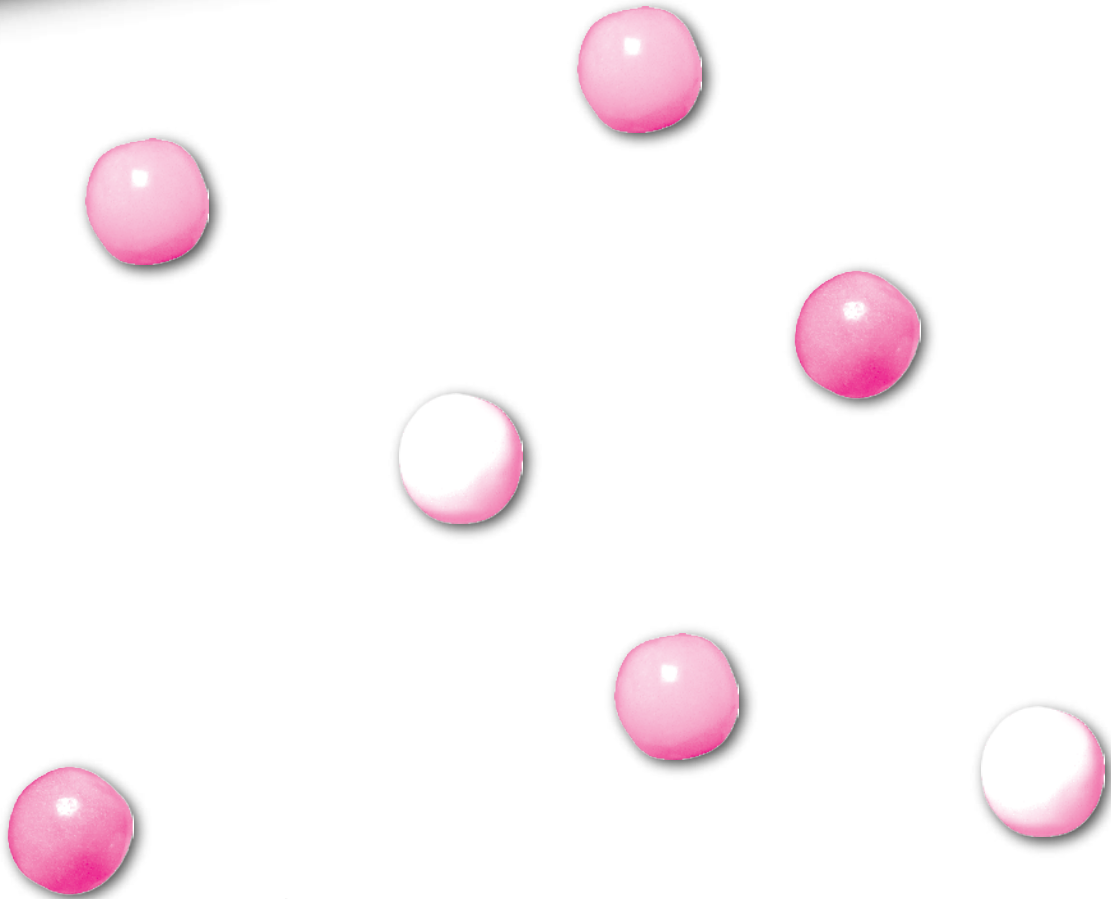


Handbook

G.U.M.

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics



ZB Zaner-Bloser
The Language Arts and Reading Company

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Handbook

Table of Contents

Mechanics

Section 1	Capitalization	196
Section 2	Abbreviations and Initials	197
Section 3	Titles	197
Section 4	Quotation Marks	198
Section 5	Spelling	198
Section 6	End Marks	198
Section 7	Apostrophes	199
Section 8	Commas, Semicolons, and Colons	199

Sentence Structure and Parts of Speech

Section 9	The Sentence	200
Section 10	Subjects	200
Section 11	Predicates	200
Section 12	Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences	201
Section 13	Fragments, Run-ons, and Comma Splices	201
Section 14	Nouns	202
Section 15	Adjectives	202
Section 16	Pronouns	202
Section 17	Verbs	203
Section 18	Adverbs	205
Section 19	Prepositions	205
Section 20	Direct Objects and Indirect Objects	205
Section 21	Conjunctions	205
Section 22	Interjections	205
Section 23	Appositives	205

Usage

Section 24	Negatives	206
Section 25	Comparisons	206
Section 26	Contractions	207
Section 27	Plural Nouns	207
Section 28	Possessive Nouns	207
Section 29	Problem Words	208
Section 30	Homophones	210

