HANDBOOK OF CURRENT ENGLISH

The Current Classic

Fourth Edition

WORKBOOK OF CURRENT ENGLISH

WILLIAM E. MAHANEY

FOURTH EDITION

WORKBOOK
OF CURRENT ENGLISH

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TO ACCOMPANY

EIGHTH EDITION

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CURRENT ENGLISH

CORDER/RUSZKIEWICZ

Preface

The *Workbook of Current English* is a comprehensive text that may be adapted to the individual interests and needs of both students and instructors. Although it is a companion volume to the *Handbook of Current English,* eighth edition, it is also an independent text that may be used with any handbook or by itself in developmental or regular composition sections, in writing laboratories, or in independent student work. The *Workbook* is comprehensive both because of its breadth of coverage of writing problems and because of the number and variety of its exercises. This breadth allows instructors to select materials according to their own philosophies of writing and the level and needs of their students.

The arrangement of material in the *Workbook* increases its adaptability. The text is divided into four units: Grammar and Usage, Punctuation and Other Conventions, Composition, and Words. Within each unit are several chapters, each of which contains a number of sections. (Chapter 4, Common Sentence Errors, for example, contains sections on Sentence Fragments, Comma Splices, Run-On Sentences, and Mixed Constructions.) At the beginning of each chapter appears explanatory material for all of its sections. The chapters, sections, and exercises are numbered to correspond to Chapters 1 through 30 of the *Handbook of Current English.* (Chapters 24, and 31–36 of the *Handbook* do not lend themselves to further exercise practice and so are not included in the *Workbook.*)

The materials in the *Workbook* may be employed in the order in which they appear, or they may be used in whatever order an instructor chooses. Parts of speech, for instance, could be approached before the grammar of sentences, or paragraphs could be studied before sentences.

The *Workbook* is also organized so that the material generally increases in difficulty and sophistication. The exercises for most sections move students from identifying structures and problems, to correcting errors, to writing their own sentences and paragraphs. All chapters have a Review Exercise which helps students review the sections and work with several related writing problems at the same time. These Review Exercises may also be used as quizzes. Each unit concludes with a Further Practice Exercise which may be used either as a test or as an exercise to help students review the unit and combine various writing skills covered in the unit.

To assist students, the *Workbook* also contains a number of problem solvers (labeled HINT) which help students avoid situations that often lead to errors. A Correction Chart appears inside the front cover, referring students to specific sections in the *Workbook* where the problems are discussed. A Checklist for Revising and Correcting a Paper appears inside the back cover. (A more detailed checklist in Chapter 23 refers students to

particular sections of the *Workbook* for solving particular problems.) And cross-references throughout the book help students tie the units of writing together.

In the fourth edition of the *Workbook*, a number of exercises have been expanded to provide students increased opportunities to practice their writing skills, the sections on composing a paper (Chapters 19–23) have been extensively reorganized and revised, and the pages of explanatory materials have been structurally separated from those containing exercises. The *Workbook* is not merely a collection of short-answer exercises. Rather, the text attempts to provide students with the explanatory material they need and to involve them actively in the writing process from the beginning. Students have the opportunity to write imaginatively and correctly on a number of topics and, by doing so, to develop an awareness and appreciation of the variety of ways in which they can express themselves. The *Workbook,* then, is one in which students work at writing *by* writing.

For their continued support, I am grateful to the staff at Scott, Foresman, to the Salem State College Bureau of Faculty Research, to Ann-Marie O'Keefe, and to Kim and Carol.

William E. Mahaney

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▶1 Understanding Sentence Grammar

The *sentence* is the basic grammatical and thought unit in English. It contains both a subject and a predicate. The *subject* consists of a noun or noun equivalent and all of its modifiers. The *predicate* consists of the verb and all of the words related to it, such as objects, complements, and modifiers.

1.1 MAIN SENTENCE ELEMENTS AND WORD ORDER

The main elements of the sentence are the subject, verb or linking verb, direct object, indirect object, and complement. Not all of these, however, will appear in every sentence. Only the subject and verb are essential.

