

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES TO ACCOMPANY

Easy Access
The Reference Handbook
for Writers

Second Edition

Michael L. Keene
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Katherine H. Adams
Loyola University New Orleans

Exercises Written by
Timothy Miank
Lansing Community College



Mayfield Publishing Company
Mountain View, California
London • Toronto

Copyright © 1999 by Mayfield Publishing Company

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without written permission of the publisher, except for instructional purposes in conjunction with the companion textbook, *Easy Access: The Reference Handbook for Writers*, Second Edition, by Michael L. Keene and Katherine H. Adams (Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999).

International Standard Book Number: 0-7674-0530-7

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Mayfield Publishing Company
1280 Villa Street
Mountain View, California 94041

CONTENTS

Exercise 1: Sentence Fragments	1
Exercise 2: Comma Splices	3
Exercise 3: Run-On Sentences	5
Exercise 4: Subject-Verb Agreement	7
Exercise 5: Verb Form	8
Exercise 6: Verb Tense	9
Exercise 7: Verb Mood	10
Exercise 8: Necessary Commas	11
Exercise 9: Necessary Commas	13
Exercise 10: Comma Errors	15
Exercise 11: Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement	17
Exercise 12: Pronoun Shifts	18
Exercise 13: Pronoun Form	19
Exercise 14: Pronoun Errors	20
Exercise 15: Apostrophes	21
Exercise 16: Misplaced Modifiers	23
Exercise 17: Dangling Modifiers	24
Exercise 18: Adjective and Adverb Form	25
Exercise 19: Faulty Parallelism of Items in Lists	26
Exercise 20: Faulty Parallelism with Coordinating and Correlative Conjunctions	27
Exercise 21: Mixed Constructions	28
Additional Exercises for ESL Writers	
Exercise 22: Articles and Nouns	30
Exercise 23: Adjectives	32
Exercise 24: Prepositions	33
Exercise 25: Verbs	34
Exercise 26: Sentence Structure	36

EXERCISE 1: SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

Edit the following numbered passages to eliminate sentence fragments.

Example: Steve, on the other hand, is serious most of the time. Even though he occasionally tells a good joke.

Correction: Steve, on the other hand, is serious most of the **time, even** though he occasionally tells a good joke.

1. Mary has a peculiar sense of humor. Which endears her to everyone she meets.
2. Classic television shows, such as *M*A*S*H* and *All in the Family*, helped make CBS the dominant broadcasting company of the early 1970s. The popularity of these shows lasting through most of the decade. They eventually ended and went into reruns.
3. Most of my close friends are going to college next year. For example, Tom, Maria, and DuJuan. They are all going to the state university.
4. All students at Hilltop University are required to take a writing course. Although some students manage to have the requirement waived.
5. The rains continued for three days. Forcing most of the town's residents to evacuate. As the Green River overflowed its banks.

The following passage is adapted from a student essay discussing a difficult personal experience. Edit it to correct sentence fragments.

Like Jonathan Bailey, I have a genetic problem. However, although Bailey's was visible the day he was born. Mine was not visible until I was in sixth grade. Which was when the problems started to occur. I remember sitting in reading class. And asking a friend to pull my arm. I thought my shoulder just needed to be cracked. But after she pulled my arm, the pain got even worse. I thought the pain would go away, but after a week or so, it started to feel like knives were entering my bone. I endured the pain until school ended for the summer. Then my mom thought it would be a good idea. For me to go to the doctor.

EXERCISE 1: SENTENCE FRAGMENTS (*continued*)

My doctor sent me to have some X-rays taken. When he received them, he was amazed at what he saw. The bone in my arm had broken in two places. He had no idea what the problem was, so he asked me to go to some specialists at MSU. Eventually, they diagnosed me with a bone disease. Called chronic recurrent multifocal osteomyelitis.

The first week of July, I had to go to the hospital. The day after I was admitted. I had to have surgery. Including a biopsy of my arm, two spinal taps, and insertion of a tube half in my body and half out. The tube was there because the doctors at first thought I had cancer. The spinal taps came back fine, but the biopsy was bad. To find out more about the disease, the next day I had to have many more X-rays. And an MRI and a CAT scan. By this time I was sick of all the radiation. The hospital could not do anything else for my bone. Because it did not have any doctors who knew how to treat chronic recurrent multifocal osteomyelitis.

EXERCISE 2: COMMA SPLICES

Edit the following numbered items to correct comma splices. Some may already be correct.

Example: Good employees know that punctuality is an invaluable characteristic, it separates the successful from the unsuccessful.

Correction: Good employees know that punctuality is an invaluable **characteristic**; it separates the successful from the unsuccessful.

1. A bright yellow Volkswagen pulled up beside me, it looked like a deviled egg on wheels.
2. Rita decided to quit smoking, however, she discovered that quitting was not as easy as she had thought.
3. Their relationship was rocky, they fought constantly.
4. Although the right to marry is seldom denied, it seems that a divorce isn't always as easy to obtain.
5. Our plan seemed to work perfectly, they were truly surprised when they walked through the door.

The following passage is adapted from a student essay arguing that young people do not read nearly enough. Edit it to correct comma splices.

Not only do teenagers not read many books for pleasure, but they also often do everything they can to avoid having to read anything at all, even for school. At the bookstore where I work, a throng of high school students comes in every day to buy *Cliffs Notes*. Buying *Cliffs Notes* for a book that is long and confusing may be understandable, the books for which these teenagers are buying them, however, are short, simple, entertaining ones, such as *The Catcher in the Rye*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Of Mice and Men*.

