

EDU 709
GRAMMAR

Infinitives

Infinitive = *to* + a verb

Do not split infinitives.

My instructor tends to rapidly talk. (no)

My instructor tends to talk rapidly (yes)

Compound Subjects

If subjects are joined by *and*, use a plural verb.

If subjects are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb agrees with the word following *or* or *nor*.

John and Harry plays soccer. (no)

John and Harry play soccer. (yes)

Neither John nor his friend plays soccer. (yes)

Neither John nor his friend play soccer. (no)

Pronouns That End in *Self*

Must refer to a person or thing in the same clause or sentence.

Miss Crabtree and myself taught the class. (no)

Miss Crabtree and I taught the class. (yes)

I taught the class myself. (yes)

Who or Whom?

Substitute *he*, *she* and *him/her*. Which sounds better?

I wonder (who/whom) will miss class today.

- he/she will miss class today
- him/her will miss class today

I wonder *who* will miss class today.

(Who/whom) did you ask to answer the question?

- you ask he/she to answer the question
- you ask him/her to answer the question

Whom did you ask to answer the question?

Compound Adjectives

If the adjective comes before the noun, use hyphens.

If the adjectives come after the noun, do not use hyphens.

My school uses cutting-edge materials.

The materials used by my school are cutting edge.

Gerunds

Gerund = a verb + *ing*

A gerund is a noun.

Mom doesn't like my eating too much ice cream. (yes)

Mom doesn't like me eating too much ice cream. (no)

Affect or Effect?

As a verb:

Affect = Influence

Effect = Cause

I affect (influence) my students by my mood.

The principal effected (caused) a change in the attendance policy.

Farther or Further?

Farther = Physical Distance

Further = More or To a Greater Extent

I have to go farther (distance) to school than you do.

I plan to have no further (more) contact with that student's parents.

Fewer or Less?

Fewer = Can Be Counted

Less = Cannot Be Counted

John has fewer crayons than he needs.

There was less noise in my class this year.

Lie or Lay?

Lie = Recline

Lay = Place or Set (requires an object)

I am tired. I think I will lie on the sofa.

I noticed that you were tired yesterday? Did you lay (past tense) down for a while?

Maria lay the newspaper on the table.

That or Which?

That starts a clause that is essential to the meaning of the sentence. If the clause is removed, the sentence does not say what you mean. No commas are used.

The topic that I want to use for my thesis is *The Effect of Standardized Test on the Anxiety Level of Teachers*.

The topic is *The Effect of Standardized Test on the Anxiety Level of Teachers*. (Does not say what you mean.)

Which starts a clause that is not essential to the sentence. It is a *by-the-way* clause. Commas are used before and after the clause.

My new BMW, which I bought in Atlanta, cost \$50,000.

My new BMW cost \$50,000. (Nothing important is left out.)

Who or That?

A human is a *who*.

An animal or a thing is a *that*.

I like the students that are in my class. (NO!)

I like the students who are in my class. (YES!)

Transition Sentences

To reflect coherence of thought in the writing process, use transition sentences between paragraphs in the same section.