



#10154 THE SPLIT-INFINITIVE WORLD OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR: PROGRAM 6

CEREBELLUM CORPORATION, 2001
Grade Level: 8-13+
25 mins.

DESCRIPTION

The object of good writing is to present an idea clearly. Sentence fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences are common problem areas, but more usual are tense shifts, vague pronoun references, and faulty parallels. Covers these frequent mistakes, and ends with some "acceptable" grammatical errors used in good, but not formal, written English. Gives examples.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Language Arts–Writing

- Standard: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process
 - ♦ Benchmark: Editing and Publishing: Uses a variety of strategies to edit and publish written work (e.g., uses a checklist to guide proofreading; edits for grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling at a developmentally appropriate level; refines selected pieces to publish for general and specific audiences; uses available technology, such as publishing software or graphics programs, to publish written work) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1, 2, and 3.)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To present potential sentence problems to look for when editing: sentence fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences.
2. To demonstrate grammatical traps to look for when editing: tense shifts, vague pronoun references, and faulty parallels.
3. To examine acceptable errors that may not be appropriate in formal writing: use of contractions, split infinitives, and ending a sentence with a preposition.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This video begins with Part 3 which is a continuation of a discussion begun in CMP #10153, *The Split-Infinitive World of English Grammar: Program 5*.

VOCABULARY

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|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. apostrophe | 3. comma splices | 5. contraction |
| 2. clarity | 4. consistency | 6. faulty |

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

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| 7. instinct | 10. preposition | 13. vague |
| 8. parallels | 11. punctuation | |
| 9. pronoun | 12. tense (verb) | |

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Review the following grammatical concepts: phrase (appositive), clause (independent and dependent), pronoun reference, possessive pronoun, and infinitives.
2. List the differences between informal and formal writing. Give examples.

DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. For each of the following, pause when the sentence appears on-screen. Rewrite the sentence to correct the error. Resume playing video to check your answers.
 - a. Sentence Fragment: "I adore macramé. A lost and treasured art."
 - b. Comma Splice: "I called the witch doctor, he told me what to do."
 - c. Run-on Sentence: "I usually eat too many candy corns on Halloween and get a stomachache how about you?" (No answer on screen.)
 - d. Tense Shift: "The show opened with a big musical number that involves fireworks."
 - e. Vague Pronoun Reference: "The Yanks are way ahead of the Sox, who are playing ball, too. They have had a great season."
 - f. Vague Pronoun Reference: "Jimmy told Joe to give back the boxing glove before he hit him with it."
 - g. Vague Pronoun Reference: "Someone is spreading vicious rumors. They say that Scooter is going around throwing coconut cream pies in his friends' faces. This is not going to be tolerated!"
 - h. Faulty Parallels: "Representatives from the Onion School, from the Tuber Association, and Up With Root Vegetables attended the protest."
 - i. Contractions: "Their going to wash they're navels."
 - j. Split Infinitive: "He was hoping to quickly eat his food."
 - k. Dangling Preposition: "I have a window I like to lean out of."

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Discuss the following common errors in grammar. Define each error, describe how it can be fixed, and indicate in what, if any, situation it is acceptable.
 - a. Sentence fragments.
 - b. Comma splices.
 - c. Run-on sentences.
 - d. Tense shifts.
 - e. Vague pronoun references.
 - f. Faulty parallels.
2. Discuss what is meant by "acceptable errors." Define each of the following acceptable errors. Indicate how to fix them and when they are acceptable.

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- a. Use of contractions.
- b. Split infinitives.
- c. Ending a sentence with a preposition.

Applications and Activities

1. Write a rough draft of a story about a birthday or use a rough draft you've already written. Edit the draft looking for sentence fragments, comma splices, run-on sentences, tense shifts, vague pronoun references and faulty parallels.
2. Write a short essay defending the use of the "acceptable errors." Use published quotes using contractions, split infinitives, and prepositions to end a sentence. Consider the claim the language must change to survive.

CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- [*The Perfect Sentence* #9346](#)
- [*The Split-Infinitive World of English Grammar: Program 4* #10152](#)

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **STANDARD DEVIANTS: ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

http://standarddeviants.com/pls/brain/cerebellum.show_subject?p_subject_id=20

Includes downloadable tests, interactive quizzes, puzzles, games, and helpful grammar cards.

- **THE BLUE BOOK OF GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION**

<http://www.grammarbook.com/>

This award-winning site created by Jane Strauss includes printable grammar exercises and tests.

- **GUIDE TO GRAMMAR AND WRITING**

<http://webster.commnet.edu/grammar/>

This searchable site includes in-depth information on word and sentence-level grammar and punctuation. Includes quizzes.