If teenagers cannot make it through these books, how can they possibly read academic material for school projects and research papers? The answer is that they don't have to, the advent of the Internet has allowed them to avoid most of that kind of reading. Don't misunderstand me, the Internet is a wonderful research tool. The problem is that when it is time to do research, the Internet is the only source from which many students derive their information, using only the

Name: _____ Section: _____ Date: _____

EXERCISE 2: COMMA SPLICES (*continued*)

Internet can be a problem because the small, neatly packaged bits of information often do not show the big picture of a topic, they are also not always from reliable sources. If teenagers would read books, they would be able to combine what they learn from the Internet with information from the books and gain comprehensive knowledge about a subject.

EXERCISE 3: RUN-ON SENTENCES

Edit the following numbered items to correct run-ons. Some may already be correct.

Example: The victory celebration lasted most of the evening several people continued to party until the middle of the following morning.

Correction: The victory celebration lasted most of the **evening, and** several people continued to party until the middle of the following morning.

1. Texas has some of this country's most cosmopolitan cities Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin come to mind.
2. We decided to move into an apartment because our house was too much work.
3. Action movies always seem to predominate during the summer when it is hot outside, people must enjoy watching things blow up.
4. Rap music fascinates me it is a unique kind of poetic expression.
5. Abraham Lincoln was president from 1861 until 1865 this period was filled with a national turmoil that we will probably never see again.

The following passage is adapted from a student essay about reggae legend Bob Marley. Edit it to correct run-on sentences.

Many musicians today are influenced by the music of Bob Marley. He sang about what was important to him other musicians were inspired by his music. Eric Clapton, for example, redid Marley's "I Shot the Sheriff" and this song became well known to people who had never heard of Bob Marley. Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead redid "Stop the Train" with his other group, the Jerry Garcia Band. The group Sublime has also covered some of Marley's songs. Other groups mention his name in their songs The Red Hot Chili Peppers, for example, refer to Marley as "a poet and a prophet" in their song "Give It Away."

In addition, Marley tried to convey important messages in his music he sang about everyday life and the difficulties that people go through. From his love songs to his songs of redemption,

Name: _____ Section: _____ Date: _____

EXERCISE 3: RUN-ON SENTENCES (*continued*)

Bob Marley wanted to tell people that there is more to life than working every day. He also wanted to expose people to injustices in the world he sang about slavery and how it has affected so many different people although it has been over a century since slavery ended. He wanted people to know that treating others poorly because of skin color is wrong. He wanted to give positive messages to his listeners being alive and happy was what Bob Marley was about.

EXERCISE 4: SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in subject-verb agreement.

Example: My pencil and notebook was sitting side by side on the counter.

Correction: My pencil and notebook **were** sitting side by side on the counter.

1. There's several things everyone should know before taking up cross-stitch.
2. Either my neighbor's dog or the Johnsons' two collies is responsible for the mess in my backyard.
3. This year's senior class are as talented as any we have had.
4. The latest sports cars built by the always-creative Foxworth Motor Company is causing quite a sensation.
5. Joe's mountain bike and his calculator has been invaluable to him.

Edit the following passage to correct errors in subject-verb agreement.

Marriage is a funny thing. Many people I have talked to believes that it is the greatest living arrangement in the world, but many others—a good example is my best friend Tony—thinks marriage is “for the birds.” I know that many factors contribute to how we each view marriage, but perhaps the most powerful factor, and the most obvious one, is our direct experience with marriage. For example, if we are fortunate enough to have grown up in a household with two happy, loving parents who respects each other, we probably view marriage in a favorable light. However, if we have experienced problems in the marriage of our parents or someone else close to us, we probably approaches it with skepticism, at the very least.

The truth is, however, that marriage are neither good nor bad, and one couple's experience do not necessarily determine their child's future as a spouse. The key to successful marriage is finding an individual to marry who catches your eye and whom you love and respect. It also helps if that special person make you laugh.

EXERCISE 5: VERB FORM

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in verb form.

Example: I was amazed; Joe had risen me \$200, and I had a full house in my hand.

Correction: I was amazed; Joe had **raised** me \$200, and I had a full house in my hand.

1. By the time Carlita arrived, most of the guests had already went home, even though the party was suppose to last until midnight.
2. Hundreds of mushrooms sprung up in the afternoon rain.
3. Tracy had wore the new jeans only twice before they ripped.
4. Jerry use to spend the afternoon laying concrete while his brother Bill laid in the hammock.
5. Because Wellington University has increased tuition rates by more than 40%, Derrick has chose to enroll at the local community college this fall.

Edit the following passage to correct errors in verb form.

The first time I came home from college, my mother cooked my favorite dinner: pork chops and peas, with a big side of applesauce. When I walked into the kitchen and seen all that beautiful food on the table, I almost cried. After regaining my composure, I hanged my coat on the rack and set down at the table to eat. By the time I was done, I must have ate six pork chops, and I know I drunk most of the gallon of milk she kepted in the refrigerator. It was all I could do to lay down on the couch while my sister and my mom done the dishes. I don't always expect to be treated this well when I come home, but, once in a while, it's certainly nice.

EXERCISE 6: VERB TENSE

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in verb tense.

Example: A dream I had early last year has haunted me ever since, and it still haunted me as I stare at my father's closet.

