

Name: _____

Writing

Conventions:

Grammar

Outcomes:

After this module you will be able to:

- Use and understand the value of correct:
 - Grammar
 - Capitalization
 - Spelling and use of homonyms
 - Verb tense
 - Pronoun references
- Correct incorrect:
 - Grammar
 - Capitalization
 - Spelling and use of homonyms
 - Verb tense
 - Pronoun references
- Identify sentence fragments and run-on sentences
- Correct sentence fragments and run-on sentences

Grammar in the Workplace

Having good grammar in the workplace:

- Saves time
- Saves face

Saves Time

Good grammar helps to reduce confusion in written communication and can prevent unnecessary questions and complaints.

Saves Face

Good grammar affects how people feel about and respond to each other. Making an impression on customers and coworkers by using correct grammar makes you look professional and can help show others that you really care about your job.

Adapted from: <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-good-grammar-workplace-10432.html>

Why is Grammar Important?

Kyle Wiens, CEO of iFixit, an online repair manual, cares about grammar for two reasons:

- (I)n this digital age, when we communicate more and more in written texts and posts, “your words are all you have.” Who you are is projected through what and how you write.
- Poor grammar is sloppy.

According to Susan Adams, senior editor in charge of Forbes’ education coverage:

- When you speak, you project your level of education, intelligence and thoughtfulness.
- You... demonstrate how organized you are, in your thoughts and in your intentions.
- (Good grammar) suggests that you are listening closely to the other person, and you’re serious about what you want to convey to that person. Good grammar and clear sentences suggest respect.

Adapted from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2012/07/20/why-grammar-counts-at-work/#658531cd421f>

Capitalization

Text messages, casual e-mails, and instant messages often ignore the rules of capitalization. Knowing the basic rules of capitalization and using capitalization correctly gives the reader the impression that you choose your words carefully and care about the ideas you are conveying.

Rules of Capitalization

- Capitalize the first word of a sentence
- Capitalize proper nouns (the names of specific people, places, objects, streets, buildings, events, or titles of individuals)
 - Do not capitalize nouns for people, places, things, streets, buildings, events, and titles when the noun is used in general or common way (e.g. uncle, college, doctor, etc)
- Always capitalize nationalities, races, languages, and religions. For example, Canadian, African American, Ojibwe, Cree, Metis, Hispanic, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, and so on.
- Capitalize days of the week, months of the year, and holidays
- Capitalize the titles of people (President), books, music, movies, etc

Did you know that, if you use all capital letters in a message, the capital letters come across like shouting? All capital letters are actually more difficult to read and may annoy the reader. To avoid “shouting” at or annoying your reader, follow the rules of capitalization and find other ways to emphasize your point.

Assignment 1: Capitalization

Remove the incorrect capitalization

1. How much do you expect to gain from the sale of those City Lots? ·
2. "How much will it cost to develop that Program," asked the Manager, "and how much will it save us in the long run?"
3. Do you have an Appointment to see the Doctor, Mrs. Smith?
4. Are you sure that Sydney is located at the Eastern end of Nova Scotia?
5. Continue West for about two Kilometres, and look for The Shady Lane Theatre on the Left-hand side of the road.

Add the missing capitalization

6. The vice president and general manager, robin jensen, called a meeting last friday.
7. The notice states that tandy is a registered trademark of tandy corporation.
8. Is lake superior considered part of canada or part of the united states?
9. They lived in charlottetown before they moved to regina.
10. The federal government employs thousands and thousands of english and French speaking people.

Edit the following sentences for capitalization

11. The Foundation has Offices at the corner of main street and centre avenue.
12. Were you enrolled at memorial university of newfoundland in the fall of 1984?
13. They will be Marching down fifth street on Sunday.
14. I worked as a Teller for the Canadian imperial bank Of commerce.
15. The canadian government funds a wide variety of Social Programs.

Why is Spelling So Important?