Letters and E-mails

Section 31	Letters	211
Section 32	E-mails	212

Research

Section 33	Library Research	212
Section 34	Internet Research	213

Guidelines for Listening and Speaking

Section 35	Listening	214
Section 36	Speaking	214

Name _____

Mechanics

Section 1 Capitalization

- Capitalize the first word in a sentence.
The kangaroo rat is an amazing animal.
- Capitalize all *proper nouns*, including people's names and the names of particular places.
Gregory Gordon Washington Monument
- Capitalize titles of respect.
Mr. Alvarez Dr. Chin Ms. Murphy
- Capitalize family titles used just before people's names and titles of respect that are part of names.
Uncle Frank Aunt Mary Governor Adamson
- Capitalize initials of names.
Thomas Paul Gerard (T.P. Gerard)
- Capitalize place names.
France Utah China Baltimore
- Capitalize *proper adjectives*, adjectives that are made from proper nouns.
Chinese Icelandic French Latin American
- Capitalize the months of the year and the days of the week.
February April Monday Tuesday
- Capitalize important words in the names of organizations.
American Lung Association Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Capitalize important words in the names of holidays.
Veterans Day Fourth of July
- Capitalize the first word in the greeting or closing of a letter.
Dear Edmundo, Yours truly,
- Capitalize the word *I*.
Frances and I watched the movie together.
- Capitalize the first, last, and most important words in a title. Be sure to capitalize all verbs including *is* and *was*.
Island of the Blue Dolphins
Away Is a Strange Place to Be
- Capitalize the first word in a direct quotation.
Aunt Rose said, "Please pass the clam dip."

Section 2 Abbreviations and Initials

Abbreviations are shortened forms of words. Many abbreviations begin with a capital letter and end with a period.

- You can abbreviate titles of address and titles of respect when you write.
Mister (Mr. Brian Davis) Mistress (Mrs. Maria Rosario)
Doctor (Dr. Emily Chu) Junior (Everett Castle, Jr.)
Note: *Ms.* is a title of address used for women. It is not an abbreviation, but it requires a period (*Ms. Anita Brown*).
- You can abbreviate words used in addresses when you write.
Street (St.) Avenue (Ave.) Route (Rte.) Boulevard (Blvd.) Road (Rd.)
- You can abbreviate certain words in the names of businesses when you write.
Pet Helpers, Incorporated (Pet Helpers, Inc.) River Corporation (River Corp.)
- You can abbreviate days of the week when you take notes.
Sunday (Sun.) Wednesday (Wed.) Friday (Fri.)
Monday (Mon.) Thursday (Thurs.) Saturday (Sat.)
Tuesday (Tues.)
- You can abbreviate months of the year when you take notes.
January (Jan.) April (Apr.) October (Oct.)
February (Feb.) August (Aug.) November (Nov.)
March (Mar.) September (Sept.) December (Dec.)
(May, June, and July do not have abbreviated forms.)
- You can abbreviate directions when you take notes.
North (N) East (E) South (S) West (W)

An *initial* is the first letter of a name. An initial is written as a capital letter and a period. Sometimes initials are used for the names of countries or cities.

Michael Paul Sanders (M.P. Sanders) United States of America (U.S.A.)
Washington, District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.)

Section 3 Titles

- Underline titles of books, newspapers, TV series, movies, and magazines.
Island of the Blue Dolphins Miami Herald I Love Lucy
Note: These titles are put in italics when using a word processor.
- Use quotation marks around articles in magazines, short stories, chapters in books, songs, and poems.
“This Land Is Your Land” “The Gift” “Eletelephony”
- Capitalize the first, last, and most important words. Articles, prepositions, and conjunctions are usually not capitalized. Be sure to capitalize all verbs, including forms of the verb *be* (*am, is, are, was, were, been*).
A Knight in the Attic *My Brother Sam Is Dead*

Section 4 Quotation Marks

- Put quotation marks (“ ”) around the titles of articles, magazines, short stories, book chapters, songs, and poems.
My favorite short story is “Revenge of the Reptiles.”
- Put quotation marks around a *direct quotation*, or a speaker’s exact words.
“Did you see that alligator?” Max asked.
- Do not put quotation marks around an *indirect quotation*, a person’s words retold by another speaker. An indirect quotation is often signalled by *whether* or *that*.
Max asked Rory whether he had seen an alligator.

Writing a Conversation

- Put quotation marks around the speaker’s words. Begin a direct quotation with a capital letter. Use a comma to separate the quotation from the rest of the sentence.
Rory said, “There are no alligators in this area.”
- When a direct quotation comes at the end of a sentence, put the end mark inside the last quotation mark.
Max cried, “Look out!”
- When writing a conversation, begin a new paragraph with each change of speaker.
Max panted, “I swear I saw a huge, scaly tail and a flat snout in the water!”
“Relax,” Rory said. “I told you there are no alligators around here.”

Section 5 Spelling

Use these tips if you are not sure how to spell a word you want to write:

- Say the word aloud and break it into syllables. Try spelling each syllable. Put the syllables together to spell the whole word.
- Write the word. Make sure there is a vowel in every syllable. If the word looks wrong to you, try spelling it other ways.
- Think of a related word. Parts of related words are often spelled the same.

When you use the word processing function of a computer to write something, you can use the spell check feature. It will identify possible spelling errors in your writing. A spell checker will not catch errors with homophones, though. For example, if you type *break* instead of *brake*, the spell checker will not catch the mistake, because the word is spelled correctly.

Section 6 End Marks

Every sentence must end with a period, an exclamation point, or a question mark.

- Use a *period* at the end of a statement (declarative sentence) or a command (imperative sentence).
Dad and I look alike. (*declarative*) Step back very slowly. (*imperative*)
- Use an *exclamation point* at the end of a firm command (imperative sentence) or at the end of a sentence that shows great feeling or excitement (exclamatory sentence).
Get away from the cliff! (*imperative*) What an incredible sight! (*exclamatory*)
- Use a *question mark* at the end of an asking sentence (interrogative sentence).
How many miles is it to Tucson? (*interrogative*)

Section 7 Apostrophes

An apostrophe (') is used to form the possessive of a noun or to join words in a contraction.

