

# THE GRAMMAR GAME

Myrtle Bates  
Renée Freedman Stern



# THE GRAMMAR GAME

MYRTLE BATES  
RENEE FREEDMAN

BOBBS-MERRILL EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING  
INDIANAPOLIS

To the students who frequented the City College Writing Center in the early years of Open Admissions; and to the teachers, tutors, and staff who worked together in a program designed to help them.

Copyright © 1980 by Myrtle Bates and Renée Freedman Stern  
Copyright © 1983 by The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.

Printed in the United States of America.

All rights reserved. No part of this book shall be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information or retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher:

The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.  
4300 West 62nd Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46268

First Edition

First Printing 1983

Interior Design by Sally Lifland, Lifland, et al., Bookmakers  
Illustrations by Mike Cagel

Acquisitions Editor: James B. Smith  
Developmental Editor: Diana C. Francoeur  
Copy Editor: J. Murdoch Matthew

**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data**

Bates, Myrtle, 1916-  
The grammar game.

1. English language—Grammar—1950-

I. Stern, Renée Freedman, 1947-	II. Title.
PE1112.B296 1983 428.2	83-2813
ISBN 0-672-61567-X	

THE  
GRAMMAR  
GAME

# GLOSSARY OF GRAMMATICAL TERMS

**Action-being** A state or condition expressed by verbs that link the subject to words in the predicate that name or modify the subject. The verbs are also known as **linking verbs**.

*Frank was a mail carrier.*

*He is unemployed now.*

A small number of verbs express state or condition: verbs like *be, seem, become* and the verbs that refer to the senses (*look, taste, smell, sound, feel*). Some verbs express action-doing as well as action-being.

*He grew thin. (action-being)*

*He grew potatoes. (action-doing)*

**Action-doing** The action expressed by most verbs. Action can be seen or heard (*play, work, dance, study, sing, etc.*). Action may also be internal and invisible (*know, believe, want, understand, etc.*).

**Active voice** See *Voice*.

**Adjective** A word that modifies a noun by restricting or limiting the noun's meaning or by describing the noun.

**Adjective clause** A dependent clause acting as an adjective.

**Adverb** A word that modifies verbs and other modifiers. The adverb expresses relations in time, in place, and in direction, and it expresses manner, degree, affirmation, and denial.

**Adverb clause** A dependent clause acting as an adverb.

**Adverbial connector** See *Logical connective*.

**Agreement** Between subject and verb: The present forms of all verbs and the past forms of *be* must agree with the subject in number.

Between pronoun and antecedent: A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number, gender (male, female, nonhuman), and person.

**Antecedent** The noun or noun substitute that the pronoun stands for.

**Appositive** A word or word group (usually a noun) placed immediately after another word or word group to add information about it. Commas set off the nonrestrictive appositive. See *Nonrestrictive modifier*.

**Article** A limiting adjective: the indefinite article (*a* or *an*) signals an unidentified noun; the definite article (*the*) signals an already identified noun.

*A boy looked at an eclair in a bakery window.*

dents' own writing. By the end of the course, students will have enough of a sense of sentences to be able to manipulate and judge and correct their own.

Because the language level of *The Grammar Game* is realistically complex and because paragraph writing is integrated into discussion of sentence-level grammar, *The Grammar Game* is suitable for college students in a variety of classes. All students should cover the introductory section so that they understand the book's organization. Then, once they have read the first chapter in a section, they need work through only those chapters in that section that they particularly need. The writing assignments are independent and can be covered in sequence without the accompanying chapter. By emphasizing either sentence writing or paragraph writing, teachers can design a course for basic writers or for more traditional first-year college writers—or for writers at any level in between.

### **Acknowledgments**

We are indebted to the City College Department of English for agreeing to test these materials before publication. We wish to thank Saul Brody, Allen Danzig, and Patricia Laurence for their efforts in behalf of this project. We want to express our thanks also to the members of the department who tested the materials in the classroom; their responses and suggestions have been of great value.

We are grateful to our reviewers—to Betty Rizzo in particular—for their thoughtful examination of the manuscript and their helpful suggestions.

To our editors, Jim Smith and Diana Francoeur, we owe special thanks for their guidance and support throughout the shaping of this book.

# BEFORE WE BEGIN



Don't be misled by the title of this book. *The Grammar Game* is really about writing—about expressing ideas and relating experiences. Our goal is to help you to become a better writer. And grammar is the means to that end.