Correction: A dream I had early last year has haunted me ever since, and it still *haunts* me as I stare at my father's closet.

1. Two days ago Jennie's teacher criticized her for chewing gum in class, but then he comes into class the following morning doing the same thing.
2. Donald told the police that he wasn't the guy they are looking for.
3. After the professor handed back our papers, he had said he was proud of us.
4. Last year my son read *Winnie the Pooh*; it was a wonderful book for all children to read.
5. After I told Antonio how I felt, he says, "Gee, Carrie, I think you should forget about him."

The following passage is from a student essay recalling personal struggles with weight. Edit it to correct errors in verb tense.

One winter I was sick during Christmas vacation and went to the doctor to get some medicine. When the doctor finished his examination, he tells my mother and me that I should go on a diet. He told me, very directly, that I am too fat. He was not kidding, either. My mother and I knew that he's totally serious because he wanted to draw blood from me to check my cholesterol level. I was shocked. I had never thought a professional doctor would say this to a twelve-year-old who has enough to worry about in junior high.

It bothered me at first. Then my mom told me not to listen to a word he was saying to me and to forget all about it. So I tried to do what my mother says to do. But it was difficult. The doctor's comments were always in the back of my mind. It was simple: I am too fat. I felt as if someone has ripped my self-esteem from me and I have none left to build on. Any critical comment directed my way after that made me feel horrible. That man made me feel like the most worthless human on the planet.

EXERCISE 7: VERB MOOD

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in mood.

Example: If he was older, he would understand our concern.

Correction: If he **were** older, he would understand our concern.

1. It's critical that people begin to conserve energy. Try carpooling or riding your ten-speed to work—anything to save gas.
2. The professor suggested that everyone meets in the parking lot before leaving on their field trip.
3. To keep a hitter off balance, a pitcher needs to use good off-speed pitches. Then surprise the hitter with a fastball or a hard slider.
4. The facilitator proposed that everyone takes a ten-minute break.
5. If it was up to me, I wouldn't let anyone near that antique vase.

Edit the following passage to correct errors in mood.

If the world today was perfect, what would we talk about? People should ask themselves this question whenever things are not going well. Imagine how dull perfection would be. Consider the challenges and rewards of dealing with problems and so-called imperfections.

A wise teacher once suggested that my classmates and I each takes time, every day, to anticipate the challenge that might lie ahead the next day. Doing this, he pointed out, would not only help us prepare for the challenge but also help us understand more about the “road of life,” as he called it. Think about problems and how you might respond. Be prepared. If everyone was prepared for problems, he believed we would be far more satisfied with our imperfect world.

EXERCISE 8: NECESSARY COMMAS

Add commas where necessary in each of the following sentences. Some sentences may already be correct.

Example: Most instructors are fair when they grade student papers but Dr. Goodfellow seems to be unusually harsh.

Correction: Most instructors are fair when they grade student *papers, but* Dr. Goodfellow seems to be unusually harsh.

1. To see her brother this summer Deborah will have to go to his farm in Iowa.
2. The sheets were absolutely beautiful but Toni didn't think she could afford them.
3. Rebecca was born on November 14 1980 in Dallas Texas.
4. The men and women employed by Johnson Steel work overtime almost every week.
5. When Mitsuko begins to serve she bounces the ball twice and takes a deep breath.
6. Felix was eager to go to Miami especially after he heard that Garth Brooks would be playing there.
7. Jarrod's new Calvin Klein jeans for which he paid \$60 already have a big rip in them.
8. It is my belief Dr. Jones that the final exam should be delayed until after spring break.
9. A dark mysterious substance began to ooze from the television screen.
10. "Let's go to Miller's Dairy" said Jody "so that we can see if the cream really rises to the top."

The following passage is adapted from a student essay about the difficulty of growing up poor. Edit it, adding commas where necessary.

Elementary school and food stamps may seem an unlikely pair but for me the two went almost hand in hand. Having had little education and having a family of six my parents had to rely on the welfare system. Consequently I was often sent to the store for groceries and even at a young age I can remember the feeling of having to pay for my items with what other people cruelly refer to as "poor people's money." I can remember quite a few occasions when I would see a friend or acquaintance in the store and would wait acting like I was looking for something until he or she had gone before I made my purchase. Nothing however could stop the feeling of panic

EXERCISE 8: NECESSARY COMMAS (*continued*)

when I was shopping with my mom and one of my friends saw that we were paying with food stamps. Even at such a young age I understood that for the most part low-income families were treated differently silently ridiculed or pitied by those who had money. Even children in elementary school treated welfare children differently mostly by making fun of them with harsh names or excluding them from their circle of friends. Most elementary children were not this way but it was surprising how many were.

Junior high and all its hurdles came next. We didn't have to rely on food stamps during those years but that meant that we struggled even more with the cash we did have. There were always holes in my shoes which weren't even the Nikes or Reeboks that everyone else seemed to be wearing. Frequently I remember the clothes that I wore were mostly outdated and mostly from second-hand stores.

Next groups started to form. People judged others by what they wore and what they had. It was obvious to me which group I would be assigned to: the group of supposed losers and nerds. Being pushed and bumped loomed in my future not to mention the endless sarcasm insults and jokes. Junior high was a time to sit quietly do my work and watch my self-esteem get pushed six feet under the earth.

EXERCISE 9: NECESSARY COMMAS

Add commas where necessary in each of the following sentences. Some sentences may already be correct.

