

Correct Writing

Overby

Fifth Edition



**Fifth
Edition**

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Eugenia Butler

University of Georgia

Mary Ann Hickman

Gainesville College

Lalla Overby

Gainesville College

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Acquisitions Editor: Paul Smith
Developmental Editor: Holt Johnson
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Production Coordinator: Lisa Arcese
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To the Instructor

College instructors who find it necessary to return to the basics of written Standard English grammar will find *Correct Writing*, Fifth Edition, a versatile and comprehensive aid in teaching grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and diction.

Correct writing is a distinctive combination of the best features of a grammar and composition text, a workbook of exercises, and a convenient reference handbook. The body of grammatical information meets the needs of instructors who must deal with this area before moving on to the teaching of composition and rhetoric. Brief but lucid definitions of terms are provided, along with careful explanations of the principles involved in sentence structure. These definitions and explanations come at the earliest mention of a term, so that instructors need not continue their discussions of a grammatical principle before students have a clear understanding of what they are being told. Another particularly convenient feature of *Correct Writing* is its cross-reference system through which a brief definition refers the reader to lengthier and more detailed discussions of the topic in other chapters.

Several exercises follow each chapter of text, with sentences designed to illustrate the specific point of the chapter, giving students the immediate opportunity to test their knowledge of the material just studied. Whenever possible, the sentences in these exercises are somewhat simplified to make them more obviously illustrative of the grammatical principles involved. Explanation of these principles is presented to the student in the simplest of terms, yet is far more extensive than those in other workbooks. Though discussion of many aspects of grammar is not intended to be exhaustive, it is always sufficiently thorough for a student to grasp and to learn without the instructor's having to spend classroom hours in further explanation.

In this edition the instructor will find enlarged lists of sentence elements that are especially troublesome for students. These include a complete listing of pronouns and their cases; discussions of the problems of tense, voice, and mood of verbs; incorrect modifiers of all kinds; and comprehensive discussions of punctuation and mechanics.

A strong aspect of *Correct Writing* is that rules of punctuation are given in individual chapters and relate to the particular elements of sentence structure under discussion. When students reach Chapter 19, devoted exclusively to punctuation, and Chapter 20, devoted to mechanics, they will already have learned most of the rules in these chapters. Instead of an arbitrary listing of rules to be memorized, these chapters then serve as reinforcement and review.

They also serve as quick references to any given questions on punctuation or mechanics.

An unusually helpful section of *Correct Writing* is the Glossary of Faulty Diction, which appears in Chapter 22. Young people nowadays are constantly exposed, through television and other media, to trite, slangy, and ungrammatical usage. With this fact in mind, the authors make careful distinctions between informal, stale, or incorrect written expressions and those that are acceptable as Standard English. The Glossary has been updated for this edition, with new entries added and outdated terms removed. Arranged in alphabetical order, it is another handy reference.

A recent addition to *Correct Writing* is a complete Glossary of Grammatical Terms, which incorporates simple and understandable examples in sentences that clarify and enhance the definitions. Also added recently is a section of "Paragraph Tests," which has a strongly practical application. These are whole, integrated paragraphs like those students encounter in their everyday reading. Within the paragraphs are grammatical and punctuation errors of all the kinds studied in this book. They provide a realistic method of determining whether a student has learned to be alert to unexpected errors in his everyday reading and writing.

New to this edition is a section of Sentence-Combining exercises. Most college instructors have found a consistent weakness in students' ability to use subordination and to reduce wordiness in order to give texture and variety to their writing, as well as a perspective on the relative importance of several ideas within a single sentence. These exercises will give strong additional practice in this particular area.

One central point which should emerge through a student's careful use of this text is that the study of grammar and sentence elements is a practical means of improving communication and understanding. *Correct Writing* will prove a valuable aid in the instructor's goal to provide that improvement.

