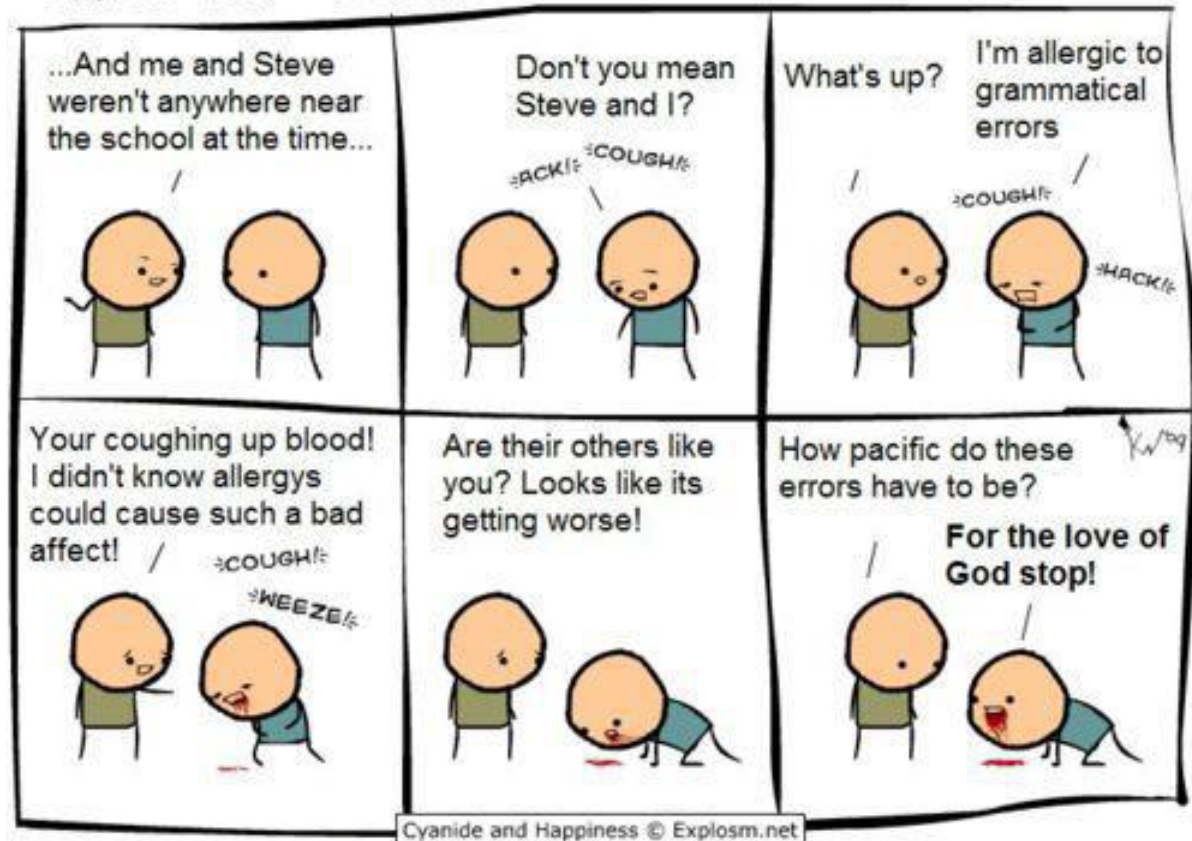


# GETTING IT “WRITE”: FINE TUNING YOUR ESSAY

## COMIC REWRITE CONTEST



# TODAY'S OBJECTIVES:

- Making your essay make sense!
  - Grammar
  - Punctuation
  - Clarity
  - Reworking
  
- Group Exercises
  - Correcting careless mistakes
  - Presenting and evaluating a good essay introduction



You were so  
attractive until you  
texted me with your  
hideous grammar.



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# CAN YOU FIND ALL 27 ERRORS?