- Possessives show ownership. To make a singular noun possessive, add 's.
The bike belongs to Carmen. It is Carmen's bike.
The truck belongs to Mr. Ross. It is Mr. Ross's truck.
- To form a possessive from a plural noun that ends in s, add only an apostrophe.
Those books belong to my sisters. They are my sisters' books.
- Some plural nouns do not end in s. To form possessives with these nouns, add 's.
The children left their boots here. The children's boots are wet.
- Use an apostrophe to replace the dropped letters in a contraction.
couldn't (could not) it's (it is) hasn't (has not)

Section 8 Commas, Semicolons, and Colons

Commas in Sentences

- Use a comma after an introductory word in a sentence.
Yes, I'd love to go to the movies. Actually, we had a great time.
- Use a comma to separate items in a series. A series is a list of three or more items. Put the last comma before *and* or *or*. A comma is not needed to separate two items.
Shall we eat cheese, bread, or fruit? Let's eat cheese and fruit.
- Use a comma to separate a noun of direct address from the rest of a sentence.
Akila, will you please stand up? We would like you to sing, Akila.
- Use a comma to separate a direct quotation from the rest of a sentence.
Joe asked, "How long must I sit here?" "You must sit there for one hour," Vic said.
- Use a comma with the conjunction *and*, *or*, or *but* when combining independent clauses in a compound sentence.
Lisa liked the reptiles best, but Lyle preferred the amphibians.

Semicolons and Colons in Sentences

- You may use a semicolon or a colon in place of a comma and a conjunction when combining independent clauses. A colon can be used when the second clause states a direct result of the first.
Lisa likes reptiles; Lyle prefers amphibians. Lisa likes reptiles; she has two pet snakes.

Commas and Colons in Letters

- Use a comma after the greeting and closing of a friendly letter.
Dear Reginald, Your friend, Deke
- Use a colon after the greeting of a business letter. Use a comma after the closing.
Dear Ms. Brocklehurst; Sincerely,

Commas with Dates and Place Names

- Use a comma to separate the day from the date and the date from the year.
We clinched the division championship on Saturday, September 20, 2008.
- Use a comma to separate the name of a city or town from the name of a state.
I visited Memphis, Tennessee.

Sentence Structure and Parts of Speech

Section 9 The Sentence

A *sentence* is a group of words that tells a complete thought. A sentence has two parts: a *subject* and a *predicate*.

- The subject tells *whom* or *what* the sentence is about. The swimmers race.
- The predicate tells what the subject *is* or *does*. The judges watch carefully.

There are four kinds of sentences: *declarative*, *interrogative*, *imperative*, and *exclamatory*.

- A *declarative sentence* makes a statement and ends with a period.
Jake swam faster than anyone.
- An *interrogative sentence* asks a question and ends with a question mark.
Did Sammy qualify for the finals?
- An *imperative sentence* gives a command and usually ends with a period; a firm command can end with an exclamation point.
Keep your eyes on the finish line. Watch out for that bee!
- An *exclamatory sentence* ends with an exclamation point. Jake has won the race!

Section 10 Subjects

The *subject* of a sentence tells *whom* or *what* the sentence is about.

- A sentence can have one subject. Mary wrote a book.
- A sentence can have a *compound subject*, two or more subjects that share the same predicate. Alex and Mark have already read the book.
- Imperative sentences have an unnamed *understood subject* of *you* (the person being spoken to). Give me the book, please. (Understood subject=*you*)

The *complete subject* includes all the words that name and tell about the subject.

Many students have borrowed the book.

The *simple subject* is the most important noun or pronoun in the complete subject.

Many students have borrowed the book. They discussed the book yesterday.

Note: Sometimes the simple subject and the complete subject are the same.

Ricardo is writing a book about robots.

Section 11 Predicates

The *predicate* of a sentence tells what happened.

The *complete predicate* includes a verb and all the words that tell what happened.

- A complete predicate can tell what the subject of the sentence did. This kind of predicate includes an action verb. Mary won an award.
- A complete predicate can also tell more about the subject. This kind of predicate includes a linking verb. Mary is a talented writer.
- A *predicate noun* follows a linking verb and renames the subject.
Mary is a writer.
- A *predicate adjective* follows a linking verb and describes the subject.
Mary is talented.

The *simple predicate* is the verb that goes with the subject. It generally tells what the subject did, does, or will do.

Celia won an award for her performance. She will receive a trophy next week.

A *compound predicate* is two or more predicates that share the same subject. Compound predicates are often joined by the conjunction *and* or *or*.

Ramon sang and danced in the play. Mary wrote the play and directed it.

Section 12 Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences

A *simple sentence* tells one complete thought.

Arthur has a rock collection.

A *compound sentence* is made up of two simple sentences joined by a comma and a conjunction (*and, or, but*). The two simple sentences in a compound sentence can also be joined by a semicolon. Two simple sentences can go together to make one compound sentence if the ideas in the simple sentences are related.

Arthur has a rock collection, and Mary collects shells.

Arthur collects rocks; Mary collects shells.

A *complex sentence* is made up of one *independent clause* (or simple sentence) and at least one dependent clause. A *dependent clause* is a group of words that has a subject and a predicate, but cannot stand on its own.

