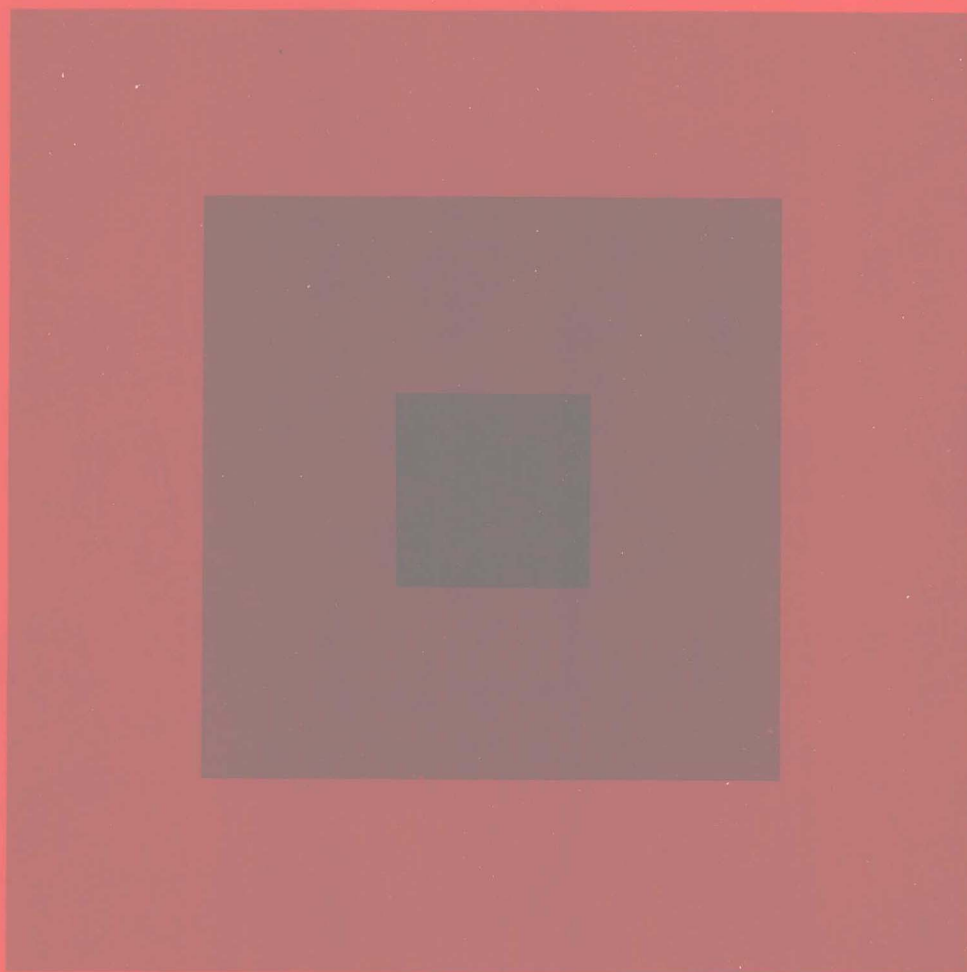


GET IT IN WRITING



PAT BRUINGTON

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**GET IT IN
WRITING**

To the Student

If you have spoken English all your life, or if you have learned English well enough to be understood in speaking and writing, you already know most of English grammar well. This book is designed to help you learn what you are already doing well so that you can polish that small part of English that gives you trouble.

Get It in Writing first explains the basically consistent patterns that English follows and then focuses on the parts of those patterns most often confused or misused. If you learn the lessons in this book and use them in your daily speech and writing, you won't need to worry any more about whether your use of English is correct. You will know when your usual English differs from standard English and be able to choose which level of language you want.

You can and already do select formal or informal words from your vocabulary, as the situation demands. These different levels of language even show up in the way you choose to arrange your sentences. If you were asking your employer to lunch, you might say, "Would you like to have lunch?" whereas if asking a co-worker or friend, you might simply say, "Ready to go?" or "Did you eat yet? Want to go?"