## Sharpen your grammar skills!

How does good grammar skills help we as people? Being that I used to teach english, I've drove people crazy, men and woman alike, giving there grammar a work out. Punctuation sentence structure and verb tenses drug out to infinity. With training, people can learn to gradually make a lot less mistakes then before, but how dose good grammar give me and you a better way of life. I don't think it should be for it's own sake, but rather a hole mindset that you operate with. This mindset is one of respect for one's laguage, and a distaste for slovenly communication. You can always choose to improve yourself, and to begin, you better be your own worst critic, not other peoples!

## The correction:

How do good grammar skills help people? When I used to teach English, I drove people crazy -- men and women alike -- giving their grammar a workout. Punctuation, sentence structure, and verb tenses dragged out to infinity. With training, people can learn gradually to make many fewer mistakes than before, but how does correct grammar give you and me a better life? I don't think it should be for its own sake, but rather a whole mindset with which you operate. This mindset is one of respect for one's language and a distaste for slovenly communication. You can always chose to improve yourself. To begin, you should be your own worst critic, not someone else's!



# PROBLEMS:

- Singular/plural agreement
- Capitalizing
- Spelling
  - E.g. homonyms
- Punctuation
  - Commas, colons, semicolons, apostrophes, dashes
- Verb forms
- Adverbs
- Prepositions (“linking words”)
- Run-on sentences
- Tone



Please accept my apology for  
causing you frustration and  
confusion with my  
proper grammar  
usage and firm  
grasp of the  
English language.

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# SUBJECT-PREDICATE AGREEMENT

- In English nouns and pronouns (the subjects of sentences) are either **singular** or **plural**.
- Singular means ‘**one**’: e.g. I, you, he/she/it, a bird, a woman, a group
- Plural means ‘**two or more**’: we, you (tricky!), they, birds, women, groups
- Notice that there are singular nouns for collections of more than one -a group, a collective, a herd, a flock



- Singular nouns or *subjects* MUST be paired with singular verbs or *predicates*
- Plural *subjects* MUST be paired with plural predicates
- eg. *I am going* alone but *they are going* together.





# COMMON MISTAKES IN AGREEMENT

1) where a singular noun which stands for a collection is used:

- eg. [Wrong] The **group** **are** going to protest outside Parliament.
- [Right] The **group** **is** going to protest outside Parliament.

In this case the subject of the sentence is singular - **a group** - and therefore must be paired with a singular form of the verb.

If more than one group is involved the correct grammar would be:

Five **groups** from around the country **are** going to protest outside Parliament.



## COMMON MISTAKES IN AGREEMENT

2) where a singular noun is followed by a phrase or clause which has a plural noun

- The tendency is to make the verb agree with the noun which immediately precedes it.
- [Wrong] A valuable collection of china dogs and cats are going to be sold at the auction.
- [Right] A valuable *collection* of china dogs and cats *is* going to be sold at the auction



# THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER PUNCTUATION!

- How would you add punctuation to the following sentence?

“A woman without her man is nothing”

1. “A woman, without her man, is nothing.”
2. “A woman: without her, man is nothing.”

PUNCTUATION IS POWERFUL!





# STOP CLUBBING, BABY SEALS

Once again, punctuation makes all the difference ....