Dependent Clause: when Arthur visited Arizona

Independent Clause: He learned a lot about desert plants.

Complex Sentence: When Arthur visited Arizona, he learned a lot about desert plants.

Section 13 Fragments, Run-ons, and Comma Splices

A *fragment* is an incomplete sentence because it does not tell a complete thought.

Sumi and Ali. (*missing a predicate that tells what happened*)

Went hiking in the woods. (*missing a subject that tells who went hiking*)

A *run-on sentence* is two complete sentences that are run together. To fix a run-on sentence, use a comma and a conjunction (*and, or, but*) to join the two sentences. (You may also join the sentences with a semicolon.)

Incorrect: Sumi went hiking Ali went swimming.

Correct: Sumi went hiking, but Ali went swimming.

A *comma splice* is two complete sentences that have a comma between them but are missing a conjunction (*and, or, but*). To fix a comma splice, add *and, or, but* after the comma.

Incorrect: Sumi went hiking yesterday, Ali went swimming.

Correct: Sumi went hiking yesterday, and Ali went swimming.

A *ramble-on sentence* is correct grammatically but contains extra words and phrases that don't add to its meaning.

Incorrect: Hiking through the wilderness to enjoy nature is my favorite outdoor sports activity, probably because it is so enjoyable and such good exercise, and because I enjoy observing wild animals in the wilderness in their natural environment.

Correct: Hiking through the wilderness to enjoy nature is my favorite outdoor sports activity. I enjoy observing wild animals in their natural environment.

Try not to string too many short sentences together when you write. Instead, combine sentences and take out unnecessary information.

Incorrect: I stared at him and he stared at me and I told him to go away and he wouldn't so then I called my big sister.

Correct: We stared at each other. I told him to go away, but he wouldn't. Then I called my big sister.

Section 14 Nouns

A *common noun* names any person, place, thing, or idea.

Ira visited an auto museum with his friends. Ira has always had an interest in cars.

A *proper noun* names a certain person, place, thing, or idea. Proper nouns begin with a capital letter.

Ira wants to visit the Sonoran Desert in Mexico.

Section 15 Adjectives

An *adjective* is a word that tells more about a noun or a pronoun.

- Some adjectives tell what kind.

Jim observed the huge elephant. The enormous beast towered above him.

- Some adjectives tell how many.

The elephant was twelve feet tall. It weighed several tons.

- Sometimes an adjective follows the noun it describes.

Jim was careful not to anger the elephant. He was happy when the trainer led it away.

- *A, an, and the* are special kinds of adjectives called *articles*. Use *a* and *an* to refer to any person, place, thing, or idea. Use *the* to refer to a specific person, place, thing, or idea. Use *a* before a singular noun that begins with a consonant sound. Use *an* before a singular noun that begins with a vowel sound.

An elephant is heavier than a rhino. The elephant in this picture is six weeks old.

- *Demonstrative adjectives* tell which one. The words *this, that, these, and those* can be used as demonstrative adjectives. Use *this* and *these* to talk about things that are nearby. Use *that* and *those* to talk about things that are far away.

This book is about rhinos.

These rhinos just came to the zoo.

That rhino is enormous!

Those funny-looking creatures are wildebeests.

Note: Never use *here* or *there* after the adjectives *this, that, these, and those*.

- A *proper adjective* is made from a proper noun. Capitalize proper adjectives.

Italian cooking

Democratic convention

Apache legend

Section 16 Pronouns

A *pronoun* can replace a noun naming a person, place, thing, or idea. Personal pronouns include *I, me, you, we, us, he, she, him, her, it, they, and them*.

- A *subject pronoun* takes the place of the subject of a sentence.

Rita is an excellent soccer player. She is an excellent soccer player.

- A subject pronoun is said to be in the *nominative case*. The subject pronouns are *I, you, he, she, it, we, and they*.

- Do not use both the pronoun and the noun it replaces together.

- An *object pronoun* replaces a noun that is the object of a verb or preposition. Object pronouns are said to be in the *objective case*. Object pronouns include *me, him, her, us, and them*. The pronouns *it* and *you* can be either subjects or objects.

Rita's team played the Bobcats. Rita's team beat them.

It was a close game. (*subject pronoun*) The Bobcats almost won it. (*object pronoun*)

- Use a subject pronoun as part of a compound subject. Use an object pronoun as part of a compound object. To test whether a pronoun is correct, say the sentence without the other part of a compound subject or object.

Incorrect: Rita told Ellen and I it was a close game. (Rita told I it was a close game.)

Correct: Rita told Ellen and me it was a close game. (Rita told me it was a close game.)

- An *antecedent* is the word or phrase a pronoun refers to. The antecedent always includes a noun.

The Bobcats are excellent players. They won every game last season.

- A pronoun must match its antecedent. An antecedent and pronoun agree when they have the same *number* (singular or plural) and *gender* (male or female).

Nick's mother cheered. She was very excited.

- *Possessive pronouns* show ownership. The words *my, your, his, her, its, their, and our* are possessive pronouns.

Those skates belong to my brother. Those are his kneepads, too.

- A *compound personal pronoun* contains the word *self* or *selves*. Compound personal pronouns include *myself, herself, himself, itself, yourself, ourselves, and themselves*. They often show that the action of a sentence is reflecting back to the subject.

