

ENG 1121

English Composition 2



Objective

Work on clarity, grammar, mechanics, and proofreading

Grammar for the Unit 2 Writing Assignment

Sometimes we understand a sentence even when incorrect grammar is used.

Writing can have clarity, but the grammar might need work—depending on the audience.

For this assignment, since the audience is your peers who may not be in the DC of your genre, and me, an English professor, we want to stick to general Standard Written English (SWE).

When we work on our projects for Unit 3, we're going to have different audiences—so then SWE wouldn't necessarily be needed (more on that after you turn in this assignment).

What do you mean by “clarity”?

Clarity in writing is when a sentence is easily understood.

Read the following sentence:

Sail knows to father how my.

If you know the fundamentals of English, you can figure out the meaning, but it gave you pause, right?

What we really need is sentence clarity, like this:

My father knows how to sail.



So, how do we know if our writing is clear?

Read your sentences aloud, or, even better, ask a family member to read it to you. It’s easier to catch problems when we **hear** exactly what’s on the page.

What do you mean by “grammar”?

Simply speaking, “grammar” means the rules of a language. Sometimes, it is about word choice.

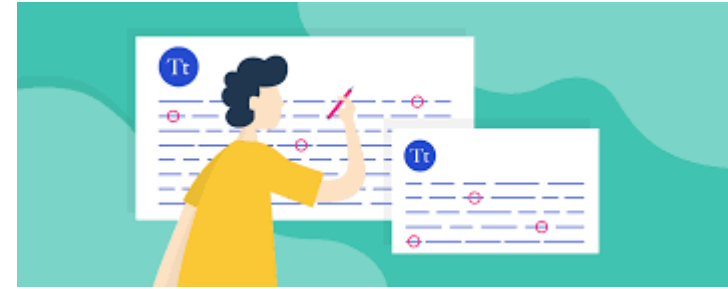
Read the following sentences:

I is from the United States. I are not from Canada.

This is an example of incorrect **word choice** (according to SWE).

Most speakers of English know the “be” verbs *is* and *are* stand for *am* in these cases.

In this case, we have no trouble understanding the meaning of both sentences (so we’ve got clarity), but we wouldn’t use incorrect word choice in certain situations—like a cover letter for a job.



What do you mean by “grammar”?

“Grammar” is also about the order of words.

Reread the following sentence:

Sail knows to father how my.

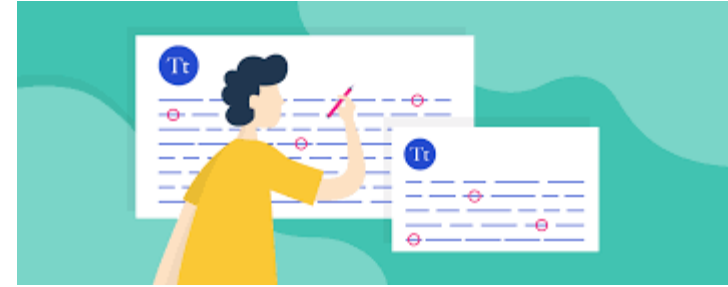
This is an example of incorrect **word order** (according to SWE).

Most speakers of English know that generally sentences should have a **subject** (person/thing) be first and the **verb** (action done by the subject) is second. (There are always exceptions, of course!)

My father knows how to sail.

Here, the subject is “My father.” The verb phrase is “knows how to sail.”

Because we expect words to be in a certain order in English, clarity is an issue.