Grammar is the study of words and how they function in the sentence. The knowledge of grammar can therefore help you to avoid making sentence errors. But what is more important, grammar strengthens your sentence-writing ability. This ability is the most important part of writing, for it is sentence by sentence that we build the essays, the stories, poems, and term papers that express our ideas.

Each chapter of *The Grammar Game* contains a large number of exercises. It is in doing these exercises that you transform grammar into sentence-writing ability. However, our goal is for you to become not simply good writers of sentences but good communicators, good writers of ideas and feelings. For this reason, most of the chapters in this book will include a paragraph-writing assignment. These assignments are a place to express ideas and feelings and a place to practice the sentence-writing skills covered in the lesson.

Grammar is not easy. It is a complex system, full of contradictions and exceptions. At the same time, because of the way it operates, grammar can be compared to a game. We make this comparison in *The Grammar Game* because it helps to clarify a difficult subject. Like players on a team, each word in a sentence has a specific job to do. The word's ending and its placement in the sentence signal what the word is doing. As in all games, there are rules and a goal. In grammar the goal is communication.

The grammar discussed in these lessons is standard English grammar. By *standard* we mean something that by general agreement has been established as a model. However, language changes, and there are variations of standard English. People who live in the same area, people who do the same kind of work, people who have the same national, racial, or educational background tend to talk the same way. As a result, small differences between groups develop in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.

These differences, which we call dialects, live side by side in the same language. In the United States there are something like seven regional variations of standard English. Without the standard language to slow down the process of change, these dialects might have developed into distinctly different languages.

Language change occurs not only in the United States but all over the world. In all nations a variety of dialects are used. Usually one dialect—one used by the more educated and powerful people in the country—becomes the standard language.

We believe it is important to know the standard language. It is the language in which developments in fields such as science, law, economics, and education have been recorded. It is the language in which most of our lasting literature has been written. Standard English is the language of most of our newspapers, magazines, and professional journals. It is the language taught to foreigners, and so it is used all over the world. We think it is to your advantage to increase your skill in using the standard language in writing.



# CONTENTS

To the Teacher .....	xiii
Before We Begin .....	xv
Introduction MAKING THE POINT .....	1
Chapter 1 Communication .....	3
The Two-Part Invention: The Sentence .....	3
The Two Parts of the Sentence .....	4
The Naming Part and the Stating Part .....	4
Identifying the Two Parts .....	4
Expanding the Two Parts .....	5
Missing Parts .....	6
Review Exercises .....	7
Chapter 2 How the Sentence Works .....	9
Forming Sentences .....	9
Naming Someone or Something .....	9
Making a Statement About What Is Named .....	10
Placing the Two Parts .....	11
Subject and Predicate .....	12
Meaning in Grammar .....	12
Other Meanings .....	12
Punctuating the Sentence .....	13
Rules for Punctuating .....	13
Review Exercises .....	14
Chapter 3 Combining Sentences .....	17
The Clause .....	17
The Connecting Words .....	18
Independent and Dependent Clauses .....	19
The Independent Clause .....	20
The Dependent Clause .....	21
Review Exercises .....	23

Chapter 4 More About Combining Sentences . . . . .	27
Who, Which, and That . . . . .	27
Subject of the Clause . . . . .	28
Omitting Who, Which and That . . . . .	29
Avoiding Fragments . . . . .	29
Adding Clauses . . . . .	30
Subject and Predicate for the Sentence . . . . .	30
Review Exercises . . . . .	33
 Chapter 5 The Second Job of the Sentence . . . . .	 35
The Paragraph . . . . .	35
Summing Up . . . . .	36
The Grammar Game . . . . .	36
Review Exercises . . . . .	37
 Part I CALLING THE PLAY: POSITION 1, THE SUBJECT WORD AS QUARTERBACK . . . . .	 39
 Chapter 6 Forming Subjects and Predicates . . . . .	 41
The Subject Word . . . . .	41
The Predicate Verb . . . . .	43
Action-Doing Verbs . . . . .	43
Action-Being Verbs . . . . .	45
Verb Combinations . . . . .	45
Two Must Play . . . . .	46
Review Exercises . . . . .	46
 Chapter 7 Selecting the Subject Word . . . . .	 51
The Noun . . . . .	51
Singular and Plural Nouns . . . . .	51
Forming Plural Nouns . . . . .	52
The Importance of Number . . . . .	53
Singular and Plural Verb Forms . . . . .	53
The Main Verbs . . . . .	53
The Auxiliary Verbs . . . . .	54
Making Subject and Verb Agree . . . . .	55
When There Is Only a Main Verb . . . . .	55
When There Is an Auxiliary Verb . . . . .	56
Review Exercises . . . . .	57
 Chapter 8 More About Nouns . . . . .	 61
Naming a Mass . . . . .	61
Naming a Quality, State, or Condition . . . . .	61
Word Endings . . . . .	62
Naming a Group . . . . .	63
Naming More Than One Mass, State, or Group . . . . .	63
Naming a Body of Information, a Disease, or a Course of Study . . . . .	64
Nouns with Plural Endings . . . . .	64
Joining Nouns . . . . .	65