With the pressure for immediate responses, it is likely that typos will creep into your writing, or worse, autocorrect will insert an inappropriate word. Spell-check and auto-correct may seem like the answer, but they have created a whole new set of problems. The most common error in writing used to be spelling, but now it is the use of the wrong word. Often spell-check corrects a word to a word that wasn't intended. If your writing is not proofread, this error will go unnoticed.

Here are some reasons why spelling is so important:

- Typos have the power to make you appear less intelligent or educated
- Typos make you look less credible. In fact, when people see typos, they often think that what they are reading is fraudulent.
- Typos can create confusion, loss of clarity and loss of meaning
- Typos can wreck customer relationships
- First impressions matter - people will judge you based on your spelling.

Adapted from: <http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20170807-the-true-importance-of-good-spelling>

Eight Tips to Improve Your Spelling Skills

1. Focus on your writing word by word, paying close attention to each word's spelling. Do not skim as you may overlook misspelled words.
2. Use strategies to remember the correct spelling of words (e.g. pronouncing the word Wednesday, 'Wed-nes-day' to remember how to spell the word correctly).
3. Use a dictionary or google to see how to spell a troublesome word.
4. Use your computer's spell checker. The spell checker will not solve all your spelling problems, but it is a useful tool. Proofread your writing too!
5. Keep a list of your frequently misspelled words.
6. Divide the word you are writing into syllables or parts. For example, divide "constitute" into con-sti-tute.
7. If you are a visual learner, close your eyes and visualize what the word looks like.
8. If you know or think you have spelled a word incorrectly, identify it so you can go back and check it later on.

Homophones

Homophones are words that have the same pronunciation, but have different spellings and meanings (like to, too and two). Using an incorrect homophone in writing can be very confusing because, despite sounding the same, they have different meanings.

Common homophones

Accept – to receive something offered	Except – to exclude or omit	
Advice – guidance given	Advise – to recommend	
Affect – to have an influence on something	Effect – the result of something	
Coarse - rough	Course – a path or set of classes	
Its – used for something belonging to “it”	It’s – it is	
Know – to understand	No – negative response	
Then – used in a description of a series of events	Than – used to compare two or more things	
Where – a place	Wear – to be dressed in something	
Were – a verb refereeing to the past	We’re – we are	
Your - belonging	You’re – you are	
Buy – to purchase	By - near	Bye - goodbye
Cent - coins	Scent – a smell	Sent – past tense of send
There – a location	Their – belonging	They’re – they are
To –to show a relation between two or more things	Too – as well	Two – number 2

Assignment 2: Homophones

Circle the correct homophones.

1. Can I go (too, two, to) the party (to, too, two)?
2. I (sent, scent, cent) a letter to my boss.
3. George and Harry like to work in (there, their, they're) garden.
4. Alex is going to (where, wear, ware) his boots today.
5. The clerk needs to (cell, sell) as many phones as possible.
6. Nobody (knows, nose) what (your, you're) thinking.
7. I need to (except, accept) that I will not (bee, be) going to Disneyland this year.
8. The sandpaper was (vary, very) (course, coarse).
9. (It's, Its) going to be a long day.
10. I (wood, would) rather (where, wear) sandals (then, than) runners.
11. (There, Their, They're) going over (there, their, they're) to get (there, their, they're) lunch.
12. I am going to (by, buy) a (pear, pair) of shoes (by, buy) the train station.



Night of the
living dead



Knight of the
living dead

Assignment 3: Spelling and Homophones

Here are some misspelled words. Use the dictionary, Google or Microsoft Word to find the correct spelling. Put the correct spelling in the space provided.

Flem _____

Redeamible _____

Astranot _____

Pitafull _____

Phantesees _____

Exagarate _____

Fred's letter to Joe passed the spell check, but it is full of spelling errors. Correct the spelling errors in Fred's letter.

Dear Joe,

I am glad I followed you're advise about going to South Carolina for my winter vacation. We road down on the train, witch was a lot better then trying to drive our old car. It was late at night when we past Washington, so I didn't see any of it. I don't know weather I'll sea any of it on the way back.