The following individuals generously helped us with their suggestions for this edition: Carol Eiten, Carl Sandburg College; Sally Hanson, University of South Dakota; Kaye W. Jeffery, Utah Valley Community College; Thomas A. Mozola, Macomb Community College; Karen K. Reid, Midwestern State University; and Cecilia M. Russo, Saint John's University.

Eugenia Butler
Mary Ann Hickman
Lalla Overby

To the Student

This book is a combination textbook, workbook, and reference handbook. It contains a great deal of information in the various chapters that precede the exercises. It is a workbook in which you will be able to write your answers concerning grammatical principles that you have just studied. When you have worked all the exercises as well as the Review and Achievement Tests, you will still have a convenient reference handbook in which you can check points of grammar, usage, punctuation, and mechanics whenever you need to. The Glossary of Faulty Diction and the Glossary of Grammatical Terms will be of special help to you in questions of usage and in providing familiarity with grammatical terminology that you are likely to encounter.

Working conscientiously through the chapters and exercises of *Correct Writing* will put you well on your way to a mastery of grammar and usage, which in turn will help you to write and speak accurately and effectively.

Diagnostic Test

In the following sentences identify the part of speech of each *italicized* word by writing one of the following numbers in the space at the right:

1 if it is a *noun*,

2 if it is a *pronoun*,

3 if it is a *verb*,

4 if it is an *adjective*,

5 if it is an *adverb*,

6 if it is a *preposition*,

7 if it is a *conjunction*,

8 if it is an *interjection*.

1. *Have* you *taken* Anthropology 101 yet? _____
2. The choir sang *beautifully* today. _____
3. *None* of the boys brought their sleeping bags. _____
4. *Either* you go to the grocery store, *or* you cook supper. _____
5. *Hey*, that is not fair. _____
6. *Where* is Yosemite National Park? _____
7. *We* won the homecoming game despite bad weather. _____
8. The expert's *prediction* did not come true. _____
9. Once in the house, the curious kitten looked *around* the room. _____
10. *Both* Matt *and* Jimmy played football in college. _____
11. Everyone agrees that Kristen is *lovely*. _____
12. Mary Rose baked *me* a birthday cake. _____
13. A *college* education opens many doors. _____
14. I finished my *test* before anyone else. _____
15. On our way to work *we* passed three car wrecks. _____
16. *Beyond* the house is the garage. _____
17. *No!* I really do not want another piece of cake. _____
18. *Only* three students attended Dr. Ruff's seminar. _____
19. The itinerary for the summer was mailed *yesterday*. _____
20. T. S. Eliot's poetry *reflects* the spiritual emptiness of the modern world. _____
21. Julia Child is best known *for* her French cookbooks. _____

22. Kay and I *went* rock climbing in the Pisgah National Forest. _____
23. The Blue Ridge Mountains are *part* of the Appalachian Mountain chain. _____
24. His attitude *about* money is shallow and immature. _____
25. Read one of Amanda Cross's *or* Andrew Greeley's mysteries. _____

Each of the following sentences either contains an error in grammar or is correct. Indicate the error or the correctness by writing one of the following numbers in the space at the space at the right:

- 1 if the case of the pronoun is incorrect,
- 2 if the subject and verb do not agree,
- 3 if a pronoun and its antecedent do not agree,
- 4 if an adjective or an adverb is used incorrectly,
- 5 if the sentence is correct.

26. I know he bought his mother and I a present. _____
27. A few members of the club is coming over tonight. _____
28. Paul's family has always been real nice to us. _____
29. Everyone in the room wore a mask. _____
30. Each of the students waited their turn in the ticket line. _____
31. Me and Jess studied all night for our chemistry final. _____
32. Do you think that she will mind me tagging along? _____
33. Neither the students nor the teacher are attending the rock performance next week. _____
34. The media proved almost unanimous in its support of the prime minister's decision. _____
35. Everybody agrees that Shelby takes his interest in race cars serious. _____
36. I believe that almost everyone except Ellen and I has been to hear the Rolling Stones at some time in her life. _____
37. The class agrees that Mr. Field's frequent use of maps clarify his lectures. _____
38. Stan says that the waves are some higher this afternoon that they were this morning. _____
39. Mr. Hanks as well as his son is interested in UFO's. _____
40. Neither of the children were old enough to change trains alone at Sydney Square. _____