Example: The wedding ceremony was performed by Dr. Alvarez the man who baptized me when I was a baby in Topeka Kansas.

Correction: The wedding ceremony was performed by Dr. **Alvarez, the** man who baptized me when I was a baby in **Topeka, Kansas.**

1. Montpelier Vermont has one of the most beautiful state capitols in America.
2. On that dark and stormy night we all stayed up late and told the scariest stories we could think of.
3. When Shawn was younger her favorite groups were the Beatles Roxy Music King Crimson and the Doors.
4. Hoping to be considered for a promotion Ramon has registered for courses at Penwicker College.
5. The parlor was full of people smoking smelly cigars so we decided to continue our conversation on the patio.
6. The woman who was seated next to us on the plane worked at the United Nations.
7. Joe began to dance like a man possessed during Green Day's opening song something we never thought we would see him do.
8. Their lead singer a young man with lime green hair managed to do the splits between each song.
9. "Each of you needs to spend more time editing your work" stated the professor "especially if you want to publish anything."
10. The Lakers the Bulls the Sonics and the Celtics always seem to be the teams contending for the NBA title.

The following passage is adapted from a student essay discussing some of the myths about drinking alcohol. Edit it, adding commas where necessary.

It is hard to believe that something that can seem so innocent can really be something dangerous. Imagine this: It's 2 a.m. and you are hanging out with some friends. Everyone is pumped. Music is blaring loudly and some drinks are being passed around. No one stops to think what all

EXERCISE 9: NECESSARY COMMAS (*continued*)

the drinking could lead to. But who cares? As long as you and your friends are enjoying yourselves you may think it doesn't matter how you decide to pass the time. If only life were as simple as partying without worrying about any consequences. But it is not quite so simple. Even though drinking often goes along with having a good time from what I have witnessed it is not what it's cracked up to be.

To begin with alcohol has been portrayed as something needed for a good time. Most commonly you'll find a Bud lying here and there at a party and probably see one in someone's hand. I know some people who make partying a part of their everyday lifestyles. If they don't have a beer in their hands it is as if their clothes have been stripped from their backs. After all a party supposedly isn't a party without a cold beer.

Another myth often associated with alcohol is the supposed attraction of the opposite sex. The idea a completely false one is that people become attractive merely by having a beer in their hand. This idea goes along with another false notion which probably comes from advertising that drinkers are constantly surrounded by (other) beautiful people who are as interesting and interested as the drinker is. The reality however is that most of the time people are trying to avoid the drinkers especially the heavy drinkers because they are sometimes obnoxious and often difficult to hold a conversation with. Some people may think they're cool if they drink but if it takes alcohol to be cool and fit in then something is seriously wrong.

EXERCISE 10: COMMA ERRORS

Remove unnecessary commas in each of the following sentences.

Example: The major reason that we decided to move, is that the school system in our town was beginning to show signs, of decline.

Correction: The major reason that we decided to *move is* that the school system in our town was beginning to show *signs of* decline.

1. Working at a large community hospital, requires Terry to be prepared for almost anything.
2. In my senior year, our basketball team went to the state semifinals but, lost to a team from Smithville.
3. Whenever we go camping, we take along lots of treats, such as, Oreos, Doritos and hot sauce, and candy bars.
4. One reason we shouldn't rush to judgment, is that we don't know whether the boys actually intended to spray paint their adorable, little sister.
5. Listening to jazz, writing poetry, and sleeping until noon, are Mookie's favorite activities.

The following passage is adapted from a student essay discussing the difficulties of having an alcoholic parent. Edit it, adding or removing commas where necessary.

Many children with an alcoholic parent must depend on themselves. These children become self-reliant because nobody is around to take care of them. When the drinking parent is present, he or she is often too intoxicated, to care about what is going on. Even though, there may be one sober parent and one alcoholic parent, the sober parent usually has to get a second job to make ends meet while the alcoholic parent drinks up the money.

Sometimes both parents are alcoholics. Sometimes a single parent is an alcoholic. Whoever the alcoholic parent is, however, the children are neglected and, they often end up making decisions for themselves. For example a child may have to decide what to eat for dinner, or what time to come home from a friend's house. The problem is, that not all children are going to make the right decisions. A child may decide to eat cupcakes for dinner, or come home at two in the morning on a school night.

EXERCISE 10: COMMA ERRORS (*continued*)

In some cases children of alcoholics even have to pay for their own clothes, and provide their own lunch money. Having to pay for these basic necessities forces many kids to get part-time jobs just so that they can have what they need. Fortunately for me I was hired to work at a restaurant when I was only fifteen. This job allowed me to buy “luxuries” like, food, sports equipment, gas, and an occasional bottle of perfume. All this time my father was spending his money on his next drink and my mom was busy trying to make ends meet. I had to grow up fast and I feel, as if, I missed out on a lot of “kid stuff” because I was too busy doing the “grownup stuff.”

Even worse for me, was the fact that my father was seldom there for me. My volleyball games, basketball games, and dance recitals, were all important to me but my father rarely attended them. When he did, he was usually so drunk, that he yelled at me every time I made a mistake. I was so embarrassed when he did this, especially, during basketball games, that I would play even worse. My coach would finally take me off the court and I would sit out the rest of the game. If I would ask my dad not to yell at me during the games he would yell at me, and tell me to quit being a baby.

EXERCISE 11: PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in pronoun-antecedent agreement. In some sentences, you may need to correct verbs to match the revised pronouns.

