the complete verb phrase in each sentence. Write it on the line. *Hint:* The number in parentheses tells how many words are in the verb phrase.



1. During World War II, a homing pigeon named Beachcomber would carry messages across enemy lines. (2) _____
2. In all, 32 homing pigeons were used in the war. (2) _____
3. Homing pigeons have been used for service and for sport. (3) _____
4. Their owners will often release them far from home. (2) _____
5. The birds will cleverly find their way across many miles. (2) _____
6. A racing pigeon must reach its home loft as quickly as possible. (2) _____
7. That weary bird over there must have been flying all day! (4) _____

CHALLENGE: On the back of this sheet, write three sentences about a race or contest. Use a verb phrase in each sentence. Circle the main verb and underline the helping verb in each verb phrase.



UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: IRREGULAR VERB FORMS



- ◆ Add *-ed* or *-d* to form the past tense of a *regular verb*. To form the past tense of an *irregular verb*, you will usually change the spelling.

EXAMPLES:

REGULAR VERB:		IRREGULAR VERB:	
PRESENT	PAST	PRESENT	PAST
look	looked	sing	sang



- A.** Read the irregular past-tense verb forms in the box. Then complete the puzzle by matching each one to a present-tense form listed as a clue.

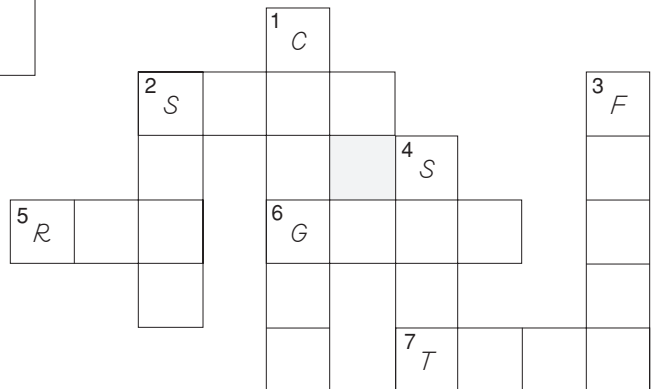
ran	swam	caught	grew
tore	sent	sank	froze

ACROSS

2. swim
5. run
6. grow
7. tear

DOWN

1. catch
2. sink
3. freeze
4. send



- B.** Fill in each blank with the past-tense form of the verb in parentheses. The verb you write should *rhyme* with the words in italics. The first one has been done for you.

1. With a bong and a *clang*, the steeple bell (ring) rang.
2. The baby eagle grew and *grew*; then from its nest it bravely (fly) _____.
3. Into the shady, peaceful cove, my little boat I slowly (drive) _____.
4. The list of promises each candidate (write) _____, should help us decide just how to *vote*.

CHALLENGE: On the back of this sheet, write five sentences using the past-tense form of the following verbs: *steal, catch, dive, do, buy*.

**UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: INDEFINITE PRONOUNS**

- ◇ *Indefinite pronouns* can cause writers problems. These pronouns include words like *all*, *each*, *either*, *few*, and *none*. As with other pronouns, writers must make sure that every indefinite pronoun agrees with its verb.

INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

SINGULAR				MAY BE SINGULAR OR PLURAL		
either	anyone	no one	each	any	more	some
neither	everybody	none		all	most	

- A.** Read each sentence. Then circle the indefinite pronoun and underline its verb. Finally, write **S** if the pronoun is *singular* or **P** if it is *plural*. The first one has been done for you.

- P All of the party guests have been given a list of items for the scavenger hunt.
- _____ Each of the party guests has been given a list of items for the scavenger hunt.
- _____ Everybody in the group is expected to participate.
- _____ Some of the guests don't want to join the hunt.
- _____ A few feel silly going door to door asking for unusual objects.
- _____ Most think it sounds like great fun!
- _____ I'll bet that nobody will be able to find a wooden clothespin.

