

Professional Development Resources Presents ...

RANLY ON GRAMMAR

*Grammar & Punctuation For
Writers and Editors*

by Professor Don Ranly, Ph.D.

I. Introduction

- A. What you always wanted to know about grammar and were afraid (or unable or embarrassed) to ask
- B. Begin in the beginning
- C. Grammar for writers and editors
 - 1. Correct — yes, but ...
 - 2. Consistent
- D. Informal, casual approach
 - 1. Excuse the glitches, even grammatical ones
 - 2. Pause where you like, also for exercises
- E. Four sessions
 - 1. Clauses, sentences, punctuation
 - 2. Parts of speech — nouns, pronouns
 - 3. The verb
 - 4. The verbals, dangles and other stuff

II. Why know grammar?

- A. Being grammatical is being clear
- B. Being grammatical is being correct
- C. Knowing grammar gives you the vocabulary to discuss writing
- D. You're expected to know it

III. Clauses

- A. Two basic clauses
 - 1. Independent = sentence
 - a. Complete thought — subject and predicate (verb)
 - b. Can stand by itself
 - 2. Dependent clauses — cannot stand alone
 - a. Subordinate — begin with subordinating conjunctions — because, after, while, if, etc.
 - b. Relative — begin with relative pronouns — who, what, that, which, etc.

Session 1:

Clauses, Sentences, Punctuation

Other sessions in this series:

- 2. *Parts of Speech — Nouns and Pronouns*
- 3. *The Verb*
- 4. *Verbals, Dangles & Other Stuff*

IV. Sentences

- A. Form
 - 1. Simple — one independent clause
 - 2. Complex — one or more dependent clauses, plus independent clause
 - 3. Compound — two or more independent clauses, joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, for, nor, or, yet, so) or by a semicolon
- B. Function
 - 1. Declaratory — (period)
 - 2. Imperative — (period)
 - 3. Exclamatory — (exclamation point)
 - 4. Interrogative — (question mark)

V. Restrictive and non-restrictive words, phrases, clauses

- A. Restrictive — necessary, essential
- B. Non-restrictive — not necessary, non-essential

Exercise 1

In the space provided, put the appropriate symbol:

- S — Complete sentence
I — Incomplete sentence (fragment)
RO — Run-on sentence (comma splice)

- ___ 1. The house is a perfect size, it is neither too large nor too small.
- ___ 2. Bob did his best trick, pouring wine from an empty bottle.
- ___ 3. One of the greatest professors in this university.
- ___ 4. I came, I saw, I conquered.
- ___ 5. A mother who was always too busy to talk to her children.
- ___ 6. "I have no idea what you're talking about, I care even less," she said.
- ___ 7. "I am pleased, I am honored," Smith said.
- ___ 8. Because he needed the money to remain in school he accepted it gladly.
- ___ 9. He was here yesterday, he was here today, and he will be here tomorrow.
- ___ 10. The suit was slightly soiled; therefore, the price was right.
- ___ 11. If you see a dog running sideways you probably aren't seeing things.
- ___ 12. This time; however, she did not go.
- ___ 13. My sister is studying physics, she's a good student.
- ___ 14. Phil likes to play football - he passes quite well.
- ___ 15. We left as soon as the game was over because we were all tired.
- ___ 16. She smiled at the mistake; and I did not mind.
- ___ 17. He seemed not to care, however, this was not the case.
- ___ 18. Since the time was near, it seemed right, regardless of the circumstances.
- ___ 19. Acting as if she knew exactly what she was doing.
- ___ 20. He never did go, he won't ever go.
- ___ 21. Remembering that she was only 16 at the time.
- ___ 22. I do so.
- ___ 23. He's still my friend and I shall always consider him so.
- ___ 24. Whenever the time came for him to perform his act.
- ___ 25. At that time he would not go but now the circumstances are different.

Exercise 2

In the space provided, put the appropriate symbol:

