

MOUNT EVERETT ENGLISH STYLE GUIDE

THE EIGHT PRIMARY PARTS OF SPEECH

NOUNS name persons, places, things, or ideas

- **Proper** nouns name specific subjects and are always capitalized, e.g., *Idaho*
- **Common** nouns name nonspecific subjects and are **not** capitalized, e.g., *state*

PRONOUNS are words used in place of nouns

- A pronoun agrees with the noun it replaces in number, gender, and person, e.g., *As John grew up, he grew wiser.* (**he** is singular, masculine, third person)
- **Indefinite** pronouns refer to unnamed nouns and include such words as *all, another, anybody, both, each other, everything, few, many, most, much, neither, nobody, none, no one, nothing, one, one another, other* and *several*
- **Interrogative** pronouns pose questions, e.g., *what, which, who, whom, whose*

ADJECTIVES modify nouns or pronouns and include the articles *a, an,* and *the*

- Adjectives indicate *how many, how much, what kind,* or *which one*
- Adjectives often precede modified subjects, e.g., *The **young** fox ran quickly.*
- Many adjectives use the suffixes *-able, -al, -ful, -ic, -ish, -less, -ous,* or *-y*
- **Proper** adjectives are capitalized, e.g., *American, English, French, Victorian*

VERBS indicate action or state of being, matching subjects in number and person

- Verb tense indicates when the action occurs: present (*the action **occurs** now*), past (*the action **occurred** before*), and future (*the action **will occur** later*)
- An **auxiliary** or **helping** verb assists in creating tense, mood, and voice, e.g., *The pair **had** walked aimlessly before they found their way.*
- A **transitive** verb requires an object to receive action, e.g., *I **threw** the ball.*
- An **intransitive** verb does not need an object, e.g., *The cat **ate**.*
- A **linking** verb connects a subject to its state of being, e.g., *The girl **felt** angry.*
- In the **active voice**, the subject acts, e.g., *A dog **gnawed** the bone.*
- In **passive voice**, the subject is acted on, e.g., *The bone **was gnawed** by a dog.*
- A **verbal** is a word made from a verb but used as a noun, adjective, or adverb, e.g., ***Swimming** is my favorite summer activity. She prefers **going fishing**.*

ADVERBS modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs

- Adverbs may demonstrate time, indicating *when, how often,* or *how long*
- Adverbs may demonstrate place, indicating *where, from where,* or *to where*
- Adverbs may demonstrate manner, indicating *how, how little,* or *how much*
- Many adverbs use the suffix *-ly*, e.g., *The lion attacked **amazingly** quickly.*

PREPOSITIONS create relationships between subjects, e.g., *He ran **beside** her.*

- *about, above, across, after, against, along, alongside, amid, among, around, as, at, before, behind, below, beneath, between, beyond, by, despite, down, during, except, excluding, for, from, in, in front of, inside, instead of, into, like, minus, near, of, off, on, onto, on top of, opposite, out of, outside, over, past, per, regarding, since, throughout, to, toward(s), under, underneath, unlike, until, up, upon, via, with, within, without*

CONJUNCTIONS connect words or groups of words

- **Coordinating** conjunctions connect items of equal value and include **FANBOYS** (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*), e.g., *She was tall **and** gangly.*
- **Correlative** conjunctions connect equal items using pairs and include *if ... then, either ... or, not only ... but also,* and *both ... and*
- **Subordinating** conjunctions establish unequal relationships and include *after, although, as if, as long as, because, before, if, in order that, provided, since, so that, than, unless, until, when, whenever, whereas, wherever,* and *whether*

INTERJECTIONS express strong emotion without grammatical connection

- Nouns and adjectives may be used as interjections if not taken literally
- An exclamation point indicates stronger emotion, e.g., ***Rats!** I broke the vase!*
- A comma indicates milder emotion, e.g., ***Well,** it wasn't the first time I did.*