41. Last week each of the chefs in the restaurant prepared their favorite recipe. _____
42. The priest who married he and Kathleen still has family in Ireland. _____
43. Just tell whomever answers the telephone that we will be at least ten minutes late for dinner. _____
44. Dan is one of those collectors who is especially interested in folk art. _____
45. During the first quarter her one aim was to do good enough to keep her scholarship. _____
46. I have heard that everyone taking ceramics must buy their own supplies. _____
47. The data verified by the expert witness is essential to the prosecutor's argument. _____
48. All of us feel badly that Andy is going to have to miss the trip to Six Flags. _____
49. Standing behind Wallace and me on the platform was a large group of Japanese tourists. _____
50. If a person wants to vote in the primary, they must register by Friday. _____

Each of the following sentences either contains an error in sentence structure or is correct. Indicate the error or correctness by writing one of the following numbers in the space at the right:

- 1 if the sentence contains a *dangling modifier*,
- 2 if the sentence contains a *misplaced modifier*,
- 3 if the sentence contains a *faulty reference of a pronoun*,
- 4 if the sentence contains *faulty parallelism*,
- 5 if the sentence is correct.

51. Driving to work this morning, the fog was very thick. _____
52. Either we need to trade the car or have its transmission repaired. _____
53. I remember that the cat hardly slept anywhere except in its basket by the fireplace. _____
54. We rented a trailer to carry the table to Memphis, which seemed the practical thing to do. _____
55. I didn't wake you when I came in on purpose. _____

56. Although the terrier was wearing a collar, it looked cold, hungry, and it was surely lost. _____
57. To appreciate Susan's wall hangings, there must first be an appreciation of the craft of weaving. _____
58. Pat often shops at the health-food store because she believes that it will lower her cholesterol. _____
59. Oil is an exhaustible resource, which continues to be of deep concern around the world. _____
60. Mr. Miller has promised to at the very first of January prune the hedges. _____
61. Lucy was opposed and appalled by the decorator's suggestion that the ceiling be painted black. _____
62. When reading in bed, it is often hard to stay awake. _____
63. In the play the queen's role is far more significant than her daughter. _____
64. I've nearly seen all the films that Steven Spielberg has directed. _____
65. Rounding the curve, the truck ran almost off the pavement. _____
66. I don't know of another jogger who persists at it as faithfully as Justin. _____
67. Meredith and I were tired, discouraged, and we were very hungry. _____
68. Although we looked everywhere for bread and cheese, we only found half a box of stale crackers. _____
69. While trying to find my sweater, my camera case was lying there in the drawer. _____
70. Anyone who cuts Dr. Haynes's class will find themselves on probation. _____
71. By measuring the distance from our front steps to the sidewalk, it was exactly fifty feet. _____
72. Waiting impatiently in the pouring rain, the bus finally stopped for Suzanne and me. _____
73. I've often thought that it would be a pleasant world if everyone could learn English grammar in your sleep. _____
74. The woman who had vanished suddenly reappeared. _____
75. After my eyes had grown accustomed to the dark, I began to recognize my surroundings and hoping that I could find my way home. _____

Each of the following sentences contains an error in punctuation or mechanics or is correct. Indicate the error or the correctness by writing one of the following numbers in the space at the right:

- 1 if a comma has been omitted,
- 2 if a semicolon has been omitted,
- 3 if an apostrophe has been omitted,
- 4 if quotation marks have been omitted,
- 5 if the sentence is correct.