The Subject (S)

The *subject* of the sentence is a noun or a noun equivalent (a pronoun, noun clause, gerund, or infinitive):

The **bridge** was covered with ice. [noun]
He arrived at the airport. [pronoun]
What he did was wrong. [noun clause]
Walking is good exercise. [gerund]
To think is to exist. [infinitive]

The Verb (V) or Linking Verb (LV)

The *verb* in a sentence describes an action or process, or expresses a condition. When the verb expresses a condition, it is a *linking verb;* that is, it *links* a word in the predicate to the subject (see **Complement**):

```
  S      V
Edna jumped into the pool. [describes action]

  S   LV
She was happy. [expresses condition]
```

The Direct Object (DO)

When a verb describes an action, it is often followed by a *direct object*—a noun or noun equivalent that completes the statement begun by the subject and verb. A direct object answers the question asked by adding "what?" or "whom?" after the verb. (He dislikes *whom?* He dislikes *me.*)

```
     S    V   DO
The farmer raised corn. [noun]
```

```
 S   V  DO
She shot him. [pronoun]
```

```
 S    V           DO
He realized what he had done. [noun clause]
```

```
  S    V     DO
Ralph enjoys reading. [gerund]
```

```
  S     V     DO
They attempted to go. [infinitive]
```

The Indirect Object (IO)

An *indirect object* (used with verbs of giving, receiving, asking, telling, sending, and the like) names the receiver of the direct object. The indirect object precedes the direct object and answers the question "to whom or to what?" or "for whom or for what?" or "of whom or of what?" (The dean sent a letter *to whom?* The dean sent *Scott* a letter.)

```
   S    V    IO     DO
Gwen gave Herman a ride.
```

```
    S     V      IO              DO
The reporter asked the senator a leading question.
```

The Complement (C)

When a verb expresses a condition (a linking verb), it is usually followed by a *complement*—a noun or an adjective that is related to the subject by the linking verb. When the complement is a noun (or noun equivalent), it is called a *predicate noun;* when the complement is an adjective, it is called a *predicate adjective:*

```
     S    LV            C
Harrison Ford is a talented actor. [predicate noun]
```

```
   S   LV      C
The pie looked delicious. [predicate adjective]
```

The Expletive (EX)

In sentences where *there* or *it* is used with a form of the verb *to be,* the actual subject appears after the verb. In such cases *there* or *it* is an *expletive* or *anticipating subject* which "anticipates" the actual subject that appears after the verb:

2

```
EX   LV           S
```
There are several reasons for denying your request.

```
EX LV        S
```
It is a dark night.

Word Order

Main sentence elements are usually identified by their positions in a sentence. In statements, the main sentence elements usually follow one of three *typical word order* pattterns.

1. Subject—Verb—Direct object:

   We   ate   fish.

2. Subject—Verb—Indirect object—Direct object:

   She   told   him   a lie.

3. Subject—Linking verb—Complement:

   The drill   is   noisy.

Inverted word order occurs in questions, exclamations, and emphatic statements, and with expletives:

```
V   S     DO
```
Have you a hammer? [question]

```
      C        S LV
```
How crowded the store is! [exclamation]

```
        DO S      V
```
A worse storm I never saw. [emphatic statement]

```
      LV  C     S
```
There are good reasons for buying a small car. [expletive]

1.2 SECONDARY SENTENCE ELEMENTS

Besides the main sentence elements, most sentences contain secondary elements. These elements are typically used as *modifiers* to describe, limit, or make more exact the meaning of the main elements. The secondary sentence elements are adjectives, adverbs, nouns used as modifiers, prepositional phrases, verbal phrases, subordinate clauses, appositives, and modifiers of modifiers.