Punctuating the Sentence . . . . .	66
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	66
Review Exercises . . . . .	68
 Chapter 9 Nouns in Other Positions . . . . .	 75
Naming Someone Who Is Being Spoken To . . . . .	75
Helping Another Noun to Name . . . . .	75
Specifying Which One or What Kind . . . . .	75
Identifying the Preceding Noun . . . . .	75
Signaling Ownership . . . . .	75
Helping to Make a Statement . . . . .	76
Recognizing the Subject Word Noun . . . . .	76
The Subject/Predicate Test . . . . .	76
Punctuating the Sentence . . . . .	77
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	77
Review Exercises . . . . .	78
 Chapter 10 Naming with Substitutes: The Verbal and the Noun Clause . . . . .	 81
The Parts of the Verb . . . . .	81
Forming the Parts of the Verb . . . . .	81
Using the Parts of the Verb . . . . .	82
As a Predicate Verb . . . . .	82
As a Substitute . . . . .	82
The Verbal Noun: Naming an Action . . . . .	83
Making Subject and Verb Agree . . . . .	83
The Noun Clause . . . . .	84
Introducing the Noun Clause . . . . .	85
The Noun Clause in the Predicate . . . . .	85
Making Subject and Verb Agree . . . . .	85
Problems with Verbals and Noun Clauses . . . . .	86
The Infinitive Problem . . . . .	86
The Fragment Problem . . . . .	86
Writing with Verbal Nouns and Noun Clauses . . . . .	88
Review Exercises . . . . .	89
 Chapter 11 Naming with Substitutes: The Personal Pronouns . . . . .	 95
The Personal Pronouns . . . . .	95
Exceptional Uses . . . . .	96
Making Subject and Verb Agree . . . . .	97
Personal Pronouns in Other Positions . . . . .	99
Pronoun Agreement . . . . .	99
Agreement in Number, Sex, and Humanness . . . . .	99
Agreement in Person . . . . .	100
Pronoun Reference . . . . .	101
Clarifying the Reference . . . . .	101
The Unnecessary Pronoun . . . . .	103
Review Exercises . . . . .	104
 Chapter 12 Naming with Substitutes: The Relative, Interrogative, and Determiner Pronouns . . . . .	 111
The Relative Pronouns . . . . .	111
Agreement with the Antecedent . . . . .	111

Agreement with the Verb . . . . .	111
The Interrogative Pronouns . . . . .	113
Agreement with the Antecedent . . . . .	113
Agreement with the Verb . . . . .	114
The Determiner Pronouns . . . . .	115
Helping to Name . . . . .	115
Naming Someone or Something . . . . .	116
Number and Agreement . . . . .	116
Review Exercises . . . . .	119
Chapter 13 Naming with Substitutes: The Indefinite Pronouns and the Pronoun One . . . . .	123
The Indefinite Pronouns . . . . .	123
Subject and Verb Agreement . . . . .	123
Pronoun Agreement . . . . .	124
The Pronoun One . . . . .	126
Using the Words <i>One of</i> . . . . .	126
Substituting the Pronoun <i>One</i> for a Noun . . . . .	126
Review Exercises . . . . .	127
Part II CARRYING THE BALL: POSITION 2, THE PREDICATE VERB AS RUNNING BACK . . . . .	133
Chapter 14 Recognizing the Verb . . . . .	135
Review: Predicate Verb or Verbal Noun? . . . . .	135
Recognizing the Predicate Verb . . . . .	135
Recognizing the Verbal Noun . . . . .	136
Recognizing Verbs by Their Endings . . . . .	136
Characteristic Verb Endings . . . . .	137
Endings That Signal Time . . . . .	137
Two Must Play . . . . .	138
Understanding Fragments . . . . .	138
Using Fragments . . . . .	139
Review Exercises . . . . .	140
Chapter 15 Combining Verbs . . . . .	147
The Verbs <i>Do</i> , <i>Have</i> , and <i>Be</i> . . . . .	147
As Main Verbs . . . . .	147
As Auxiliary Verbs . . . . .	147
Modal Auxiliary Verbs . . . . .	149
The Main Verb Understood . . . . .	150
The Auxiliary Verb Understood . . . . .	150
Meanings Expressed by Modal Auxiliary Verbs . . . . .	150
How to Combine Verbs . . . . .	151
The Modal Auxiliary Verbs . . . . .	152
The Auxiliary Verb <i>Do</i> . . . . .	152
The Auxiliary Verb <i>Have</i> . . . . .	152
The Auxiliary Verb <i>Be</i> . . . . .	152
Taking a Shortcut . . . . .	152
Review Exercises . . . . .	154
Chapter 16 The Present and Past Tenses . . . . .	161