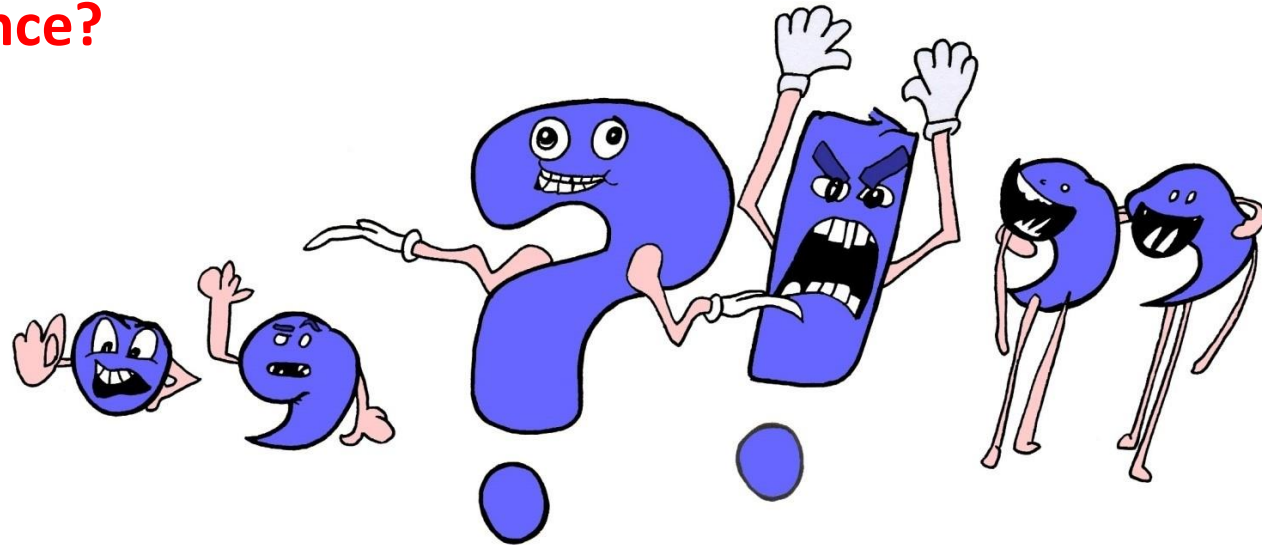


Grammar Issue: Run-on Sentences

Here's an example of a run-on sentence, which makes its meaning(s) unclear:

Look out for run-on sentences if you see a run-on sentence be sure to write "RO" to alert the writer that they need to either break up the sentence into separate ideas or use commas or semi-colons to ensure the reader doesn't get lost in the myriad of words.

How would you revise this run-on sentence?



Grammar Issue: Sentence Fragments

Watch out for sentences that aren't sentences. A complete sentence needs a **subject** AND a **verb**.

This is NOT a sentence: A **teacher** at City Tech.

This is NOT a sentence: At City Tech **laughed**.

How would you revise these fragments to make a complete sentence?



What do you mean by “mechanics” and “proofreading”?

When I use the term “mechanics,” I mean capitalization of certain words, punctuation, and spelling.

Proofreading is a way to catch and fix those issues before you turn in your second draft to me.



Keep reading to review these individual issues...



