

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society
Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Introduction



Click the pencils above to learn more about common errors in language and usage.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society
Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Faulty Parallelism



Faulty Parallelism

Errors in parallelism involve the position and relation of words, meanings, and forms of words in a sentence. The phrases in a sentence must be parallel in agreement, direction, and comparison.

Incorrect: In the mall, she bought boots, stockings, and found some gloves.
Correct: In the mall, she bought boots and stockings and found some gloves.

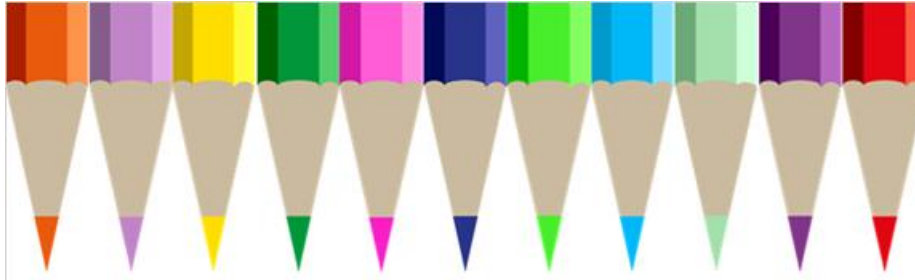
Errors in parallelism involve the position and relation of words, meanings, and forms of words in a sentence. The phrases in a sentence must be parallel in agreement, direction, and comparison.

Incorrect: In the mall, she bought boots, stockings, and found some gloves.
Correct: In the mall, she bought boots and stockings and found some gloves.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society

Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Faulty Comparisons



Faulty Comparisons

Comparisons contrast at least two things using the word *than*. Errors in comparisons often result from missing words that clarify what is being compared.

Incorrect: His car is more expensive than his neighbor.

Correct: His car is more expensive than his neighbor's car.

Comparisons contrast at least two things using the word *than*. Errors in comparisons often result from missing words that clarify what is being compared.

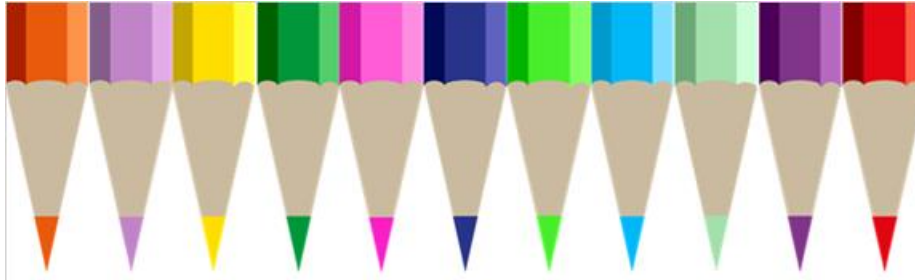
Incorrect: His car is more expensive than his neighbor.

Correct: His car is more expensive than his neighbor's car.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society

Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Wordiness



Wordiness

Wordiness is using more words than needed to make a point, which often distracts the reader.

Incorrect: Consider his past history.
Correct: Consider his history.

Wordiness is using more words than needed to make a point, which often distracts the reader.

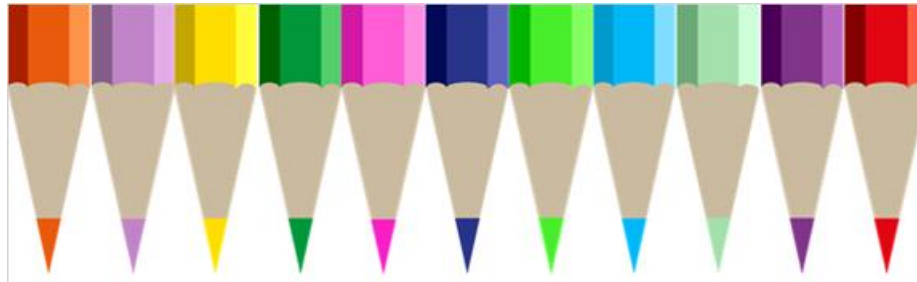
Incorrect: Consider his past history.

Correct: Consider his history.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society

Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Who Versus Whom



Who Versus Whom

The words *who* and *whoever* are used as the subject of a clause; they carry out the action. However, the words *whom* and *whomever* are used when they serve as direct or indirect objects.

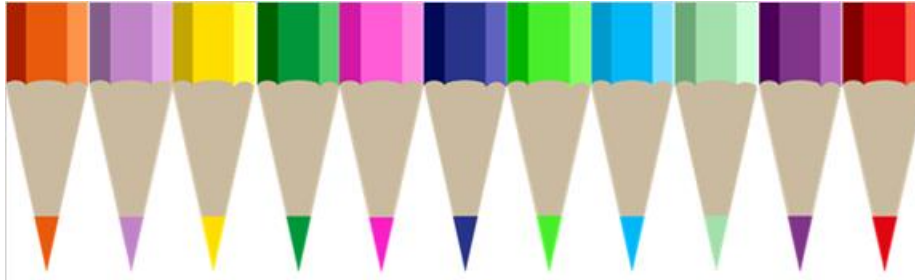
Incorrect: Who will represent the school in the debate?
Correct: Whom did Sarah choose as her partner?

The words *who* and *whoever* are used as the subject of a clause; they carry out the action. However, the words *whom* and *whomever* are used when they serve as direct or indirect objects.

Incorrect: Who will represent the school in the debate?
Correct: Whom did Sarah choose as her partner?

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society
Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Subject-Verb Agreement



Subject-Verb Agreement

Make sure that singular subjects use singular verbs. Plural subjects should take plural verbs.

Incorrect: Cases of paper was delivered.
Correct: Cases of paper were delivered.