COMMONLY MISSPELLED WORDS – absence, acceptance, accidentally, address, athlete, audience, beautiful, beginning, benefited, bureau, caffeine, canceled, cemetery, conceivable, conscience, conscious, controlling, decision, definitely, desperate, dying, efficiency, embarrass, especially, exaggerate, existence, familiar, fascinating, gauge, grieve, guidance, hypocrisy, illiterate, inconvenience, infinite, jealousy, judgmental, knowledgeable, lens, license, loneliness, maneuver, marriage, mysterious, naïve, necessary, noticeable, obvious, occasion, occurrence, particularly, patience, perseverance, possessed, privilege, questionnaire, reference, referred, repetition, rhythm, separate, severely, simultaneous, sophomore, subtle, sufficiency, suspicious, symbolic, tendency, thoroughly, transferred, tries, truly, trying, unanimous, usable, usually, vacuum, vague, valuable, villain, weird, whether, wholly, yield

PHRASES & CLAUSES

- A **phrase** is a group of words acting together to function as a single noun, adjective, or adverb
- A **clause** is a group of words that contains both a subject and a verb
- An **independent** or **main clause** may stand alone, e.g., *He enjoyed taking long walks.*
- A **dependent** or **subordinate clause** may not stand alone, requiring other words to make sense, e.g., ***When sad,** he enjoyed taking long walks.*

SENTENCES

- **Declarative** sentences make statements, e.g., *I would like you to go to the store.*
- **Interrogative** sentences ask or pose questions, e.g., *Are you willing to go to the store?*
- **Imperative** sentences command, request, or beg, e.g., *Go to the store right now. Please, go.*
- **Exclamatory** sentences express strong feelings e.g., *It is essential that you go to the store!*
- **Simple** sentences contain one main clause of a subject and a verb, e.g., *The dog barked.*
- **Compound** sentences contain two or more main clauses, e.g., *The dog barked and the cat hissed.*
- **Complex** sentences contain one main clause and at least one subordinate clause, e.g., *The dog was rather weak and timid despite its loud bark.*
- **Compound-complex** sentences contain at least two main clauses and at least one subordinate, e.g., *Despite its loud bark, the dog was weak, and the cat, knowing its own strength, struck cruelly.*

SIX BASIC RULES OF SENTENCES

1. All sentences in prose begin with a capital letter
2. All sentences in prose require end punctuation
3. All sentences in prose must have a subject
4. All sentences in prose must have a verb
5. All sentences in prose express a complete thought
6. All rules may be broken, but only with deliberate, consistent control and clear communication

FIVE COMMON SENTENCE MISTAKES

1. A **sentence fragment** is punctuated like a whole sentence but lacks a subject, a verb, or both
2. A **comma splice** joins two complete sentences by incorrectly replacing a period with a comma
3. A **rambling sentence** results from overusing conjunctions such as *and, but,* or *then*
4. A **run-on sentence** joins complete sentences without needed punctuation or connecting words
5. Never use **texting abbreviation** in formal writing

PUNCTUATION

PERIODS (.) end declarative sentences, mild imperative sentences, or polite requests or interrogative sentences not requiring answers

QUESTION MARKS (?) end direct interrogative sentences

- Do not use for indirect questions that state but do not ask

EXCLAMATION POINTS (!) end exclamatory sentences, strong imperative sentences, and occasional fragments or interjections

- Do not use exclamation points in formal essay writing

COMMAS (,) separate sentence elements to ensure sentence clarity

- Use to separate individual items in a list of more than two items
- Use to separate adjectives modifying the same noun equally
- Use to offset an introductory word, clause, or phrase
- Use to enclose an explanatory word, clause, or phrase
- Use to enclose and offset inessential information
- Use to separate two independent clauses linked by FANBOYS, the coordinating conjunctions *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*

QUOTATION MARKS (“ ”) identify the exact wording of a speaker

- Place periods or commas inside the end quotation mark
- Place exclamation points or question marks within the end mark only if the exclamation or question is part of the quoted thought
- Use for titles of shorter works such as poems, stories, or essays

SEMICOLONS (;) separate sentence elements more strongly than commas but not as strongly as periods

- Use to separate independent clauses not linked by FANBOYS
- Use for clauses, phrases, or lists containing serial commas

COLONS (:) signal that a statement, explanation, or list will follow

- Use to emphasize a following word, phrase, or clause
- Use to introduce a quote or question with greater formality

ELLIPSES (...) indicate that irrelevant words have been removed

- Use to mark an interrupted thought or one expressed hesitantly
- Do not use ellipses as substitutes for other punctuation