76. Though he was displeased with my behavior Dad let me go with the others to the movie. _____
77. Havent you ever been to San Francisco, Mark? _____
78. We had hoped to drive today to Minneapolis however, because of this snow we had better wait until Tuesday. _____
79. Who's going to keep the baby while you're out of town? _____
80. Henry I have told you three times to go to bed. _____
81. Martha glared at Jack and said, You are going to make me late for church. _____
82. I asked all five boys to come for supper but only three were able to make it. _____
83. I have taken my final exam and am anxiously awaiting news of the outcome. _____
84. Loretta Lynn's concert starts at seven we plan to be there by five. _____
85. When are you planning to give the cat its supper? _____
86. Mr. Thompson I heartily agree with you. _____
87. The angry disconsolate fans were furious with the umpire. _____
88. The name of the song, Don, is Blue Bayou. _____
89. Wheres the key to my locker? _____
90. Edgar Allan Poe's short story The Purloined Letter set the standard for the modern detective story. _____
91. While taking a shower I heard the phone ring, but I could not answer it. _____
92. The Tylers have gone to South Carolina for a visit with their parents. _____
93. Robert Frosts poem "The Road Not Taken" is quite frequently quoted. _____

94. Nathan has found a new way to waste time: hes learning sand sculpture. _____
95. Be sure to be on time tonight, Harry we begin rehearsal promptly at six o'clock. _____
96. Katherine has the feminine lead in *Othello* she will be a good Desdemona. _____
97. Kit's favorite baseball player is Steve Bedrosian, sometimes known as Bedrock. _____
98. But, Dr. Wright, it's not easy to make all As. _____
99. The time has come I'm sure you agree to leave for the airport. _____
100. Maybe we should go in separate cars, said Frank. _____

Contents

Diagnostic Test xiii

1 The Parts of Speech 1

Exercise

1. Nouns and Pronouns 13
2. Pronouns 15
3. Adjectives and Adverbs 17
4. Verbs 19
5. Prepositions 21
6. Conjunctions 23
7. Review of Parts of Speech 25
8. Review of Parts of Speech 27

2 Recognizing Subjects, Verbs, and Complements 29

Exercise

9. Subjects and Verbs 33
10. Subjects and Verbs 35
11. Direct Objects and Predicate Nouns 39

12. Indirect Objects and Objective Complements 41

13. Complements 43

3 The Sentence Fragment 45

Exercise

14. The Sentence Fragment 49
15. The Sentence Fragment 53
16. The Sentence Fragment 57

4 Verbals 59

Exercise

17. Verbs and Verbals 63
18. Gerunds 65
19. Participles 67
20. Infinitives 69
21. Verbals 71

5**Recognizing Phrases 73****Exercise**

- 22. Phrases 77
- 23. Phrases 79
- 24. Phrases 81
- 25. Phrases 83
- 26. Punctuation of Phrases 87

6**Independent Clauses 89****Exercise**

- 27. The Comma Splice and the Run-together Sentence 93
- 28. The Comma Splice and the Run-together Sentence 95
- 29. Punctuation of Independent Clauses 97

7**Dependent Clauses 101****Exercise**

- 30. Clauses 107
- 31. Clauses 109
- 32. Review of Clauses 111
- 33. Clauses 115
- 34. Punctuation of Clauses 117
- 35. Kinds of Sentences 121

8**Agreement of Subject and Verb 123****Exercise**

- 36. Subject-Verb Agreement 129
- 37. Subject-Verb Agreement 131
- 38. Subject-Verb Agreement 133
- 39. Subject-Verb Agreement 135

9**Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent 137****Exercise**

- 40. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent 139

- 41. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent 141
- 42. Agreement of Subject, Verb, and Pronoun 143

10**Reference of Pronouns 145****Exercise**

- 43. Reference of Pronouns 149
- 44. Reference of Pronouns 153
- 45. Reference of Pronouns 157

11**Case of Pronouns 161****Exercise**

- 46. Case of Pronouns 165
- 47. Case of Pronouns 167
- 48. Case of Pronouns 169
- 49. Review of Agreement and Case 171