Example: Each of the participants was required to have their height and weight recorded.

Correction: Each of the participants was required to have **his or her** height and weight recorded.

OR **All** of the participants **were** required to have their height and weight recorded.

1. Putting a student in a testing-only atmosphere may put unnecessary pressure on them.
2. Each individual must decide how much risk they can handle.
3. When a student sees his or her friends doing well, they want to do better.
4. Judging a person by the color of their skin is as absurd as judging someone by what kind of clothes they wear.
5. Every player cleaned out their locker immediately after the season's final game.

The following passage is adapted from a student essay discussing violence on television. Edit it to correct pronoun-antecedent errors.

In my opinion, children seem to be affected most by violence on television. When an adult reaches a certain age, they begin to discover who they want to be and what they want to do with their lives. However, a child is just beginning to grow up and explore the world. When they see anything negative, like violence, they often think it is permissible and may adopt similar behaviors unless they are corrected by someone older and wiser. Television should not be held responsible for the violence in this world.

I cannot state strongly enough that the violent acts shown on television have left, and continue to leave, its mark on viewers. It is not enough to turn down the volume or close our eyes for a moment. Sometimes, the set needs to be turned off.

EXERCISE 12: PRONOUN SHIFTS

Edit the following sentences to correct inappropriate pronoun shifts.

Example: If a student is willing to work hard, you can go a long way in this course.

Correction: If a student is willing to work hard, **he or she** can go a long way in this course.

OR If **students are** willing to work hard, **they** can go a long way in this course.

1. It is not easy for teachers to keep their lectures and classroom presentations interesting; you have to spice them up with colorful visuals, and having a sense of humor doesn't hurt either.
2. Whenever one encounters a difficult person, it is wise for you to react rationally.
3. When Uncle Doug was in high school, you were required to take two English courses.
4. It is generally good for people to be exposed to tragedy. When they are, you begin to gain perspective, and they are forced to re-examine their lives, if only for a moment. When they re-examine their lives, you change.
5. Seldom can one person climb a mountain alone. You almost always need someone by your side.

Edit the following short passage to correct inappropriate pronoun shifts.

Students often suffer when professors force them to write in class. For example, you get the sweats, and then your mind goes blank. Many students waste much of their in-class time staring at a blank page, wondering how you can get the writing started or hoping for divine inspiration.

Fortunately, there are strategies for avoiding this dilemma. Many students use freewriting, a technique that requires you to write down thoughts and ideas as quickly as they occur to you. Not everything students write down is useful, but that is not the point. The point is for you to get something on paper—one thought that may lead to another thought—a few words to help the student move forward with the paper.

EXERCISE 13: PRONOUN FORM

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in pronoun form.

Example: Even though **us** Johnson boys all work in the family business, we're all so busy that we seldom see one another.

Correction: Even though **we** Johnson boys all work in the family business, we're all so busy that we seldom see one another.

1. Nobody ever really understood why **her** and Bob decided to move to Texas.
2. Jennifer's eighteenth birthday party was hosted by **my** husband and I.
3. Dr. Chavez is the person **whom** has had the greatest influence on me.
4. Just between you and I, Delores tends to exaggerate, so don't believe everything she says.
5. Caroline had three sisters who are older than **her**.

Edit the following passage to correct errors in pronoun form.

Last month, my sister Jody and me drove to Las Vegas to try our luck at gambling. Unfortunately, we got lost on the way and had trouble finding someone whom would help us. It seemed that everyone except Jody and I was going in the other direction, and we couldn't get anyone to stop. It was so hot outside that **her** and I took turns sitting in the air conditioning while the other one tried to flag down a car. Eventually, Jody got a car to stop. It was no surprise that she would be the one to get a car to stop; she has always been better at getting attention than me.

EXERCISE 14: PRONOUN ERRORS

The following passage discusses one writer's Thanksgiving. Edit it to correct errors in pronoun-antecedent agreement, pronoun shift, pronoun form, and pronoun reference.

Example: Even though us Johnson boys all work in the family business, we're all so busy that we seldom see one another.

Correction: Even though **we** Johnson boys all work in the family business, we're all so busy that we seldom see one another.

Last year, several of my friends and me went to a good restaurant to celebrate Thanksgiving. It was a very pleasant afternoon. The manager of the restaurant had a private dining room for us. The waitresses were excellent and cheerful, too, considering that she had to work on a holiday. They even provided a color television set so that you could watch the Thanksgiving football games as you ate your meal. We stuffed ourselves and had a most enjoyable time.

However, during the following week, as I reflected on the day's events, I realized that something had been missing from this particular Thanksgiving. Everyone had eaten plenty of food, and each of my friends had told me afterward that they had had a good time. Still, something was missing, though I wasn't quite sure what it was.

Then it hit me. Satisfaction was missing. Even though I had enjoyed myself, and everyone else had enjoyed themselves, I had received no sense of satisfaction from that Thanksgiving afternoon because it had required no effort, no work. Don't misunderstand me; nobody likes leisure time more than me. However, Thanksgiving represents—or at least should represent—more than a day off, good food, and football. It should represent effort: sweat and its subsequent satisfaction. Next year, I'm going to cook my own turkey in my own home—provided, of course, that I can borrow my neighbor's microwave.

EXERCISE 15: APOSTROPHES

Edit the following sentences to correct apostrophe errors.

Example: Marys cousin decided to move to Baltimore because he cant get enough of those wonderful crab cake's.