I herd that Charleston was a grate place too visit. Were going their tomorrow. I'll rite latter and tell you all about the sites in this lovely state.

Sincerely,

Fred

The following report is full of spelling errors. It is going to a lot of important people, and your boss wants you to be sure that you correct all the errors.

The Johnston Company has reached the point where it must deside weather or not to formerly announce it's plans to set up an enviromental library at its new sight

The library has been moved from one sight to another over the passed three years. Now it will go to a stationery sight in our New Orleans office. While we have had some arguements over where the new libary should go, we have now acheived piece and harmoney about this isshue.

We are greatfull to J. F. Jones, who has lead us to the rite desision about where to put the libary. His knowlege and incite have been invaluable in bringging us together in this enterprize.

Verb Tense

A verb expresses an action. You can tell if a word is a verb if you can put “to” in-front of it (e.g. to be, to run, to sleep, etc.).

Verb tenses are used to show time. Verb tenses tell when events happened, happen, or will happen.

Present Tense

The present tense expresses an action that is repeated or ongoing.

Example: Jane and Sarah jog every morning.

Past Tense

The past tense expresses an action that has already happened. In regular verbs, the past tense is formed by adding –ed or –d to the base form.

*In most writing we use the past tense, however, this is not a rule.

Example: John and Sara hiked to the top of the mountain.

Future Tense

The future tense expresses an action that will take place in the future. The future tense is formed by adding will to the base form.

Example: I will fly to Atlanta Friday evening.

Maintaining Consistent Verb Tense

Your verb tense must be the same throughout your entire written piece. Jumping back and forth between the present tense and the past tense is very confusing and can waste a lot of time for the reader.

Inconsistent tense:

The crowd starts cheering as Melina approached the finish line.

Consistent tense (past tense):

The crowd started cheering as Melina approached the finish line.

Consistent tense (present tense):

The crowd starts cheering as Melina approaches the finish line.

Assignment 4: Verb Tense

Edit the following paragraphs by correcting the inconsistent verb tense to past tense. Cross-out the incorrect verb tenses and write the correct ones.

In the Middle Ages, most people lived in villages and work as agricultural laborers, or peasants. Every village has a "lord," and the peasants worked on his land. Much of what they produce go to the lord and his family. What little food was leftover goes to support the peasants' families. In return for their labor, the lord offers them protection. A peasant's day usually began before sunrise and involves long hours of backbreaking work, which includes plowing the land, planting seeds, and cutting crops for harvesting. The working life of a peasant in the Middle Ages is usually demanding and exhausting.

A bank teller in Italy was jilted by his girlfriend and decide the only thing left to do was kill himself. He stolen a car with the idea of crashing it, but the car broken down. He steal another one, but it was too slow, and he barely dent a fender when he crashed the car into a tree. The police arrive and charge the man with auto theft. While being questioned, he stab himself in the chest with a dagger. Quick action by the police officers saves the man's life. On the way to his cell, he jumped out through a third-story window. A snowdrift broken his fall. A judge suspends the man's sentence, saying, "I'm sure fate still has something in store for you."

Sentence Fragments and Run-On Sentences

What is a sentence fragment?

A sentence fragment is a sentence that is not a complete thought. For example, “After I cashed my cheque” is a sentence fragment because it is not a complete thought. The reader is left wondering, “What happened after you cashed the cheque?”.

Practice A

Correct the fragments by writing them as complete sentences

Trying to stay awake.

The employee found.

After answering the phone and taking a message.

What is a run-on sentence?

A run-on sentence is the opposite of a sentence fragment. A run-on sentence is a sentence that has too much! A run-on sentence often happens when we try to combine two (or more) thoughts into one sentence. For example, “I went to work, Judy went to the beach” is a run-on because it combines two separate ideas. One way it can be re-written is, “I went to work. Judy went to the beach”

Practice B

Correct the run-ons by writing them as complete sentences

She woke up late, she made it to work on time.

Determine your printing specifications, then secure two estimates for the job, submit the two estimates to Marie.