- B.** Complete the two sentences below. Make sure to use a verb that agrees with the **boldface** indefinite pronoun.

- All** of the job applicants _____.
- Both** Hector and Neil _____.

CHALLENGE: Indefinite pronouns are often the subject of a sentence. In fact, one indefinite pronoun and one verb can make a complete sentence!

EXAMPLES: *Everyone screamed. Nobody answers.*

On the back of this sheet, write three two-word sentences containing an indefinite pronoun and a verb.



UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT



◇ A verb must agree with its subject. A single subject requires a single verb, and a plural subject takes a plural verb.

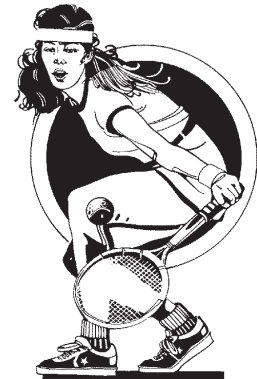
EXAMPLES:

SINGULAR

The girl is playing tennis.
 He has been to the court.
 Jolie likes the show.
 The team goes to meets.

PLURAL

The girls are playing tennis.
 They have been to the court.
 Jolie and Todd like the show.
 The teams go to meets.



A. Use a verb from the box or a verb of your own to correctly complete each sentence.

think	enjoys	became	are	eat	drink	take	time
rides	believe	consume	pace	is	does	plays	run

- Gloria Jackson _____ ball each Saturday morning.
- Marilyn and Sandra _____ two miles after school.
- The team _____ the bus to the baseball game.
- Many athletes _____ that concentration is hard to master.

B. First, circle the agreement error in each sentence. Then rewrite each sentence correctly on the line.

- Percy play in the basketball tournament tomorrow.

- When does the teams celebrate their victories?

- Some people likes to play sports, and others prefer to watch.

- To build strength, Marlene use weights in her training.

CHALLENGE: On the back of this sheet, write four sentences about a sport that you enjoy watching or playing. Underline the subject and circle the verb in each sentence.

**UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: CHOOSING APPROPRIATE ADJECTIVES**

- ◆ Writers use adjectives to make their writing more interesting. Selecting appropriate adjectives creates a stronger, clearer picture for the reader.

A. Circle the stronger adjective in each sentence.

1. A (large / huge) dinosaur discovered in South Dakota was named “Sue.”
2. (Rocky / Hard) material surrounded the fossilized bones.
3. Fossil hunters were excited about their (interesting / fascinating) find.
4. Sue was a carnivorous dinosaur with very (adequate / strong) teeth.
5. Sue’s (big / massive) bones weighed more than 3,000 pounds.
6. Sue’s (strong / powerful) arms were about the length of human arms.
7. Many students have the (fine / golden) opportunity to see Sue.
8. Sue is now a (good / magnificent) exhibit in a big museum.
9. You can also see (some / colorful) pictures of Sue on the Internet.

**B.** Add *-y*, *-ly*, *-ful*, *-ous*, or *-ive* on the line to complete the **boldface** adjectives. You will need to drop a final *e* in one word before adding the suffix.

1. Archeologists work **careful**_____ so they don’t destroy a specimen.
2. Today, Sue’s **mass**_____ skeleton stands in the Field Museum.
3. The **fame**_____ dinosaur from South Dakota is nearly 45 feet long.
4. The **master**_____ reconstruction of the dinosaur took several years to complete.

CHALLENGE: On the back of this sheet, write two sentences about dinosaurs. Use at least one strong adjective in each sentence.

**UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: ADVERBS**

- ◆ *Adverbs* describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Writers use adverbs to give more information about an action. Sometimes a group of words serves as an adverb. Adverbs answer these questions:

EXAMPLES: How?
quickly

When?
today

Where?
everywhere

To what degree?
totally

- A.** Read the following sentence. Then use an adverb to answer each question.

Today the raft nearly capsized as it swiftly approached the rapids.