Correction: *Mary's* cousin decided to move to Baltimore because he *can't* get enough of those wonderful crab *cakes*.

1. Nobody knew who's coat it was, so we decided to give it to one of Martha's cousins.
2. The trees largest branch lost most of it's leaves in last nights storm.
3. "The hurricane in the Atlantic is probably the reason its raining," said Marty.
4. Since mens clothes are always on sale at Sear's, Max and Antonio do most of their shopping there.
5. Last years womens softball team is much better than this years.
6. Its time for several of the schools policies' to be reviewed.
7. The neighbor's cat got it's tail caught in the fence.
8. "If your really my friend," said LaShon, "you'll do me this one favor."
9. Marvin's and Gwen's new house sit's on ten beautiful acres in Brown County.
10. Ms. Chens lectures' are full of wonderful anecdotes.

The following passage is adapted from a student's essay discussing her experience with racism. Edit it to correct apostrophe errors.

Its uncomfortable when your not sure where you belong. I neither want nor need the pressure to be someone I'm not. Instead, I think I should be accepted as an individual, not just someone whose labeled a half-breed.

The term *half-breed* may seem harsh, but this is what people think when they see someone like me; I know because I think the same thing. Nonetheless, Im tired of feeling bad for being multiracial and tired of wondering what people are thinking when they look at me. Maybe its silly, but I almost feel like a lesser person when people make little joke's, like asking me if I have my "green card" yet. And I feel foolish when people assume that I know Spanish; when Mexican people find

EXERCISE 15: APOSTROPHES (*continued*)

out that I dont, they tease me. Im a human being just like everyone else, so why cant I go one week without hearing some kind of racial comment? Don't people want to see that I have a great personality or that I'm a really hard worker or even that I have a nice set of teeth?

I realize that its almost natural to see a persons color before seeing anything else; we all do it. However, its not okay to make someone feel bad about something that he or she has no control over. I never had a problem with how I look until people started making me feel, through their comments, that it isnt okay to be of more than one color.

EXERCISE 16: MISPLACED MODIFIERS

Edit the following sentences to correct misplaced modifiers.

Example: Our neighbor just moved in two weeks ago.

Correction: Our neighbor moved in **just** two weeks ago.

1. Food in this town certainly is expensive; last week, I almost spent \$80 on groceries.
2. Tran played his stereo while Terry did the dishes, at the highest volume possible.
3. Wendy could only complete two thirds of her final exam in the allotted time.
4. The man who had been eating dinner slowly rose to his feet.
5. Eduardo's mother bought him a new car for graduation, which cost nearly \$20,000.

Edit the following short passage to correct misplaced modifiers.

Some people are truly addicted to cigarettes. My roommate Saul almost smokes three packs of cigarettes a day. In fact, his addiction is so bad that he can't do some things without a cigarette in his hand. For example, he can only drive if he has a cigarette going; unfortunately, he's a truck driver who spends over 40 hours a week on the road. He constantly smokes while driving his truck, inhaling and exhaling furiously. The truck smells like an ashtray, which he rents for \$200 a month.

Even worse is how bad his breath smells. The stench from his cigarette smoking makes me wonder how he can enjoy his food, which is quite strong if you get near him.

EXERCISE 17: DANGLING MODIFIERS

Edit the following sentences to correct dangling modifiers.

Example: When studying for the final, our lecture notes made absolutely no sense to either of us.

Correction: When studying for the final, ***neither of us could make any sense of*** our lecture notes.

1. Upon turning eighteen, Joe's father took him to a nightclub.
2. Having spent most of our money, the carnival no longer seemed a fun place to be.
3. While listening to the violent winds outside, our neighbor's oak tree blew over.
4. To throw a baseball properly, your glove must be kept on the other side of your body.
5. While driving to Phoenix, the snow started falling.

Edit the following short passage to correct dangling modifiers.

Hearing strange noises in the family room one night, the television set was about to explode. That is what we thought, but while waiting for something awful to happen, the set just died. We had bought the set only three weeks earlier, so it shouldn't have broken down. Having bought the fanciest model, the salesman would be surprised to see us return so soon.

But we had to return. We wanted a television set that worked. Trying to control our anger, the television set was placed carefully into the trunk and taken back to the store. Fortunately, the sales manager was there. After listening to our story and looking at our sales receipt, a new television set was given to us, and we were on our way home.

EXERCISE 18: ADJECTIVE AND ADVERB FORM

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in adjective and adverb usage.

Example: We decided to offer Juanita the job; she was the most perfect candidate.

Correction: We decided to offer Juanita the job; she was the **best** candidate.

1. If there's a more funnier person in the world than Janet, I don't know who it would be.
2. The engine in Felicia's car has been running much quieter since she had it tuned up.
3. To get rid of those cockroaches, you're going to have to use a more fatal poison.
4. Dawna felt badly when she learned that she would be unable to attend Maria's bridal shower.
5. The two guys in the dorm room next to us played their music so loud that we thought the wall between us would crumble.

Edit the following short passage to correct errors in adjective and adverb usage.

There couldn't have been a more perfect couple than Aunt Clarissa and Uncle Elmo. Not only were they both very unique individuals with a clear sense of themselves, but they also got along so good together. Only one thing ever seemed to cause friction between them: because my Uncle Elmo spoke so slow, my aunt constantly finished his sentences for him, and these interruptions often made him real mad. Other than that, I never saw them become angrily with each other.