You must be doing something extra, special reports and projects are good examples.

Assignment 5: Sentence Fragments and Run-On Sentences

Identify each sentence as a good sentence (S), a run-on sentence (RO), or a sentence fragment (F).

	S/RO/F
1. Most of the jobs are never posted on job boards.	
2. Some are filled through company websites and employment agencies, many of the very best are filled through the grapevine.	
3. When people in the organization know the job will be open and tell friends.	
4. I told some friends about the posting, and the applications poured in.	
5. A posting that offers payment to anyone who knows about a good unadvertised position.	
6. The reward is promised only if the information leads to the applicant accepting the position.	
7. Good networking means talking about your job with these people, you must let them know how well you do it.	

The following paragraph contains some sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Edit the paragraph, revising each fragment and run-on to make the meaning clear.

Although penguins look clumsy on land. They are graceful in the water. Their bodies are perfectly suited for swimming and diving. They are a streamlined torpedo shape. Their wings are shaped like flippers penguins use them to propel themselves through the water at speeds up to 30 miles per hour. Use their webbed feet to steer. Most penguins can even swim like porpoises. Leaping out of the water to breathe and then diving back in with one graceful motion.

Pronoun References

A pronoun is a word used to take the place of a noun (e.g. his, hers, their, etc). A pronoun should refer clearly to one, clear, unmistakable noun (called a pronoun antecedent) coming before the pronoun. Unfortunately, it is very easy to create a sentence that uses a pronoun WITHOUT a clear, unmistakable pronoun antecedent.

E.g. Jen dropped the laptop on the glass-top table and broke it.

This sentence does not tell the reader what broke. Was it the laptop or the table? What does “it” refer to? This sentence should be corrected as:

“Jen dropped the laptop on the glass-top table and broke the glass”.

Practice A

Look at the following pairs of sentences. One is correct and the other contains an incorrect pronoun reference. Place an X beside the incorrect sentence. Identify what is unclear in the incorrect sentence.

1. _____ Bill and George each bought Norwegian canoes because he heard that the Norwegians make the best canoes.

_____ Bill and George each bought Norwegian canoes because Bill heard that the Norwegians make the best canoes.

What is unclear? _____

2. _____ Jennifer’s sister wondered if she was tall enough to be a model.

_____ Jennifer’s sister wondered if Jennifer was tall enough to be a model.

What is unclear? _____

3. _____ Dipping the spoon into the soup pot, Jean felt the spoon slip out of her hand.

_____ Dipping the spoon into the soup pot, Jean felt it slip out of her hand.

What is unclear? _____

4. _____ Mary and Tom left their bags at the counter, but they weren’t sure if they were safe.

_____ Mary and Tom left their bags at the counter, but they weren’t sure if their bags would be safe there.

What is unclear? _____

Assignment 6: Pronoun References

Rewrite the sentences to correct the pronoun reference errors. The first has been done for you.

1. Don't give new uniforms to employees until they have nametags.

Don't give new uniforms to employees until the uniforms have nametags.

2. Myrna told Jodi she had a terrible cold and shouldn't go to the staff meeting.

3. My daughter wrote a report and studied for a spelling test. It was a long one.

4. My neighbor frequently buys food for the local church because they are so kind.

5. Both Mark and George work on his truck.

6. The office manager was speaking to John; he looked unhappy.

7. Although the car smashed into the wall, it was not damaged.

8. My mother, my cousin and I were talking about her boyfriend.

9. Every time Mary makes a cake for her daughter, she gets excited.

10. When Lisa and Sally went to the parking lot, they found that her car was missing.

Answer Key: Grammar

Assignment 1: Capitalization

Remove the incorrect capitalization

1. How much do you expect to gain from the sale of those city lots?
2. "How much will it cost to develop that program," asked the manager, "and how much will it save us in the long run?"
3. Do you have an appointment to see the doctor, Mrs. Smith?
4. Are you sure that Sydney is located at the eastern end of Nova Scotia?
5. Continue west for about two kilometres, and look for the Shady Lane Theatre on the left-hand side of the road.