PARENTHESES () enclose explanatory information of smaller relevance than is typically offset by commas

- Do not use parentheses as substitutes for commas
- Do not use parentheses to offset essential information

BRACKETS [] enclose matter that is independent from the sentence

- Use brackets to correct or call attention to an in-text error
- Use brackets to mark an editorial comment or addition

DASHES (—) carry the force of strong commas, but should not be used to substitute for commas as they interrupt flow dramatically

- Use a dash to indicate a sudden break, change, or afterthought
- Use a dash to emphasize or set apart a word or phrase

HYPHENS (-) serve to combine or fuse words into single concepts

- Use to join multiple words being used as a single adjective
- Use to separate the prefixes *self-* and *ex-* from root words
- Use to avoid three same consonants in a word, e.g., *grass-seed*

APOSTROPHES (’) indicate contraction of two words or possession

- Use to indicate a contraction, e.g., *is not* becomes *isn't*
- Use to form a noun's possessive, e.g., *That is the puppy's ball.*

MLA FORMATTING

- **Heading** – four lines justified to the left; include your name, your teacher's name, the course name, and the date
- **Dates** – write dates as *day month year*; abbreviate all months as three letters except May, June, and July
- **Title** – center on a new line; do not use quotation marks
- **Spacing** – double-space; use one-inch margins on all sides
- **Paragraphs** – indent a tab or ten spaces; do not use blank lines
- **Pagination** – last name and page go in the upper right corner

William Smith
Mrs. Jones
English 11
21 Dec. 2012

What Goes Around

Many people believe that the planet has an expiration date that will soon

PARENTHETIC CITATIONS

- Parenthetical citations are required for all direct and indirect quotations to give proper credit and avoid plagiarism
- Provide only enough information to accurately direct readers to a thorough corresponding entry in your Works Cited
- If the sentence is a statement, place the parenthetical citation after the end quotation mark but inside the period
- If the original material asks a question, place the question mark inside the end quotation mark and place the citation outside
- If the original material is a statement that you use to create a question, the question mark follows the parenthetical citation
- For **one author**, provide last name and page(s) → (Jones 27)
- For **authors with the same last name**, provide additional first initials → (J. Jones 93), (W. Jones 22), (A. Jones 4-9)
- For **sources with two or three authors**, provide all last names and page(s) → (Jones, Smith and Fields 119)
- For **sources with no author**, provide either a full short title or a shortened title and page(s) → (“Details Matter” 88-89)
- If **quoting quotes** or materials that are cited quotations in your source, use *qtd. in* → (qtd. in Jones 43)
- For **Internet articles**, indicate provider and paragraph(s), not pages → (SBRSD, par. 3), (Jones, par. 9), (“Luck” pars. 4-8)

WORKS CITED

- A Works Cited page should follow your essay
- Center the Works Cited heading but do not underline, italicize, boldface, or place in quotation marks
- Create thorough entries only for sources cited in your essay
- Alphabetize all entries by authors' last names and titles
- Begin the first line of each new entry at the left margin and use hanging indentation for each additional line
- Use exact punctuation given below for each works cited entry
- **Books** → Last name, first name. Full Title. City of publication: publisher, most recent copyright.
- **Journals** → Last name, first name. “Article Title.” Journal volume (year): pages.
- **Periodicals** → Last name, first name. “Article Title.” Magazine or Newspaper Title day month year: pages.
- **Internet** → Last name, first name. “Article Title.” Site Title. Posting date. Website provider. Access date <full URL>

COMMON USAGE MISTAKES • Affect (verb = Action) — Effect (noun = *the rEsult*) • Its (possessive *it*) — It's (contraction of *it is*)
New (*recent*) — Knew (past of *to know*) • ThAn (compArison) — ThEn (timE) • Their (possessive *them*) — There (*where?*) — They're (*they are*)
Through (direction) — Threw (past of *to throw*) • To (*toward*) — Too (*also, excessive*) — Two (2) • Weather (atmosphere) — Whether (*possibly*)
Were (past of *to be*) — We're (*we are*) • Witch (*sorceress*) — Which (*what one?*) • WomEn (plural) • Your (possessive *you*) — You're (*you are*)