- S — Simple sentence
C — Complex sentence
CO — Compound sentence

- ___ 1. In all of his 45 years he had never been to Ohio.
- ___ 2. Whenever he came to Chicago he stayed at the Y.
- ___ 3. It didn't seem possible but it happened.
- ___ 4. She was in the springtime of her life, he was not.
- ___ 5. John spoke to her when he saw her in Atlanta.
- ___ 6. I have seen it happen and I know it can happen again.
- ___ 7. He did not seek redress because the law was not clearly on his side.
- ___ 8. The year was not a good one in spite of all his added income.
- ___ 9. Since you have gone the city has grown.
- ___ 10. No one could mistake what had happened.
- ___ 11. Although he tried to forgive he could not forget.
- ___ 12. It was no way to spend a Sunday afternoon.
- ___ 13. He did not want to go and he would not go.
- ___ 14. She left early in the evening, however, he didn't go with her.
- ___ 15. Regrettably he knew no grammar at all.
- ___ 16. The time and the place were of no consequence.
- ___ 17. If that were the case she wouldn't know or do anything about it.
- ___ 18. The last of the tribe was not the least; nor was he the best.
- ___ 19. The cat was indeed in the bag because Tom had seen to it the night before.
- ___ 20. He tried to do it but could not.
- ___ 21. He never thought he was fat.
- ___ 22. She didn't do it then and wouldn't do it now.
- ___ 23. The city was quiet, the streets were empty.
- ___ 24. She did not feel well, therefore, she stayed at home.
- ___ 25. She was one of those people who worked hard at everything she did and never quit before the job was finished.

Exercise 3

Punctuate the following sentences correctly.

1. The yellow tarnished cup was supposedly valuable.
2. The man, who was wearing a green suit, was an escaped convict.
3. His wife Ann was in her 30s but she acted like a 10 year old.
4. The third house which has green shutters is Tom's.
5. The tall muscular young man was no member of the middle class.
6. The tiny old man was all alone.
7. If a person cares enough he will give an all out effort.
8. Nodding to her to come he smiled congenially.
9. He led a strange lonely life.
10. The tall newly-constructed building is unsafe.
11. The worker who missed only one day of work was rewarded.
12. Because she knew him well she would not betray him.
13. The simple short lesson took him 20 minutes to complete.
14. The two year degree was of no use.
15. The age old truism never rang more true.
16. The friendly looking person did not bother anyone.
17. The weak unsteady chair was poorly-constructed.
18. The tree which had just been trimmed was blown over.
19. The middle class neighborhood had many poorly-planned streets.
20. The car had turned left and he could no longer see it.
21. If the opportunity arose the properly-informed person would act.
22. He was old fashioned but he was not stingy.
23. The dirty run down place was filled with antique lovers.
24. The movie was pure unmitigated propaganda.
25. The tall brick house stood in a neatly-kept yard.

Ranly's Rules

Punctuating for Consistency

Always place a comma:

1. After words in a series, but *not* before "and" or "or" unless the meaning is unclear.
Example: Mary, Tom and Bill were there.
2. After an introductory dependent clause in a complex sentence.
Example: Until he came, the party was quiet.
3. After an introductory independent clause in a compound sentence, before the coordinating conjunction.
Example: The gang soon left, but Jeff stayed.
4. Around non-essential, non-restrictive words, phrases, and clauses. ("Which" always introduces a non-restrictive clause; "that" always introduces a restrictive clause.)
Example: The third house that has green shutters is his.
5. After introductory participial phrases.
Example: Waiting in the bar, Tom grew restless.
6. After a second introductory prepositional phrase.
Example: In May of last year, profits were up.
7. After an introductory interjection, an independent element, a direct address.
Examples: Oh, so that's it. Yes, I'm certain. Harry, come here.
8. Between coordinate adjectives. (Adjectives are coordinate if they can be reversed and if you can insert "and" between them.)
Example: The gaunt, lonely creature was also afraid.

You may place a comma:

1. After introductory adverbs.
Example: Suddenly, it's summer.
2. After an introductory prepositional phrase.
Example: In his later years, he grew even more conservative.
3. After short sentences in a series (three or more).
Example: It was cold yesterday, it was cold today, and it will be cold tomorrow.

Use a semicolon:

1. After elements in a series when the elements have commas.

Example: The list included the following: Bill Corrigan, 31, of 445 North Main St.; Sheila Smith, 28, of 333 Elm St.; and Shawn Taylor, 36, of 789 S. Edgewood Ave.

2. Between independent clauses to show that they are closely related when no coordinating conjunction is present.

Example: She had an inquiring mind; she read a great deal.

Use a colon:

1. To introduce more than one item.
2. After an attribution that introduces a direct quotation of more than one sentence.

Use a dash:

— to show dramatic contrast or emphasis.

Example: The killer whale raced across the pool toward its trainer — then kissed her on the cheek.

Use a hyphen:

1. Between compound adjectives. (Adjectives are compound when both or several adjectives can't stand independently with the noun.) *Example: light-green house; 4-year-old girl.*
2. Between compound nouns. *Example: animal-lovers.*
3. Between adverbs and adjectives unless the adverb ends in "ly." *Example: well-constructed; badly burned.*

Note:

Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks.

Example: "Little girls don't drink bath water," said the mother.

The little girl said, "I do."