Add the missing capitalization

6. The Vice President and General Manager, Robin Jensen, called a meeting last Friday.
7. The notice states that Tandy is a registered trademark of Tandy Corporation.
8. Is Lake Superior considered part of Canada or part of the United States?
9. They lived in Charlottetown before they moved to Regina.
10. The federal government employs thousands and thousands of English and French speaking people.

Edit the following sentences for capitalization

11. The foundation has offices at the corner of Main Street and Centre Avenue.
12. Were you enrolled at Memorial University of Newfoundland in the fall of 1984?
13. They will be marching down Fifth Street on Sunday.
14. I worked as a teller for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.
15. The Canadian government funds a wide variety of social programs.

Assignment 2: Homophones

1. Can I go (too, two, **to**) the party (to, **too**, two)?
2. I (**sent**, scent, cent) a letter to my boss.
3. George and Harry like to work in (there, **their**, they're) garden.
4. Alex is going to (where, **wear**, ware) his boots today.
5. The clerk needs to (cell, **sell**) as many phones as possible.
6. Nobody (**knows**, nose) what (your, **you're**) thinking.
7. I need to (except, **accept**) that I will not (bee, **be**) going to Disneyland this year.
8. The sandpaper was (vary, **very**) (course, **coarse**).
9. (**It's**, Its) going to be a long day.
10. I (wood, **would**) rather (where, **wear**) sandals (then, **than**) runners.
11. (There, Their, **They're**) going over (**there**, their, they're) to get (there, **their**, they're) lunch.
12. I am going to (by, **buy**) a (pear, **pair**) of shoes (**by**, buy) the train station.

Assignment 3: Spelling and Homophones

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Flem | 3. Phantessie | 5. Pitafull |
| <u>Phlegm</u> | <u>Fantasy</u> | <u>Pitiful</u> |
| 2. Astranot | 4. Redeamible | 6. Exagarate |
| <u>Astronaut</u> | <u>Redeemable</u> | <u>Exaggerate</u> |

Dear Joe,

I am glad I followed **your advice** about going to South Carolina for my winter vacation. We **rode** down on the train, **which** was a lot better **than** trying to drive our old car. It was late at night when we **passed** Washington, so I didn't see any of it. I don't know **whether** I'll **see** any of it on the way back.

I **heard** that Charleston was a **great** place **to** visit. **We're** going **there** tomorrow. I'll **write later** and tell you all about the sites in this lovely state.

Sincerely,

Fred

The Johnston Company has reached the point where it must **decide whether** or not to formerly announce **its** plans to set up an **environmental library** at its new **site**.

The **library** has been moved from one **site** to another over the **past** three years. Now it will go to a stationery **site** in our New Orleans office. While we have had some **arguments** over where the new **library** should go, we have now **achieved peace** and **harmony** about this **issue**.

We are **grateful** to J. F. Jones, who has **led** us to the **right decision** about where to put the library. His **knowledge** and **insight** have been **invaluable** in **bringing** us together in this **enterprise**.

Assignment 4: Verb Tense

In the Middle Ages, most people lived in villages and **worked** as agricultural laborers, or peasants. Every village **had** a "lord," and the peasants worked on his land. Much of what they **produced went** to the lord and his family. What little food was leftover **went** to support the peasants' families. In return for their labor, the lord **offered** them protection. A peasant's day usually began before sunrise and **involved** long hours of backbreaking work, which **included** plowing the land, planting seeds, and cutting crops for harvesting. The working life of a peasant in the Middle Ages **was** usually demanding and exhausting.

A bank teller in Italy was jilted by his girlfriend and **decided** the only thing left to do was kill himself. He **stole** a car with the idea of crashing it, but the car **broke** down. He **stole** another one, but it was too slow, and he barely **dented** a fender when he crashed the car into a tree. The police **arrived** and **charged** the man with auto theft. While being questioned, he **stabbed** himself in the chest with a dagger. Quick action by the police officers **saved** the man's life. On the way to his cell, he jumped out through a third-story window. A snowdrift **broke** his fall. A judge **suspended** the man's sentence, saying, "I'm sure fate still has something in store for you."