EXERCISE 19: FAULTY PARALLELISM OF ITEMS IN LISTS

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in parallel structure.

Example: We bought several items that would be essential on our camping trip: firewood, magazines, bug spray, a rain tarp, and we got lots of food.

Correction: We bought several items that would be essential on our camping trip: firewood, magazines, bug spray, a rain tarp, **and lots of food.**

1. Christmas often frustrates me because it is too time-consuming, too commercial, and it costs too much.
2. Pikeville College hopes to bring in new students by diversifying its faculty, expanding its course offerings, and we hope to create two new graduate programs.
3. Alex asked Mark to buy more paper, check the toner level on the printer, and adjusting the roller was necessary, too.
4. What bothered us was that he sang off-key, his lack of rhythm, and his awful piano technique.
5. Brian enjoys playing tennis, riding horses, and, for some strange reason, to throw banana peels at bluejays.

Edit the following short passage to correct errors in parallel structure.

Being in a classroom filled with eager students makes teaching a rewarding experience for me. There is nothing more rewarding than students waving their hands furiously to answer my questions, engaging one another in open discussion, and to come up afterward to ask me questions. When all these things happen, I feel needed, secure, and like they respect me.

Even more important, I feel that I am getting through to them. I have always hoped that as a teacher I would make a difference in the lives of students, provide them with knowledge they could use, and to make them care about the process of learning. When I have good days and everything clicks, I have concrete evidence that I am doing what I hoped to do.

EXERCISE 20: FAULTY PARALLELISM WITH COORDINATING AND CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in parallel structure.

Example: Belinda likes square dancing and to write poetry.

Correction: Belinda likes square dancing and **writing** poetry.

1. Would you prefer to go for a walk or staying indoors?
2. Autumn means not only that leaves fall by the thousands but also snow falling when you least expect it.
3. The students in this class should either have taken freshman writing or earned advanced placement on the assessment test.
4. Yvette is an expert in both military strategy and in quilt making.
5. Hans is not only a gifted skier but also he is a talented drummer.

Edit the following short passage to correct errors in parallel structure.

Television is an integral part of most Americans' everyday lives. Whether it's soap operas, comedies, police or medical dramas, news, educational programming, or sports events, television offers something for just about everyone. In fact, most Americans have either a television in their bedroom or want to put one there. And the television is not only the central piece of furniture in most family rooms, but it is also on in most homes for ten or more hours every day.

Whether so much television viewing is a good thing or causes problems is a much-debated question. The effect of television is the source of a long-running argument that won't soon be won by one side or the other. And that's the way it should be.

EXERCISE 21: MIXED CONSTRUCTIONS

Correct the mixed constructions in the following sentences.

Example: Young people driving too fast for road conditions is the main reason they cause more traffic accidents than older drivers.

Correction: Young people *cause more traffic accidents than older drivers because they* often drive too fast for road conditions.

1. The reason the Yankees won the World Series is because they had superior pitching and got several clutch hits from their shortstop.
2. A grand slam is when someone hits a home run with players on all three bases.
3. A bachelor party is where a group of men friends get together to celebrate the upcoming marriage of one of them.
4. Not only did Jeff and his wife win a lot of money, the lottery made them celebrities.
5. After driving almost 1,500 miles in one day, was the reason Antonio was so tired.

Edit the following short passage to correct mixed constructions.

It seems that today a television talk show is defined as when people sit in front of a live audience and attack one another. When they argue, they often all talk at once. When everyone is talking at once causes them to become even madder and more frustrated. The reason television producers like the guests to lose their tempers is because viewers like to see anger and hostility.

One talk-show host whose show is different is Oprah Winfrey. When she does a show is where viewers can see people talking about serious issues in a civilized manner. Because her show makes people think caused her ratings to go down for a while, but they have improved. Programming more talk shows like hers would make a lot of people happy.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES FOR ESL WRITERS

Exercise 22: Articles and Nouns 30

Exercise 23: Adjectives 32

Exercise 24: Prepositions 33

Exercise 25: Verbs 34

Exercise 26: Sentence Structure 36

EXERCISE 22: ARTICLES AND NOUNS

Correct the article errors in the following sentences.

Example: We decided to take airplane to California to see the Disneyland.

Correction: We decided to take **an** airplane to California to **see Disneyland**.

1. Kim bought new car from her neighbor.
2. Most people want to have the good health, so they try to visit doctor regularly.
3. The philosophy is very challenging course.
4. We decided to buy three gallons of the gasoline before driving to the party.
5. To win an election in this town, a candidate must get a money from the wealthy.
6. The gardener decided to prune tree that we had planted just a week ago.
7. Chris has always been fascinated by the zebras.
8. In the history class, we read essay by Bruce Catton, very famous Civil War historian.
9. As Xiong stared at a moon, she thought about future.
10. All the students wanted to spend Saturday at championship game.

The following passage is from a student essay about education in Japan. Edit it to correct errors in the use of articles.

In today's Japan, even many kindergarten students try to enter the best elementary schools because this is one way to enter good college or university. In most cases, parents make their children try to get in these elementary schools.

Many Japanese children go to private supplementary schools after regular school day in order to prepare for difficult entrance examinations for college. At a private supplementary school, student studies similar subjects, but at more difficult level. Many Japanese students go to these private supplementary schools from elementary school throughout the high school.