My brother bought himself a new puck. We cheered for ourselves.

- *Indefinite pronouns* refer to persons or things that are not identified as individuals. These pronouns include *all, anybody, both, anything, few, most, no one, and somebody*.

Somebody lost the ball. We can't play anything until we find it.

- The interrogative pronouns *who, whom, whose, what, and which* are used to ask questions.

Who has brought the volleyball?

What is a wicket used for?

Which is the net for volleyball?

To whom did you hit the ball?

- *This, that, these, and those* can be used as demonstrative pronouns. Use *this* and *these* to talk about one or more things that are nearby. Use *that* and *those* to talk about one or more things that are far away.

This is a soft rug.

These are sweeter than those over there.

That is where I sat yesterday.

Those are new chairs.

Section 17 Verbs

An *action verb* shows action in a sentence.

Scientists study the natural world.

They learn how the laws of nature work.

- A *main verb* is the most important verb in a sentence. A *helping verb*, or *auxiliary verb*, comes before the main verb to help it show action. Auxiliary verbs such as *had, are, and will* indicate the tense of the main verb. Others, such as *could, might, and may*, show how likely it is that something will happen.

Scientists are studying glaciers.

The studies may help us learn more about Earth.

- The *present tense* is used to show that something happens regularly or is true now. Squirrels bury nuts each fall.

Add *s* to most verbs to show present tense when the subject is *he, she, it*, or a singular noun. Add *es* to verbs ending in *s, ch, sh, x*, or *z*. Do not add *s* or *es* if the subject is a plural noun or if the subject is *I, you, we*, or *they*.

add s

speak/speaks

add es

reach/reaches

change y to i and add es

carry/carries

- The *past tense* shows past action. Add *-ed* to most verbs to form the past tense. Verbs that do not add *-ed* are called *irregular verbs*. You can find the past and past participle forms of an irregular verb in a dictionary.
- The *future tense* shows future action. Use the verb *will* to form the future tense. Mom will visit Antarctica next year. She will photograph penguins.
- The *present perfect tense* shows action that began in the past and may still be happening. To form the present perfect tense, add the helping verb *has* or *have* to the past participle of a verb. Mom has studied Antarctica for years. Her articles have appeared in science journals.
- The *past perfect tense* shows action that was completed by a certain time in the past. To form the past perfect tense, add the verb *had* to the past participle of a verb. Before she visited Antarctica, Mom had imagined it as a wasteland.
- *Progressive forms* of verbs show continuing action. To form a *present progressive* verb, add *am, is, or are* to the *present participle* of a verb (usually the present form + *-ing*). To form a *past progressive* verb, add *was* or *were* to the present participle. To form a *future progressive* verb, add *will be* to the present participle. Scientists are learning new facts about Antarctica every day. (*present progressive*)
When Mom was traveling in Antarctica, she saw its beauty. (*past progressive*)
Someday soon I will be visiting Antarctica with Mom. (*future progressive*)
- A verb is in *active voice* if its subject performs an action. A verb is in *passive voice* if its subject is acted upon by something else. Explorers plan trips months in advance. (*active voice*)
Trips are planned months in advance by explorers. (*passive voice*)
- The subject and its verb must agree in number. Be sure that the verb agrees with its subject and not with the object of a preposition that comes before the verb. An Antarctic explorer needs special equipment. (*singular subject: An Antarctic explorer; verb + s or es: needs*)
Explorers in Antarctica carry climbing tools and survival gear. (*plural subject: Explorers; verb without s or es: carry*)

A compound subject and its verb must agree. Compound subjects joined by *and* are plural. If a compound subject is joined by *or*, the verb must agree with the last item in the subject.

Snow and ice make exploration difficult.

Either the helpers or the leader checks the weather report.

A linking verb does not show action. It connects the subject of a sentence to a word or words in the predicate that tell about the subject. Linking verbs include forms of the verb *be*, such as *am, is, are, was, and were*. *Seem, appear, and become* can be used as linking verbs, too.

Explorers are brave. That route seems very long and dangerous.

Section 18 Adverbs

An *adverb* describes a verb or an adjective. Adverbs tell how, when, where, or how much.

- Many adverbs end in *-ly*. Some adverbs do not end in *-ly*. These include *now*, *then*, *very*, *too*, and *fast*.

Andrew approached the snake cage slowly. He knew that snakes can move fast.

Section 19 Prepositions

A *preposition* shows a relationship between a word in a sentence and a noun or pronoun that follows the preposition. Prepositions tell when, where, what kind, how, or how much.

- Prepositions include the words *in*, *at*, *under*, *over*, *on*, *through*, *to*, *across*, *around*, *beside*, *during*, *off*, and *before*.

Jeff left the milk on the table.

He knew it belonged in the refrigerator.

- A *prepositional phrase* is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with its object. The object of a preposition is a noun or a pronoun. A prepositional phrase can be at the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence.

Jeff's mom would be home in five minutes. Within three minutes he had put it away.

Section 20 Direct Objects and Indirect Objects

A *direct object* is the noun or pronoun that receives the action of the verb. Direct objects follow action verbs. To find the direct object, say the verb then “Whom?” or “What?” A *compound direct object* occurs when more than one noun receives the action of the verb.

Jacques painted a picture. (Painted whom or what? Picture. *Picture* is the direct object.)

He used a brush and oil paints. (The compound direct object is *brush* and *paints*.)