The Present Tense . . . . .	161
The Time Signal . . . . .	161
Forming the Present Tense . . . . .	161
The Past Tense . . . . .	164
The Time Signal . . . . .	164
Forming the Past Tense . . . . .	164
The Imperative . . . . .	166
Negative Orders and Requests . . . . .	166
Reinforcing an Order or Request . . . . .	167
Review Exercises . . . . .	168
Chapter 17 The Present Perfect and Past Perfect Tenses . . . . .	173
The Present Perfect Tense . . . . .	173
The Time Signal . . . . .	173
Forming the Present Perfect . . . . .	173
Using the Present Perfect . . . . .	173
The Past Perfect Tense . . . . .	174
The Time Signal . . . . .	174
Forming the Past Perfect . . . . .	174
Using the Past Perfect . . . . .	175
Review Exercises . . . . .	175
Chapter 18 The Present Future and the Past Future Tenses . . . . .	183
The Present Future Tense . . . . .	183
The Time Signal . . . . .	183
Forming the Present Future . . . . .	183
The Present Future Perfect Tense . . . . .	185
The Time Signal . . . . .	185
Forming the Present Future Perfect . . . . .	185
The Past Future Tense . . . . .	186
The Time Signal . . . . .	186
Forming the Past Future . . . . .	186
The Past Future Perfect Tense . . . . .	187
The Time Signal . . . . .	187
Forming the Past Future Perfect . . . . .	187
The Active Voice . . . . .	188
Review Exercises . . . . .	188
Chapter 19 The Passive Voice and the Progressive Tenses . . . . .	195
The Passive Voice . . . . .	195
Forming the Passive . . . . .	195
Signaling Tense . . . . .	195
Using the Passive . . . . .	196
The Progressive Tenses . . . . .	198
Forming the Progressive . . . . .	198
Signaling Tense . . . . .	198
Voice . . . . .	199
Review Exercises . . . . .	200
Chapter 20 Tense Consistency . . . . .	209
Choosing Past or Present Tense . . . . .	210

The Past Tense . . . . .	210
The Present Tense . . . . .	210
Tense Inconsistency . . . . .	210
Tense Shifts in Reporting . . . . .	211
Direct Reporting . . . . .	211
Indirect Reporting . . . . .	211
Punctuating the Sentence . . . . .	213
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	213
Review Exercises . . . . .	215
Chapter 21 When the Action Is Not Fact . . . . .	221
Expressing Action That Is Not Fact . . . . .	221
The Modal Auxiliary Verbs . . . . .	221
The Dependent Clause . . . . .	222
The Conditional Sentence . . . . .	223
Expressing the Improbable Action . . . . .	223
Expressing the Contrary-to-Fact Action . . . . .	223
Expressing the Probable (Likely) Action . . . . .	224
Summing Up About Conditional Sentences . . . . .	224
Variations of the Conditional Sentence . . . . .	225
Expressing Action That Is Not Fact Using <i>Be</i> . . . . .	226
Using <i>Was</i> in <i>If</i> Clauses . . . . .	226
Expressing Requirement or Suggestion . . . . .	227
Using the Basic Form . . . . .	227
Relics . . . . .	229
Review Exercises . . . . .	229
Part III PLAYING WITH PRECISION: POSITION 3, THE CONNECTOR AS CENTER . . . . .	235
Chapter 22 Connecting Ideas . . . . .	237
The Connectors . . . . .	237
The Logical Connectives . . . . .	238
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	240
The Coordinating Conjunctions . . . . .	241
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	243
The Semicolon as Sole Connector . . . . .	245
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	245
Review Exercises . . . . .	246
Chapter 23 More on Connecting Ideas . . . . .	251
The Subordinating Conjunctions . . . . .	251
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	253
The Relative Pronouns . . . . .	254
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	256
Review Exercises . . . . .	259
Part IV BLOCKING THE OPPOSITION: POSITION 4, THE MODIFIERS AS THE FORWARD LINE . . . . .	265
Chapter 24 Modifying . . . . .	267