- How did the raft move? _____
- When did the rafting take place? _____
- To what degree did the raft capsize? _____

- B.** Circle the adverb in each sentence. Then underline the verb each adverb describes. Next, tell whether the adverb answers the question *how, when, where, or to what degree*.

- When the storm broke, the guide rowed furiously. _____
- The rain completely drenched her. _____
- We rafted everywhere we could maneuver our craft. _____
- Yesterday Felix took his first whitewater trip. _____

- C.** Add an adverb to complete each of the following sentences. Notice the *how, when, or where* clue given in parentheses.

- (when)* _____ Felix and Anna ate a picnic lunch before they went rafting.
- There were ants *(where)* _____, crawling on the picnic food.
- Felix and Anna ate *(how)* _____ so they could start their rafting trip.
- They were *(to what degree)* _____ eager to begin their river adventure.

CHALLENGE: On the back of this sheet write three sentences about a recreational activity you enjoy. Use at least one adverb in each sentence. Remember that adverbs tell *how, when, where, or to what degree*.



UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: PREPOSITIONS



◇ A *preposition* shows the relationship of a noun or pronoun to another word in the sentence. Prepositions can show direction, position, time, or cause.

EXAMPLES: above the house (*direction*) in the street (*position*)
 during the storm (*time*) sick with fear (*cause*)

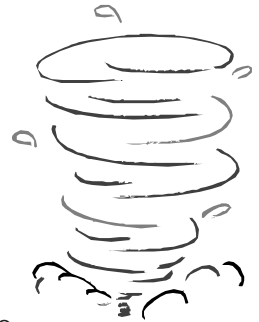
A. Write the preposition from the box that best completes each sentence.

- | |
|----------------|
| against |
| under |
| up |
| out |
| near |

1. Arnie looked _____ at the stormy sky.
2. The rain beat _____ the windows.
3. When the lights went _____, the room was *dark*.
4. A lightning bolt hit _____ the house.
5. Arnie snuggled _____ the blankets.

◇ A *prepositional phrase* always begins with a preposition. It ends with a noun or pronoun called the *objective of the preposition*.

EXAMPLE: The storm came *before we went to school*.



B. Underline the prepositional phrase in each sentence below. Then decide whether the prepositional phrase indicates *direction, position, time, or cause*. Write your choice on the line.

1. The hurricane demolished almost every house on the beach. _____
2. Marla and Oscar went down to the storm cellar. _____
3. Evacuation centers were set up during the hurricane. _____
4. After the storm, neighbors helped each other rebuild. _____
5. One region in the Midwest is called the Tornado Belt. _____
6. The damage from high winds can be devastating. _____

CHALLENGE: On the back of this sheet, write a four-sentence paragraph about a big storm. Include at least one preposition in each sentence.



UNDERSTANDING PARTS OF SPEECH: INTERJECTIONS



◇ *Interjections* are words used to express emotion. A strong interjection is followed by an exclamation point. A mild interjection is followed by a comma.

EXAMPLES: *Wow!* What a great concert.
Oh, we'll go another time.

A. Put either a comma or an exclamation point on the line after each interjection.

1. Super___ We got the tickets before they sold out.
2. Oh___ you mean we have to sit in the balcony?
3. Hooray___ Everyone in the group can go.
4. Well___ at least the concert wasn't canceled.



B. Complete each sentence with an appropriate interjection.

1. _____, I sure wish I could go to the concert.
2. _____! That loud music hurts my ears.
3. _____! I'm not ready to go yet.
4. _____, that show was way too long.

C. Rewrite the following sentences, using the correct punctuation after each interjection.

1. My goodness I didn't expect to have so much fun.

2. Hey You're sitting in my seat.

3. Whew We barely made it to the show on time.

4. Well maybe we should have left earlier.

CHALLENGE: On the back of this sheet, write two sentences about a musical event. In one sentence use a *strong* interjection. In the other use a *mild* interjection. Remember to punctuate correctly.