A sentence with a direct object may also have an *indirect object*. An indirect object is a noun or pronoun and usually tells to whom something is given, told, or taught.

Jacques gave his mom the painting.

Section 21 Conjunctions

The words *and*, *or*, and *but* are *coordinating conjunctions*.

- Coordinating conjunctions may be used to join words within a sentence.
My favorite reptiles are snakes and lizards. Najim doesn't like snakes or lizards.
- A comma and a coordinating conjunction can be used to join two or more simple sentences. (The conjunction *and* does not need a comma if both sentences are short.)
I like snakes, but he says they're creepy. We can get a snake, or we can get a lizard.

A *subordinating conjunction* relates one clause to another. Many dependent clauses begin with a subordinating conjunction. Subordinating conjunctions include *because*, *so*, *if*, and *before*.

Before his mom left, Bo cleaned his room. He had a favor to ask, so he vacuumed, too.

Section 22 Interjections

An *interjection* expresses emotion and is not part of any independent or dependent clause.

Wow, this bread is delicious!

Section 23 Appositives

An *appositive* is a word or phrase that identifies a noun.

My favorite snack, cornbread with honey, is easy to make.

Usage

Section 24 Negatives

A negative word says “no” or “not.”

- Often negatives are in the form of contractions.
Do not enter that room. Don't even go near the door.
- In most sentences it is not correct to use two negatives.
Incorrect Correct
We can't see nothing. We can't see anything.
We haven't got no solution. We haven't got a solution.
- Do not use the word *ain't*.

Section 25 Comparisons

- The *comparative form* of an adjective or adverb compares two people, places, or things. The comparative form is often followed by “than.” To compare two people, places, or things, add *-er* to short adjectives and adverbs.
An elephant is tall. A giraffe is taller than an elephant. (*Giraffe* is compared with *elephant*.)
A lion runs fast. A cheetah runs faster than any other animal. (*Cheetah* is compared with *any other animal*.)
 - The *superlative form* of an adjective or adverb compares three or more people, places, or things. The article “the” usually comes before the superlative form. To compare three or more items, add *-est* to short adjectives and adverbs.
The giraffe is the tallest land animal.
The cheetah runs the fastest of any animal on land.
 - When comparing two or more persons, places, or things using the ending *-er* or *-est*, never use the word *more*.
Incorrect Correct
She is more faster than he is. She is faster than he is.
 - The word *more* is used with longer adjectives to compare two persons, places, or things. Use the word *most* to compare three or more persons, places, or things.
Mario is excited about the field trip.
Duane is more excited than Mario.
Kiki is the most excited student of all.
 - Sometimes the words *good* and *bad* are used to compare. These words change forms in comparisons.
Mario is a good athlete. The basketball court is in bad shape.
Kiki is a better athlete. The tennis court is in worse shape than the basketball court.
Bill is the best athlete of all. The ice rink is in the worst shape of all.
- Note:** Use *better* or *worse* to compare two things. Use *best* or *worst* to compare three or more things.

Section 26 Contractions

When two or more words are combined to form one word, one or more letters are dropped and replaced by an apostrophe. These words are called *contractions*.

- In the contraction below, an apostrophe takes the place of the letters *wi*.
he will = he'll
- Here are some other common contractions.

cannot/can't	have not/haven't	she would/she'd
could not/couldn't	I will/I'll	they have/they've
does not/doesn't	it is/it's	we are/we're

Section 27 Plural Nouns

- A *singular noun* names one person, place, thing, or idea.
girl pond arrow freedom
- A *plural noun* names more than one person, place, thing, or idea. To make most singular nouns plural, add *s*.
girls ponds arrows freedoms
- For nouns ending in *sh*, *ch*, *x*, or *z*, add *es* to make the word plural.
bush/bushes box/boxes
lunch/lunches quiz/quizes
- For nouns ending in a consonant and *y*, change the *y* to *i* and add *es*.
penny/pennies army/armies
- For nouns that end in *f* or *fe*, replace *f* or *fe* with *ves* to make the noun plural.
shelf/shelves wife/wives
- Some words change spelling when the plural is formed.
man/men woman/women mouse/mice goose/geese
- Some words have the same singular and plural form.
deer sheep

Section 28 Possessive Nouns

A *possessive noun* shows ownership.

- To make a singular noun possessive, add an apostrophe and *s*.
John's bat the girl's bike
- When a singular noun ends in *s*, add an apostrophe and *s*.
Ross's project James's glasses
- To make a plural noun that ends in *s* possessive, add an apostrophe.
the soldier's songs the girl's bikes
- When a plural noun does not end in *s*, add an apostrophe and *s* to show possession.
the men's ideas the childre'n's shoes

Section 29 Problem Words

These words are often misused in writing.

sit	Sit means “rest or stay in one place.” Sit down and relax for a while.
sat	Sat is the past tense of <i>sit</i> . I sat in that chair yesterday.
set	Set is a verb meaning “put.” Set the chair here.

may	May is used to ask permission or to express a possibility. May I have another hot dog? I may borrow that book someday.
can	Can shows that someone is able to do something. I can easily eat three hot dogs.

learn	Learn means “to get knowledge.” Who will help you learn Spanish?
teach	Teach means “to give knowledge.” Never use <i>learn</i> in place of <i>teach</i> . Incorrect: My sister will learn me to speak Spanish. Correct: My sister will teach me to speak Spanish.