The Modifier . . . . .	267
Blocking the Question . . . . .	268
How the Modifier Works . . . . .	268
Modifying Nouns . . . . .	269
The Limiting Adjective . . . . .	269
The Descriptive Adjective . . . . .	269
Placing Adjectives . . . . .	270
Modifying Verbs and Other Modifiers . . . . .	272
The Adverb . . . . .	272
Placing Adverbs . . . . .	273
Modifying Modifiers . . . . .	276
Choosing the Right Modifier . . . . .	277
The Rules for Using Modifiers . . . . .	277
Review Exercises . . . . .	279
Chapter 25 Modifying with Substitutes: Verbals, Nouns, and Pronouns . . . . .	283
Modifying with Verbals . . . . .	283
Modifying Nouns . . . . .	283
Modifying Verbs and Modifiers . . . . .	283
Placing Verbals . . . . .	284
Expressing Number . . . . .	284
Modifying with Nouns . . . . .	285
The Noun as Adverb . . . . .	285
The Noun as Adjective . . . . .	285
Modifying with Pronouns . . . . .	288
The Determiner Pronouns . . . . .	288
The Indefinite Pronouns . . . . .	288
The Personal Pronouns . . . . .	288
The Relative Pronouns . . . . .	289
Review Exercises . . . . .	293
Chapter 26 Modifying with Word Groups: The Clause and the Phrase . . . . .	297
The Modifying Clause . . . . .	297
The Adjective Clause . . . . .	297
The Adverb Clause . . . . .	299
The Modifying Phrase . . . . .	300
The Noun Phrase . . . . .	301
More Rules for Punctuating . . . . .	301
The Verbal Phrase . . . . .	302
The Prepositional Phrase . . . . .	306
The Absolute Phrase . . . . .	309
Review Exercises . . . . .	310
Chapter 27 Modifying by Comparison . . . . .	319
Comparing with Adjectives . . . . .	319
Comparing Equals and Unequals . . . . .	319
Forming Comparative and Superlative Adjectives . . . . .	320
Using the Adjective Forms . . . . .	323
Comparing with Adverbs . . . . .	325
Forming Comparative and Superlative Adverbs . . . . .	325
Comparing Equals and Unequals . . . . .	326
Correcting Comparisons . . . . .	327
Review Exercises . . . . .	329

Part V COMPLETING THE PASS: POSITION 5, THE COMPLETER AS RECEIVER . . . . .	335
Chapter 28 Completing . . . . .	337
Completing the Verb . . . . .	337
Complements That Name . . . . .	338
Complements That Modify . . . . .	338
Verbs Requiring Second Complements . . . . .	339
The Second Complement . . . . .	339
Verbs like <i>Give, Donate, Offer, Owe, and Award</i> . . . . .	340
Verbs like <i>Call, Name, Elect, Consider, and Make</i> . . . . .	340
Placement and Punctuation . . . . .	341
Placing First Complements . . . . .	341
Placing Second Complements . . . . .	341
Punctuation . . . . .	341
Completing Verbals and Prepositions . . . . .	342
Completing Verbals . . . . .	342
Completing Prepositions . . . . .	342
Pronouns with Completing Forms . . . . .	343
Choosing the Correct Form . . . . .	344
Completing the Verb <i>Be</i> . . . . .	345
With the Personal Pronoun . . . . .	345
With the Pronoun <i>Who</i> . . . . .	346
Review Exercises . . . . .	347
Answers to the Practice Exercises . . . . .	351
Glossary of Grammatical Terms . . . . .	371



# INTRODUCTION

## Making The Point