Adjectives (ADJ)

Adjectives modify nouns and noun equivalents (see 9, Adjectives and Adverbs):

A **green** rug covered the floor. [modifies the noun *rug*]
They were **suspicious.** [modifies the pronoun *they*]
We are in for some **strenuous** hiking. [modifies the gerund *hiking*]

Adverbs (ADV)

Adverbs may modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs (see 9, Adjectives and Adverbs):

> He **certainly** expected better results. [modifies the verb *expected*]
> The sky was **quite** dark. [modifies the adjective *dark*]
> It moved **very** quietly. [modifies the adverb *quietly*]

Nouns (N) as Modifiers

Nouns sometimes modify other nouns (see 7.4, Noun Modifiers):

> The **bedroom** window was broken. [modifies the noun *window*]

Prepositional Phrases (PP)

Prepositional phrases can modify any of the main sentence elements (see 1.3, Phrases and Clauses):

> The pianist **in the concert** was excellent. [modifies the subject *pianist*]
> She gazed **out the window.** [modifies the verb *gazed*]

Verbal Phrases (VP)

Verbal phrases can also modify main sentence elements (see 1.3, Phrases and Clauses):

> **Looking out the porthole,** he saw a whale. [modifies the subject *he*]
> They gathered **to mourn their martyred leader.** [modifies the verb *gathered*]

Subordinate Clauses (SC)

Subordinate clauses (or dependent clauses) can serve as modifiers (see 1.3 Phrases and Clauses):

> An actor **who wants to succeed** must be able to portray many emotions. [modifies the subject *actor*]
> He enjoys collecting coins **that are old.** [modifies the object *coins*]

Appositives (AP)

An *appositive* is a noun or noun equivalent placed next to another noun and set off from it by commas. The appositive is used to further identify the noun, or to clarify or supplement its meaning:

> The orchestra leader, **Zubin Mehta,** raised his baton. [identifies the noun *leader*]
> Zubin Mehta, **the orchestra leader,** raised his baton. [identifies the noun *Mehta*]
> Banquo is a character in *Macbeth,* **a play by William Shakespeare.** [identifies the noun *Macbeth*]

Modifiers of Modifiers (MM)

Secondary sentence elements that modify main sentence elements may themselves be modified by expressions which are termed *modifiers of modifiers:*

> The **regional** office manager retired after forty-three years of service. [modifies *office* which modifies *manager*]
> The traffic was **quite** heavy. [modifies *heavy* which modifies *traffic*]

1.3 PHRASES AND CLAUSES

Sentences are built of single words, phrases, and clauses. Phrases and clauses may function as main sentence elements (S, V, DO, IO, or C) or as secondary sentence elements (modifiers).

Phrases: Prepositional and Verbal

A phrase is a group of words connected to a main or secondary sentence element by a preposition or a verbal. Because a phrase has neither a subject nor a predicate, it cannot stand alone.

Prepositional Phrases (PP). A *prepositional phrase* consists of a preposition *(in, on, over, at, by, of)*, a noun or noun equivalent, and any modifiers of the noun. A prepositional phrase can function as an adjective or an adverb:

> He returned **from the lake.** [modifies the verb *returned*]
> The chair **in the corner** is comfortable. [modifies the noun *chair*]

Verbal Phrases (VP). A verbal phrase consists of a verbal (a participle, gerund, or infinitive) plus its object or complement and modifiers. There are three types of verbal phrases.

1. A *participial phrase* functions as an adjective:

> Alligators **hiding in the weeds** make swimming dangerous. [modifies *alligators*]

2. A *gerund phrase* functions as a noun:

> **Discussing the works of Plato and Aristotle** with Professor Armenne helped me understand ancient philosophy. [serves as the subject]

3. An *infinitive phrase* may function as either a noun, an adjective, or an adverb:

> The surest way **to pass this course** [adjective, modifies *way*] is **to work hard.** [noun, serves as a complement]

Clauses: Main and Subordinate

A clause contains a subject and a predicate. Two types of clauses exist: *main* (or independent) and *subordinate* (or dependent).

Main Clauses (MC). A *main clause* can stand alone because it is a complete expression. A main clause may be introduced—

1. By the subject itself:

   The village prepared for the attack.

2. By a coordinating conjunction *(and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet):*

   But the enemy arrived early.