Capitalization

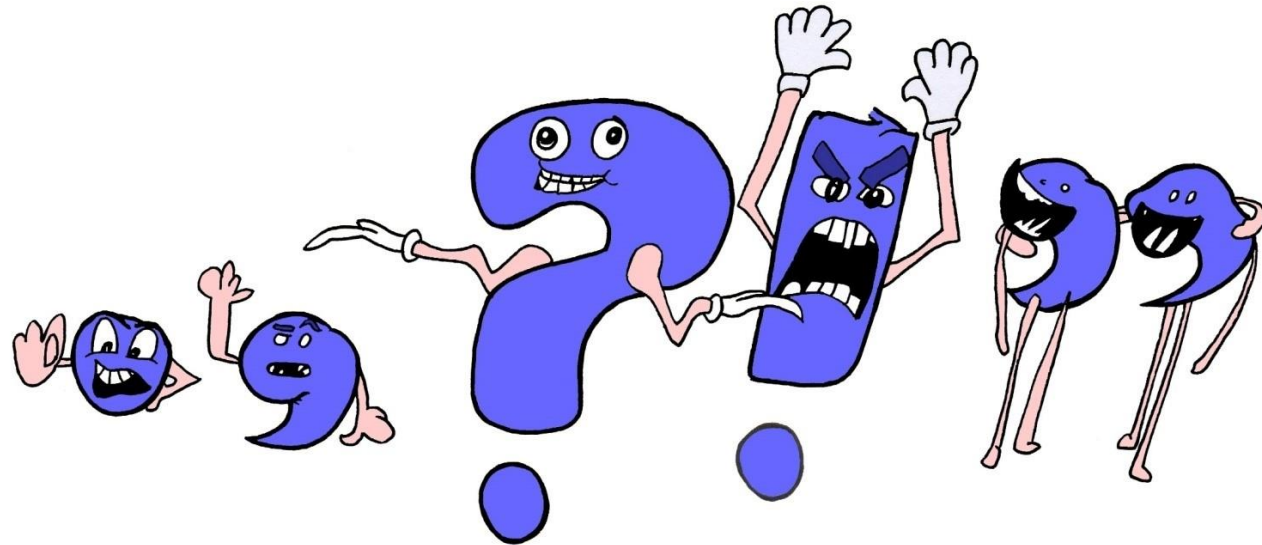


- Make sure every word at the beginning of a sentence is capitalized.
- Check for “i” when “I” is needed.
- Make sure that proper nouns are capitalized.
 - Names, like Jessica Penner. Places, like City Tech or New York City. Titles, like Professor Penner or *Star Wars*.
- But be careful! Sometimes people capitalize general nouns as if they are proper nouns. Read this sentence, and note when “professor” is capitalized:
 - A professor at City Tech, Professor Penner is thrilled to be working with exceptional students.



Commas

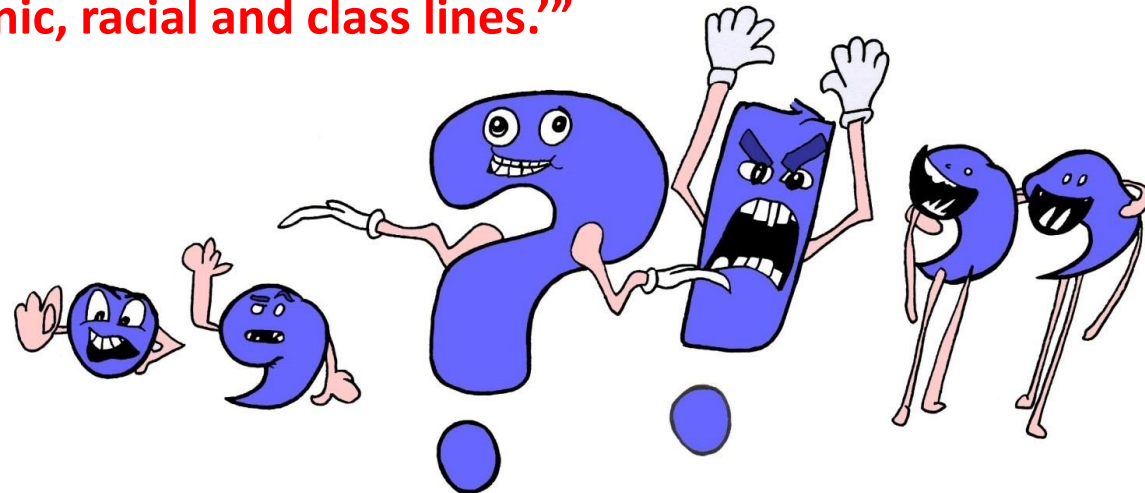
- Commas are often misused. They're either missing entirely or used too often.
- Here we **need** commas: **Professor Penner loves coffee chocolate and grading papers.**
- Here we have **too many** commas: **Professor Penner, loves coffee, chocolate, and grading papers.**
- If you're unsure about the comma usage, talk to me!



Quotation Marks

- With in-text citations with names and/or page numbers, follow this example:
Ed Levine notes that “The appeal of pizza crosses all ethnic, racial and class lines” (10).
- But if there is NO PAGE NUMBER, follow this example:
Ed Levine notes that “The appeal of pizza crosses all ethnic, racial and class lines.”
- Use double quotation marks unless you are quoting something within a quote.

Shayla came upon this sentence and decided to use it in her research paper: “Ed Levine notes that ‘The appeal of pizza crosses all ethnic, racial and class lines.’”



Spelling

- Look out for **they're / there / their**

They're going to a movie.

My car is over there.

Their house is by the lake.

- Look out for **too / to / two**

I'm too tired to go out tonight.

Let's go to a movie.

I have two dollars.

- Pay attention to the context of the sentence with the spellings of these words
- Confirm the spelling of names



Ways to Proofread



1. Read everything in the copy straight through from the beginning to end multiple times.
2. Focus on one thing each time you read: first, do capitalization, second, do fragments/run-on sentences, etc.
3. Read copy backward to catch spelling errors.
4. Read pages out of order.