12**Adjectives and Adverbs 175****Exercise**

- 50. Adjectives and Adverbs 181
- 51. Adjectives and Adverbs 185
- 52. Adjectives and Adverbs 187

13**Tense, Voice, Mood 189****Exercise**

- 53. Tense and Mood 195
- 54. Tense and Mood 197
- 55. Two Troublesome Pairs of Verbs 201
- 56. Voice 205

14**Dangling Modifiers 209****Exercise**

- 57. Dangling Modifiers 211
- 58. Introductory Modifiers 215

15 Misplaced Modifiers 219

Exercise

- 59. Misplaced Modifiers 223
- 60. Misplaced Modifiers 225

16 Parallelism 227

Exercise

- 61. Parallelism 231
- 62. Parallelism 235

17 Subordination 237

Exercise

- 63. Subordination 239
- 64. Subordination 243
- 65. Subordination 247
- 66. Subordination 249

18 Illogical Comparisons and Mixed Constructions 251

Exercise

- 67. Illogical Comparisons and Mixed Constructions 255

19 Punctuation 259

Exercise

- 68. The Comma 267
- 69. The Comma 271
- 70. The Colon and the Dash 273
- 71. Quotation Marks 275
- 72. Review of Punctuation 277
- 73. Review of Punctuation 279

20 Mechanics: Capital Letters, Italics, the Apostrophe, the Hyphen 281

Exercise

- 74. Capitals 287
- 75. Italics 289
- 76. The Apostrophe 291
- 77. The Hyphen 293
- 78. Review of Mechanics 295

21 Use of the Dictionary 297

Exercise

- 79. Word Origins 301
- 80. British and American Usage 303
- 81. Plurals 305
- 82. Levels of Usage 307
- 83. General Information 309
- 84. Borrowed Foreign Expressions 311

22 Diction 313

Exercise

- 85. Diction 331
- 86. Diction 333
- 87. Diction 335
- 88. Diction 337
- 89. Diction 339
- 90. Diction 341
- 91. Diction 343
- 92. Diction 345

23 Building a Vocabulary 347

Exercise

- 93. Word Analysis: Prefixes 353
- 94. Word Analysis: Suffixes 357
- 95. Word Analysis: Roots 361
- 96. Vocabulary: Prefixes and Suffixes 363
- 97. Vocabulary: Greek and Latin Roots 365

24**Spelling 367****Exercise****98. Spelling 373****99. Spelling 375****100. Spelling 377****Paragraph Tests 381****Sentence-Combining Exercises 397****Test on Lessons 1-7 447****Test on Lessons 8-18 453****Test on Lessons 19-24 463****Achievement Test 469****Glossary of Grammatical
Terms 475****Index 491**

1

The Parts of Speech

Our own language is one of the most fascinating subjects that we can investigate, and those of us who speak and write English can find pleasure in seeking to understand its various aspects. The concern of this book is Standard English and its use in contemporary writing. The study and description of Standard English, based on the thoughtful use of language by educated people, provide standards for correct writing. Although the English language is flexible and continually changing, it is possible to follow certain principles and to observe certain characteristics of usage which can make grammar a relatively exact study and one which can widen the scope of the individual in a satisfying way.

An understanding of the accurate and effective use of English is important not only as a means of communication but also as a vital element of creative thought. Because words are used to formulate conscious thought, precise grammatical usage promotes clear thinking and encourages logical and systematic transmission of ideas.

Knowledge of Standard English and its acceptable forms is basic to the education of all college students. Learning grammatical terms is an essential first step toward understanding what is correct and what is incorrect in the writing of English prose. The best place to begin this learning of terms is with the various elements that make up a sentence, elements called **parts of speech**. Many words may function as more than one part of speech, and any word's designation as a particular part of speech depends entirely upon its use within its sentence. (See Section 1i as well as the "Glossary of Grammatical Terms" at the end of this book.) The names of the eight parts of speech are as follows:

noun	verb	conjunction
pronoun	adverb	interjection
adjective	preposition	