A tuition at a private school is very expensive, about \$10,000 for a year. Because private supplementary schools are so expensive, less affluent families must make great sacrifices in their

Name: _____ Section: _____ Date: _____

EXERCISE 22: ARTICLES AND NOUNS (*continued*)

lifestyle. For example, family may give up family vacations, and parents may sacrifice their personal wants and needs to pay for this private supplementary school. Without this private school, child may be at a disadvantage compared with other children.

EXERCISE 23: ADJECTIVES

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in the use of adjectives.

Example: The white old house that used to be on the corner was torn down last week.

Correction: The **old white** house that used to be on the corner was torn down last week.

1. The bored story that Phong told us made us all sleepy.
2. The instructor was very disappointing about Diana's test score.
3. Unfortunately, the police officer's directions were not help.
4. The stand-up young comedian made the audience laugh.
5. Maria was amazing when she heard about the meteor.

Edit the following short passage to correct errors in adjectives.

There are many things you can become interesting in when you move to a big town. For example, most big towns have amazed art galleries, and many have zoos filled with many kinds of animals. You might see a huge African gray old elephant or a flock of black and white playful penguins.

Most big towns also have sports teams that are fun to watch, whether or no they are professional teams. In my town, there are several good high school sports teams, and they are no expensive to watch. Almost every weekend I go to some kind of sports event. I enjoy watching the basketball games in the high school's steel-and-glass new gymnasium and watching the swim meets in its turquoise Olympic-sized pool. Next year, my town will get a semi-pro hockey team. I am very exciting about this and about everything there is for me to do in my big town.

EXERCISE 24: PREPOSITIONS

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in the use of prepositions in phrasal constructions.

Example: Nikki and I were angry to our roommate.

Correction: Nikki and I were **angry at** [OR **with**] our roommate.

1. We aren't sure that we are worthy to such praise.
2. My friend Jade was very deserving to the award she was given.
3. The newer mini-vans are inferior of the older ones.
4. According from the recent memo, we must reduce our photocopying costs.
5. In addition with this request, we must try to save money on typing costs.

Edit the following passage to correct errors in the use of prepositions in phrasal constructions.

For many people, swimming is an excellent way to exercise. It is very good for people who may not be capable to doing more strenuous exercise, like running. Although swimming gives some aerobic benefits that are similar with the benefits of running, it does not cause the joint and bone problems that can result from running. Swimming is also fun. It's a relaxing, refreshing activity people can do at their own pace. It can also be done in a number of places, including neighborhood pools, rivers, lakes, and oceans. Because for these factors, swimming is superior of many other types of exercise.

EXERCISE 25: VERBS

Correct the verb errors in the following sentences.

Example: Although Soonam enjoys to play the piano, she usually doesn't have the time.

Correction: Although Soonam enjoys **playing** the piano, she usually doesn't have the time.

1. Everyone on the team objected the coach's harsh criticisms.
2. Victor working until 10 p.m. today.
3. Marisa is wants to become a pharmacist.
4. After Phong finished to eat her dinner, she decided washing the dishes.
5. Phillippe like to swims every morning.
6. Boris was accused cheating on the exam.
7. Jose is liking to eat scrambled eggs.
8. Dr. Nguyen encouraged to major in economics.
9. Mrs. Johnson a very tall person.
10. Matsue can juggles five tennis balls at once.

The following passage is from a student essay about education in Japan. Edit it to correct errors in verb usage.

I started to go to a private supplementary school when I was being nine years old. I goed to this school for almost ten years. I studying hard every day, even on weekends, holidays, and summer and winter vacations. I sometimes am studying over ten hours a day. Later, I went to a girls' high school in Tokyo. This school was very strict and had many strange regulations. For example, students could not changed their hair color, wearing skirts less than two inches below the knee, pierce their ears, or wears makeup or nail polish. Every morning, our teachers are standing in front of the school to checking whether we obey these school regulations. If we hadn't, we are being in big trouble.

Name: _____ Section: _____ Date: _____

EXERCISE 25: VERBS (*continued*)

I do not agree about Japanese schools' regulations. However, I think Japanese schools will establish strict rules and regulations for many reasons. The most important is that they want everyone treating in the same way. Because of the uniforms and lack of jewelry, nobody can tell what a student's economic background. Also, strict rules make students look clean and neat and giving a school a good reputation.

EXERCISE 26: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Correct the sentence structure errors in the following sentences.

Example: Mateo and Maria found a really nice neighborhood where they would like to live there.

Correction: Mateo and Maria found a really nice neighborhood where they would like to *live*.

1. Is a good idea to practice your lessons at least once each day.
2. Brandon asked whether I wanted to go to the fair with him?
3. Yesterday Terrance and Deniece had an appointment to see the house that they want to buy it.
4. The school was built last year already needs to be remodeled.
5. Our professor told us that “this would be his last lecture of the semester.”

Edit the following passage to correct errors in sentence structure.

Playing intramural basketball is a wonderful way for college students to spend free time. For one thing, is great exercise; it requires a lot of running, cutting, and jumping. A player can burn hundreds of calories in a two-hour game. In addition, it’s fun to compete against peers. Is nothing like the feeling you get from blocking a shot or driving past a classmate to score a winning basket.

My friend Kurt says that “it’s his favorite way to spend an evening after a tough day of classes.” I understand the joy that he experiences it. I most enjoy playing against guys from rival dormitories whom I know. During these games I am very competitive, which occur two or three times a season. To me, is the perfect way to unwind it.