is	Use <i>is</i> to tell about one person, place, or thing. Alabama is warm during the summer.
are	Use <i>are</i> to tell about more than one person, place, or thing. Also use <i>are</i> with the word <i>you</i> . Seattle and San Francisco are cool during the summer. You are welcome to visit me anytime.

doesn't	The contraction <i>doesn't</i> is used with the singular pronouns <i>he</i> , <i>she</i> , and <i>it</i> . He doesn't like sauerkraut. It doesn't agree with him.
don't	The contraction <i>don't</i> is used with the plural pronouns <i>we</i> and <i>they</i> . <i>Don't</i> is also used with <i>I</i> and <i>you</i> . They don't like swiss cheese. I don't care for it, either.

I	Use the pronoun <i>I</i> as the subject of a sentence. When using <i>I</i> or <i>me</i> with another noun or pronoun, always name yourself last. I am going to basketball camp. Renée and I will ride together.
me	Use the pronoun <i>me</i> after action verbs. Renée will call me this evening. Also use <i>me</i> after a preposition, such as <i>to</i> , <i>at</i> , and <i>with</i> . Pass the ball to me. Come to the game with Renée and me.

good	Good is an adjective.
well	Well is an adverb. These words are often used incorrectly. Incorrect: Renée plays good. Correct: Renée is a good basketball player. She plays well.

raise	Raise must be followed by a direct object. I raised the flag at camp last summer.
rise	Rise does not need a direct object. I had to rise at dawn every morning.

Section 30 Homophones

Homophones sound alike but have different spellings and meanings.

are	<i>Are</i> is a form of the verb <i>be</i> .	We are best friends.
our	<i>Our</i> is a possessive pronoun.	Our favorite color is green.
hour	An <i>hour</i> is sixty minutes.	Meet me in an hour.
its	<i>Its</i> is a possessive pronoun.	The horse shook its shaggy head.
it's	<i>It's</i> is a contraction of <i>it is</i> or <i>it has</i> .	It's a beautiful day for a ride.
there	<i>There</i> is an adverb that usually means "in that place." It can also be used in the expressions "there is" and "there are." Please put the books there. There is an aquarium nearby.	There are three books on the table.
their	<i>Their</i> is a possessive pronoun. It shows something belongs to more than one person or thing. Their tickets are in my pocket.	
they're	<i>They're</i> is a contraction made from the words <i>they are</i> . They're waiting for me inside.	
two	<i>Two</i> is a number.	Apples and pears are two fruits I like.
to	<i>To</i> can be a preposition meaning "toward." <i>To</i> can also be used with a verb to form an infinitive. I brought the pot to the stove. (<i>preposition</i>)	I like to cook. (<i>infinitive</i>)
too	<i>Too</i> means "also." <i>Too</i> can mean "more than enough."	I'd like some lunch, too. That's too much pepper!
your	<i>Your</i> is a possessive pronoun. Where are your socks?	
you're	<i>You're</i> is a contraction made from the words <i>you are</i> . You're coming with us, aren't you?	
whose	<i>Whose</i> is a possessive pronoun. It can refer to people or things. Whose raincoat is this?	The raincoat whose buttons are blue is mine.
who's	<i>Who's</i> is a contraction made from the words <i>who</i> and <i>is</i> or <i>who</i> and <i>has</i> . Who's at the front door?	Who's taken my book?
principal	<i>Principal</i> is a person with authority. The principal made the rule.	
principle	<i>Principle</i> is a general rule or code of behavior. He lived with a strong principle of honesty.	
waist	The <i>waist</i> is the middle part of the body. She wore a belt around her waist.	
waste	To <i>waste</i> something is to use it in a careless way. She would never waste something she could recycle.	
aloud	<i>Aloud</i> means out loud or able to be heard.	He read the poem aloud.
allowed	<i>Allowed</i> is a form of the verb <i>allow</i> .	We were not allowed to swim after dark.

Letters and E-mails

Section 31 Letters

A friendly letter is an informal letter written to a friend or family member.

In a friendly letter, you might send a message, invite someone to a party, or thank someone for a gift.

A friendly letter has five parts.

- The *heading* gives your address and the date.
- The *greeting* includes the name of the person you are writing to. It begins with a capital letter and ends with a comma.
- The *body* of the letter gives your message.
- The *closing* is a friendly or polite way to say good-bye. It ends with a comma.
- The *signature* is your name.

35 Rand Street
Chicago, Illinois 60606
July 15, 2008

Dear Kim,

Hi from the big city. I'm spending the summer learning to skateboard. My brother Raj is teaching me. He's a pro.

I have one skateboard and hope to buy another one soon. If I can do that, we can practice together when you come to visit.

Your friend,
Art

A business letter is a formal letter.

You would write a business letter to a company, an employer, a newspaper, or any person you do not know well. A business letter looks a lot like a friendly letter, but a business letter includes the name and address of the business you are writing to. The *greeting* of a business letter begins with a capital letter and ends with a colon.

35 Rand Street
Chicago, Illinois 60606
July 15, 2008

Swenson Skateboard Company
10026 Portage Road
Lansing, Michigan 48091

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please send me your latest skateboard catalog. I am particularly interested in your newest models, the K-7 series.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Arthur Quinn
Arthur Quinn

The envelope below shows how to address a letter.