3. By a conjunctive adverb (*however, therefore, nevertheless,* and so on):

   Therefore, the village was captured.

Subordinate Clauses (SC) A subordinate clause cannot stand alone because it is not a complete expression. A subordinate clause functions as a noun, adjective, or adverb within a sentence. A subordinate clause may be introduced—

1. By a subordinating conjunction (*because, although, when, after, while,* and so on):

   She missed the meeting **because her car would not start.**

2. By a relative pronoun (*who, which, that,* and so on):

   The house **that you hoped to buy** was sold yesterday.

1.4 SENTENCES CLASSIFIED BY CLAUSE STRUCTURE

Depending upon the type and number of clauses they contain, sentences may be classified as *simple, compound, complex,* or *compound-complex.*

Simple Sentences

A *simple sentence* contains one main clause and no subordinate clauses:

   The orchestra played until midnight.

Compound Sentences

A *compound sentence* contains two or more main clauses and no subordinate clauses. The main clauses may be linked—

1. By a semicolon:

   The batter swung at the ball; he missed.

2. By a coordinating conjunction *(and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet):*

   The batter swung at the ball, **but** he missed.

3. By a conjunctive adverb (*accordingly, therefore, then, consequently,* and so on):

> The batter swung at the ball; **however,** he missed.

4. By correlative conjunctions *(either . . . or, neither . . . nor, both . . . and, not only . . . but also):*

> **Either** he took his eye off the ball **or** the pitch fooled him.

Complex Sentences

A *complex sentence* consists of a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses:

> While you were watching the baboon [subordinate], he was watching you [main].
> When I was young [subordinate], I enjoyed the circus [main] because the clowns made me laugh [subordinate].

Compound-Complex Sentences

A *compound-complex sentence* consists of two or more main clauses and one or more subordinate clauses:

> When the police arrived [subordinate], he attempted to escape [main], but he was captured [main] as he tried to jump the fence [subordinate].

1.5 SENTENCES CLASSIFIED BY PURPOSE

Depending upon their purposes, sentences may be classified as—

1. Statements:

> The roof leaks.
> Superman wears pantyhose.

2. Questions:

> What is the capital of Guatemala?
> At what time does the train leave?

3. Commands:

> Take your feet off the table.
> Place Tab B into Slot A.

4. Exclamations:

> You ought to be ashamed!
> How polite she is!

1.6 MINOR SENTENCES

Although sentences generally contain both subjects and verbs, occasionally some do not. Such *minor sentences* are employed intentionally, usually for a special effect.

Subjectless Sentences

Subjects are often implied rather than stated in commands and requests and, in informal writing, when the subject is easily determined by the context.

> Halt! [*You* is the implied subject of a command.]
> Please pass the pepper. [*You* is the implied subject of a request.]
> Fred wore a bright green tuxedo trimmed in orange velvet. Didn't want to appear conservative, I suppose. [*Fred* is the implied subject carried over from the first sentence.]

Verbless Sentences

Three types of construction often do not use verbs.

1. Exclamations *(Aha! Good grief! How wonderful!)*
2. Short replies to questions *(Yes. In a little while.)*
3. Answers to questions raised by the writer (What do we look for in a candidate? *Honesty, integrity, and knowledge.*)

Understanding Sentence Grammar

Because all writing depends upon sentence grammar, it is particularly important to understand both the elements used to build sentences and the types of sentences which may be built.

Elements Used to Build Sentences

Main Elements	Secondary Elements	Phrases and Clauses
Subject	Adjectives	Prepositional phrases
Predicate	Adverbs	Verbal phrases
Verb	Nouns as modifiers	Participial phrases
Linking verb	Appositives	Gerund phrases
Direct object	Modifiers of modifiers	Infinitive phrases
Indirect object	Phrases	Main clauses
Complement	Clauses	Subordinate clauses
predicate noun		
predicate adjective		
Expletive		

Types of Sentences

By Clause Structure	By Purpose	Minor Sentences
Simple	Statements	Subjectless
Compound	Questions	Verbless
Complex	Commands	
Compound-complex	Exclamations	