Sentence Fragments and Run-On Sentences Practice A

Answers may vary; examples are provided.

Trying to stay awake.

I was trying to stay awake during the meeting

The employee found.

The employee found the file he was looking for.

After answering the phone and taking a message.

I emailed my boss after answering the phone and taking a message.

Sentence Fragments and Run-On Sentences Practice B

Answers may vary; examples are provided.

She woke up late, she made it to work on time.

She woke up late but made it to work on time.

Determine your printing specifications, then secure two estimates for the job, submit the two estimates to Marie.

Determine your printing specifications. Secure two estimates for the job before submitting the estimates to Marie.

You must be doing something extra, special reports and projects are good examples.

Special reports and projects are a good example of the extra work you must be doing.

Assignment 5: Sentence Fragments and Run-On Sentences.

- | | | |
|-------|------|-------|
| 1. S | 4. S | 7. RO |
| 2. RO | 5. F | |
| 3. F | 6. S | |

Although penguins look clumsy on land, they are graceful in the water. Their bodies are perfectly suited for swimming and diving. They are a streamlined torpedo shape and their wings are shaped like flippers. Penguins use them to propel themselves through the water at speeds up to 30 miles per hour. They use their webbed feet to steer. Most penguins can even swim like porpoises; leaping out of the water to breathe and then diving back in with one graceful motion.

Pronoun References Practice A

1. Bill and George each bought Norwegian canoes because he heard that the Norwegians make the best canoes.

Bill and George each bought Norwegian canoes because Bill heard that the Norwegians make the best canoes.

What is unclear? Who heard that the Norwegians make the best canoes, Bill or George?

2. Jennifer's sister wondered if she was tall enough to be a model.

Jennifer's sister wondered if Jennifer was tall enough to be a model.

What is unclear? Who is tall enough to be a model, Jennifer or her sister?

3. Dipping the spoon into the soup pot, Jean felt the spoon slip out of her hand.

Dipping the spoon into the soup pot, Jean felt it slip out of her hand.

What is unclear? What slipped out of her hand, the spoon or the pot?

4. Mary and Tom left their bags at the counter, but they weren't sure if they were safe.

Mary and Tom left their bags at the counter, but they weren't sure if their bags would be safe there.

What is unclear? Who/what is unsafe, Mary and Tom or their bags?

Assignment 6: Pronoun References

Answers may vary depending on the subject of the sentence. Examples are provided.

1. Don't give new uniforms to employees until the uniforms have nametags.
2. Myrna told Jodi that Jodi had a terrible cold and shouldn't go to the staff meeting.
3. My daughter wrote a report and studied for a spelling test. The spelling test was a long one.
4. My neighbor frequently buys food for the local church because my neighbor is so kind.
5. Both Mark and George work on Mark's truck.
6. The office manager was speaking to John; the office manager looked unhappy.
7. Although the car smashed into the wall, the car was not damaged.
8. My mother, my cousin and I were talking about my cousin's boyfriend.
9. Every time Mary makes a cake for her daughter, her daughter gets excited.
10. When Lisa and Sally went to the parking lot, they found that Sally's car was missing.

End of Module Reflection

After completing this module, answer the questions below. If you answer agree (3) for each question, ask for a review or a final assessment from an instructor. If you answer maybe (2) or no (1), have a discussion with an instructor to make a plan to improve your performance and confidence.

1 – No

2 – Maybe

3 – Yes

A	I understand all of the outcomes covered in this module.	1	2	3
B	I do not need any further assistance from an instructor on the material covered in this module.	1	2	3
C	I do not need more practice questions or assignments	1	2	3
D	I am confident in my abilities to complete tasks related to this module.	1	2	3
E	I am ready to complete a review and/or a final assessment related to this module.	1	2	3

Reflection