A friendly letter and a business letter are addressed the same way.

Arthur Quinn
35 Rand St.
Chicago, IL 60606

Kim Lee
1555 Montague Blvd.
Memphis, TN 38106

Section 32 E-mails

An *e-mail* is a note sent from one person to another person, a group, or a company through a computer network. Today, many people use e-mail to stay in touch with friends and family. An e-mail should contain five parts, like a letter does.

- An e-mail contains a *greeting*, a *body*, a *closing*, and your *name*.
- An e-mail *header* contains your e-mail address, the e-mail address of the person you are writing to, the date, and a subject line.

SendSave as a DraftCancel

From:

To:

Date:

Subject:

Attach Files

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please send me your latest skateboard catalog. I am particularly interested in your newest models, the K-7 series.

My address is 35 Rand Street, Chicago, IL 60606. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Arthur Quinn

Research

Section 33 Library Research

You can find information for a report or a project in a library.

- Many libraries have an information desk. The person at the desk can help you look for information.
- Libraries have many reference books, including dictionaries, thesauruses, and encyclopedias. You can use these to find information about words and basic information about topics.
- Libraries have nonfiction books about all kinds of subjects. You can find books on a particular subject by entering that subject into a computer connected to the library's database. This database lists all the publications in the library. The computer will usually list several books on the subject you entered. Each listing will have a code that tells where in the library that book can be found.

Section 34 Internet Research

You can use online dictionaries, thesauruses, and encyclopedias to find basic information about words and topics. You can also find information for a report or a project by using an Internet search engine.

- Think of **key words** that describe what you are looking for. For example, if you need information on animals that live in the rainforest, you might use the key words **rainforest animals**. Type these words into the search engine's text box.
- The search engine will provide you with links to **Web sites**. You can click on a link to visit a Web site.
- When you get to the Web site, you need to judge whether it will be a good source of information.
 - Notice the last three letters of the Web site's Internet address. Sites with **.gov** and **.edu** are usually more reliable than sites with **.com**.
 - Think about who has written the information. Is the writer an expert on the topic? Is the writer giving facts, or just expressing opinions?
 - Check to see if the information is up-to-date. The site should tell you when it was last updated.

Internet Safety

Be sure to follow safety rules whenever you use the Internet. These rules will help you keep personal information private.

- When you log on to a school computer, you may type your own name as a username. However, when you go on the Internet, you use a screen name. That should never be your real name or nickname. You will also use a password, a secret word or symbol that identifies who you are. Keep your password safe. Do not share it with anyone. Never use your address, birthday, phone number, or pet's name as a password. Those are too easy for someone else to figure out.
- Have you ever received e-mail with an attachment? Usually you must click this attachment to load it into your computer. Never download attachments from strangers. These may harm your computer.

Guidelines for Listening and Speaking

Section 35 Listening

These steps will help you be a good listener:

- Listen carefully when others are speaking.
- **Keep in mind your reason for listening.** Are you listening to learn about a topic? To be entertained? To get directions? Decide what you should get out of the listening experience.
- **Look directly at the speaker.** Doing this will help you concentrate on what he or she has to say.
- **Do not interrupt** the speaker or talk to others while the speaker is talking.
- **Ask questions** when the speaker is finished talking if there is anything you did not understand.

Section 36 Speaking

Being a good speaker takes practice. These guidelines can help you become an effective speaker:

Giving Oral Reports

- **Be prepared.** Know exactly what it is that you are going to talk about and how long you will speak. Have your notes in front of you.
- **Speak slowly and clearly.** Speak **loudly** enough so everyone can hear you.
- **Look** at your audience.

Taking Part in Discussions

- **Listen** to what others have to say.
- **Disagree politely.** Let others in the group know you respect their point of view.
- **Try not to interrupt** others. Everyone should have a chance to speak.

Ordering Information



Lessons that really stick!

G.U.M. offers a fresh new way to teach students the grammar, usage, and mechanics skills important for successful writing. Short, 2-page lessons focus on one skill at a pop. Lots of practice helps you make sure that instruction really sticks.

LEVEL	GRADE	ISBN-13
Student Editions		
Level A	Grade 3	978-0-7367-5737-9
Level B	Grade 4	978-0-7367-5738-6
Level C	Grade 5	978-0-7367-5739-3
Level D	Grade 6	978-0-7367-5740-9
Level E	Grade 7	978-0-7367-5741-6
Level F	Grade 8	978-0-7367-5742-3
Teacher Editions		
Level A	Grade 3	978-0-7367-5743-0
Level B	Grade 4	978-0-7367-5744-7
Level C	Grade 5	978-0-7367-5745-4
Level D	Grade 6	978-0-7367-5746-1
Level E	Grade 7	978-0-7367-5747-8
Level F	Grade 8	978-0-7367-5748-5

Free! Teacher Edition upon request with purchase of 25 matching Student Editions



www.zaner-bloser.com



Customer Service
800.421.3018
(8:00 AM-6:00 PM EST)



Complete Writing Instruction

For a more comprehensive approach to writing instruction, consider Zaner-Bloser's **Strategies for Writers**. This research-based program contains explicit instruction for every step of the writing process and integrates the six traits of effective writing (plus presentation).

To order, call **800.421.3018** or click www.zaner-bloser.com