The point here is that you are already "bilingual in English"; that is, you can express yourself in both formal and informal circumstances. And just as you would not mismatch clothes with the occasion in which you will wear them (for instance tuxedos to a dogfight or jeans to a formal dance), neither do you normally use formal language when spending an informal evening with friends or informal slang at an important formal meeting. You automatically choose your words to fit the occasion.

Problems arise only when you have no choice between informal and formal usage, when you have forgotten (or perhaps never learned) a formal way of expressing your thoughts. In this case you are stuck with only informal language which is probably inappropriate for formal circumstances you may be in.

This book is designed to help you know what your choices are when formal language has been forgotten or confused with daily informal use. For example, you will learn *why* you have probably been told not to use "ain't" all these years and what your options are if you choose not to use it; why "he *don't*" is considered wrong and "he *doesn't*" is correct; and when to say "he and I" or "him and me" (each is formally correct, just different in purpose).

Learning more about standard grammar will not cure all your ills, but it will certainly give you more confidence in your ability to express yourself clearly and correctly.

Now, get it in writing!

To the Instructor

Unlike many other developmental English books you may have used in the past, *Get It in Writing* is designed to be read. Each chapter starts with a summary of the main points to be presented followed by the “Full Story,” a point-by-point detailed explanation of each chapter concept. Beginning each chapter, after each chapter summary, and throughout the “Full Story” sections are exercises designed to give students a successful experience in applying chapter concepts (correct answers are provided after each set of exercises and are labeled “Sample Answers” in cases where various responses could be correct).

Get It in Writing is intended to encourage adult students to discover how much of English grammar they have already mastered and then gradually examine areas such as subject–verb agreement, pronoun case, or run-on sentences where their current English usage departs from accepted standards. If students first become confident that they can understand how the sentences they use really work, they become immediately more interested, as well as proficient, in correcting long-standing grammatical errors.

One possible approach to using this text is to introduce each chapter by having students first try the initial exercises and then leading them quickly through the “Chapter Summary” section in class. They can then be asked to read the “Full Story” explanations and prepare the chapter worksheets on their own. The following class period can then be devoted to checking answers on worksheet exercises and explaining in fuller detail any problems class members had with chapter concepts.

This approach can aid your students in two ways. First, as developmental writing students, they will probably benefit from reading everything they can lay their hands on, particularly if they are required to apply information from the reading to their own writing. Second, they will learn to rely on the full explanations of each chapter concept rather than attempt to skim through each chapter using the “Chapter Summary” alone.

For answers to the worksheets for each chapter and detailed suggestions for classroom approach and technique, please see the instructor’s manual accompanying your text.

Best wishes to you and your class for a refreshing and successful term with *Get It in Writing*.

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PART ONE

Basic Ingredients of a Sentence

Nouns

Verbs

The Sentence

Adjectives

Adverbs

Prepositional Phrases

REVIEW

You are using English grammar each time someone understands what you write or say. You don't just combine words randomly. You are already carefully choosing — unconsciously — the specific words you need to convey your ideas and combining them to create sentences your listeners and readers will understand. The first section of this book deals with the basic types of words you are using to create sentences, the organized groups of words that convey your ideas to others.

Chapter 1 explains how to recognize nouns, the naming words you use in your speech and writing. Chapter 2 discusses verbs, words usually showing action of some kind. Chapter 3 discusses how you create a sentence by combining nouns and verbs. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are about the words and phrases you use to “decorate,” or *modify*, nouns and verbs — adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases.

You create the core of each sentence that you write or say simply by combining nouns and verbs. Adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases are the most common “decorations,” or *modifiers*, added. All other kinds of words in your sentences simply connect these words.

CHAPTER 1

Nouns

Try These

Supply a word for each blank.

My calculator doesn't work anymore.

Ms. Smith wants the _____ finished today.

A(n) _____ just arrived in the mail.

Michael handed a(n) _____ to his teacher.

Many _____ visit the United States each year.

Put the _____ and a(n) _____ on the _____.