**ATTENTION**

**Toilet  
ONLY**  
for  
**DISABLED  
ELDERLY  
PREGNANT  
CHILDREN**

**THANK YOU for shopping with us!!!**

# COMMAS

- Commas are the most mis-used punctuation mark. A comma (,) is used

## 1) to separate items in a list:

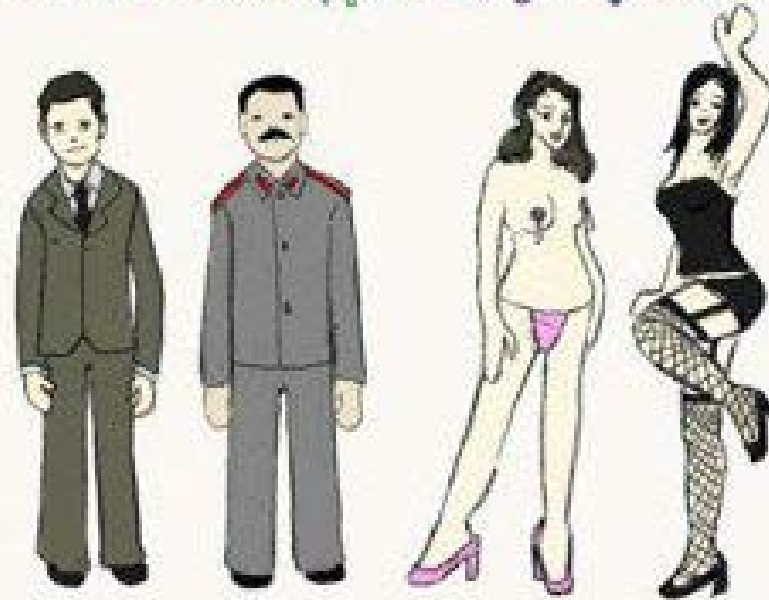
- She picked up her kids, the groceries, the dry-cleaning and the dog.
- She is clever, angry and determined to win.

The 'Oxford comma' is an optional comma before the word 'and' at the end of a list:

*We sell books, videos, and magazines.*



With the Oxford comma:  
we invited the strippers, jfk, and stalin.



Without the Oxford comma:  
we invited the strippers, jfk and stalin.



## 2) to set off an aside or interjection in a sentence

- The use of contraceptives, although posing some health dangers, has been fundamental to improving women's control over their lives.
- I expected a mention, at least, of the substantial literature by feminist anthropologists.





**3) to set off a long modifying clause from the main part of the sentence in order to improve readability.**

- Although women have been using oral contraceptives for about thirty-five years and hormone replacement therapy for about fifteen, there is still uncertainty about the long-term health risks of both forms of medication.



- 4) to set off words which indicate change of emphasis, order, example, etc. at the beginning of a sentence or in the middle of a sentence.
- Furthermore, ...
- For example, ...
- However,
- Firstly,... Secondly,... Finally, ....
- Rugby, for example, is a sport in which New Zealand women excel at the world level.



- 5) to separate a direct quotation from the rest of a sentence
- She said, “I love my anthropology papers.”



# PUTTING TOGETHER AN ASSIGNMENT

- Assemble all the necessary instructions:
  - Instructions for the assignment
  - Anthropology Department Writing Guide
  - Marking guide and coversheet
  - Handout on Turnitin

Read each of these carefully and highlight important parts



I read your comment.  
Unfortunately, your  
inability to spell  
completely  
overshadowed your  
stunningly sharp wit.



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## AN EXAMPLE OF AN “A” GRADE ESSAY INTRODUCTION:

In their discussion of punk music, scholars often emphasize political radicalism and rebellion as defining characteristics of the genre and its associated subculture (Phillipov 2006:386-87; Shevory 1995:25). Michelle Phillipov writes of various scholarship dealing with punk music that “the fundamental point...ultimately remains the same: [scholars] see punk as an essentially progressive movement articulating egalitarian, community-based, broadly leftist politics” (2006:386). In this essay, however, I argue that the “progressive” and “egalitarian” tenets that may have persevered in the British punk movement are largely lacking in the American movement. Additionally, I maintain that while the punk subculture failed to radicalize American youth politically, it did provide a less extreme outlet through which youth could socially rebel against previous generations.



## IMPROVING YOUR INTRODUCTION

- Compare this example with the one you were given last week
- In pairs, rewrite introduction of low-C-range essay to meet the standards of an A-range essay
- Swap your new introductions with a neighbouring group
- Assess the introduction you've now received. How would you grade it? Why?



## BEFORE SUBMITTING

- Get out all the relevant materials you assembled in the beginning.
- Check to make sure that you have covered or included all the things which are required.
- DO YOU HAVE A GOOD INTRODUCTION, which directly addresses the question and has a strong thesis statement?
- Read the assignment through from start to finish to check for errors. Then give it to a friend, family member, or colleague to read to check for clarity and mistakes of grammar, spelling, or punctuation.





Next time you're "board," why not  
open a book?  
I recommend a  
dictionary.



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