Sample Answers: Any word you have used to make sense in the sentences is a noun and is correct. Some sample answers are work; package; paper; tourists; magazine, ashtray, table.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter explains how to recognize and improve the nouns you use in your writing. Nouns have the following main characteristics:

- **Naming.** You are naming something — a person, place, thing, or idea — whenever you use a noun.

For example

N	N	N	N	N	N
girl	John	freedom	Utah	election	eraser

- **Noun Markers.** Certain words you use, called noun markers, come before a noun and signal that it is coming.

Sample Noun Markers: a, an, the, my, their, your

Try These

Supply your choice of noun in each blank.

a fire

the skinny _____

three old _____

several broken _____

an honest _____ and a dishonest _____

many _____

Sample Answers: booklet; pigeons; dreams; thief, robber; joys

THE FULL STORY

If you had any trouble with those examples, don't worry. Just read on. Here are details about each noun characteristic.

Naming

Look at the room around you right now. The name you can give to anything you see — person, place, or thing — is a *noun*.

For example

N	N	N	N
this book	your chair	the wall	a corner

Nouns are also the words you choose to name the condition someone is in, the characteristics he/she has, or the ideas and concepts you think about.

For example

N	N	N	N
poverty	courage	freedom	imagination

You sometimes capitalize the first letter of a noun to show that it is the exact name or title of someone or something. (Chapter 33 explains capital letters in detail.) Whether you capitalize a naming word or not, it is still a noun.

For example

N	N	N	N
boy	day	country	city
Charles	Tuesday	Mexico	Seattle

Try These

Write a noun that names each of these things:

a thing with four wheels and a motor automobile (or car)

a machine that writes when you press its keys down _____

the thing that slaves want to have _____

the day that most businesses close _____

the thing that the Internal Revenue Service wants from you _____

the thing that makes a television show successful _____

Sample Answers: typewriter; freedom; Sunday; money; humor (or ratings)

Noun Markers

Each time you write *the*, you are about to use a noun. *The*, along with several other specific words, is a *noun marker* (NM). It signals your reader that you will soon use a noun in your sentence.

For example

 N N N
The _____ called the _____ to the _____.

Whatever word you put in each blank to make sense, it will be a noun because it is marked by *the*. Here is a list of noun markers: *a, an, the, my, your, his, her, its, our, their*. Sometimes you can also use these words as noun markers: *each, every, all, any, some, most, this, that, these, those*, and number words, such as *three, ten*, etc.

The only words you can put between a noun marker and a noun are adjectives. These words describe the noun (see Chapter 4 for details). To find the noun that is marked, just return to the noun marker and ask yourself: “the *what?*”

For example

NM
the huge, fat, lazy turtle
the *what?*

NM N
the *turtle* — *huge, fat, and lazy* only describe the noun *turtle*

Review all the noun markers listed and then try your hand at these examples.

Try These

Supply a noun for each blank.

- NM
an enormous armadillo
- NM
eleven _____
- NM
my overworked _____
- NM
a quiet little _____
- NM
your very last _____
- NM
this outdated _____

Label each noun (N) and noun marker (NM) in these phrases and draw an arrow from the noun to its noun marker.

NM → N
during the last few weeks

the last report on your department

a quiet room with a beautiful view of the river

any restaurant on the next block

my 11-year-old nephew with a wart on his nose

a solar eclipse

Sample Answers: typewriters; assistant; dinner; cigarette; calendar

the report, your department; a room, a view, the river; any restaurant, the block; my nephew, a wart, his nose; an eclipse

Noun Endings

Many of the nouns you use were formed by adding a *noun ending*, or *suffix*, to another kind of word. Knowing these endings can help you recognize nouns immediately, even when you use them without noun markers.

Common Noun Endings

-dom	-ism	-ion (or -tion, -sion, -cion, -ation)
-hood	-ist	-er (or -ar, -or)
-ice	-ment	-ee (or -ess)
-ship	-ness	-ity (or -ty, -cy)
-ery	-ence	-ance