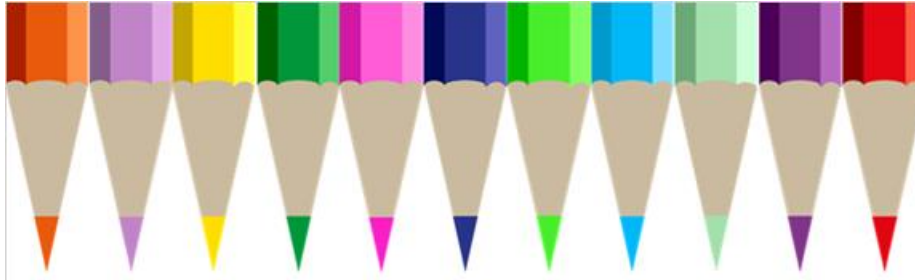
Make sure that singular subjects use singular verbs. Plural subjects should take plural verbs.

Incorrect: Cases of paper was delivered.

Correct: Cases of paper were delivered.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society
Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Sentence Fragments



Sentence Fragments
Make sure each sentence contains a subject and a verb, expresses a complete thought, and can stand alone.
Incorrect: The house that the fire destroyed.
Correct: The house that the fire destroyed was unoccupied.

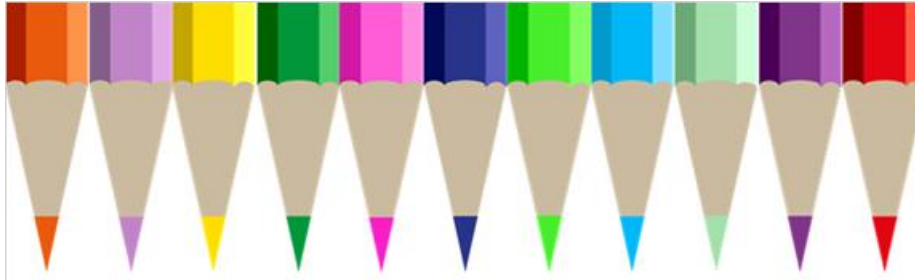
Make sure each sentence contains a subject and a verb, expresses a complete thought, and can stand alone.

Incorrect: The house that the fire destroyed.

Correct: The house that the fire destroyed was unoccupied.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society
Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Run-On Sentences



Run-On Sentences

If you have more than one complete sentence, make sure you join the sentences with either a semicolon or a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

Incorrect: She tried to buy a ticket, however they were sold out.
Correct: She tried to buy a ticket; however, they were sold out.

If you have more than one complete sentence, make sure you join the sentences with either a semicolon or a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

Incorrect: She tried to buy a ticket, however they were sold out.

Correct: She tried to buy a ticket; however, they were sold out.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society

Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement



Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Make sure that pronouns agree with the antecedents they are referencing.

Incorrect: A driver may not be carrying their license.

Correct: A driver may not be carrying his or her license.

Make sure that pronouns agree with the antecedents they are referencing.

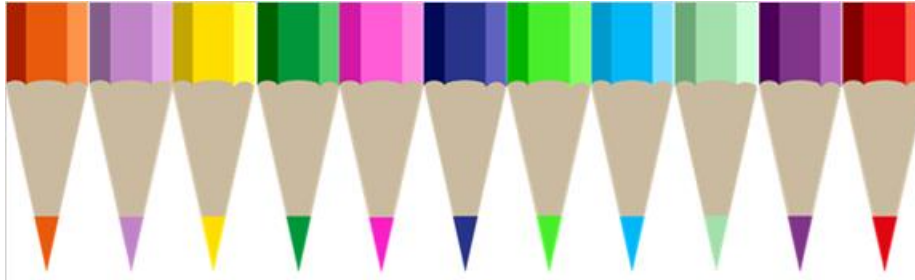
Incorrect: A driver may not be carrying their license.

Correct: A driver may not be carrying his or her license.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society

Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Misplaced Modifiers



Misplaced Modifiers

It is important to place all modifiers, whether a word or a phrase, directly before or after the nouns they modify in order to avoid confusion.

Incorrect: Passing over the stadium, the baseball pitcher saw an airplane.

Correct: The pitcher saw an airplane passing over the stadium.

It is important to place all modifiers, whether a word or a phrase, directly before or after the nouns they modify in order to avoid confusion.

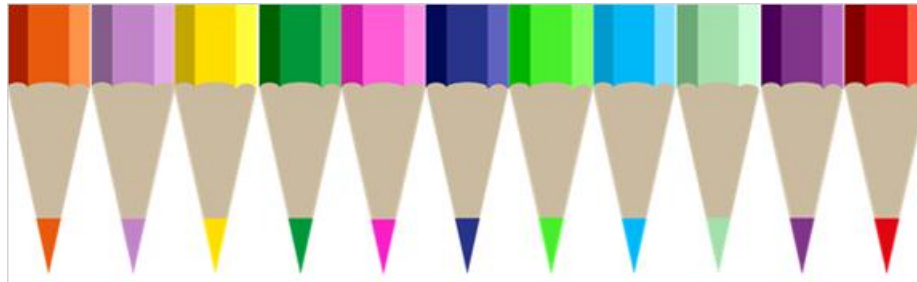
Incorrect: Passing over the stadium, the baseball pitcher saw an airplane.

Correct: The pitcher saw an airplane passing over the stadium.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society

Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Active Versus Passive Voice



Active Versus Passive Voice

Declarative sentences that use the active voice rather than the passive voice are more effective and have stronger meaning. To use the active voice, follow a basic sentence pattern of subject-verb-object.

Incorrect: The letters are read by Amir.
Correct: Amir reads the letters.

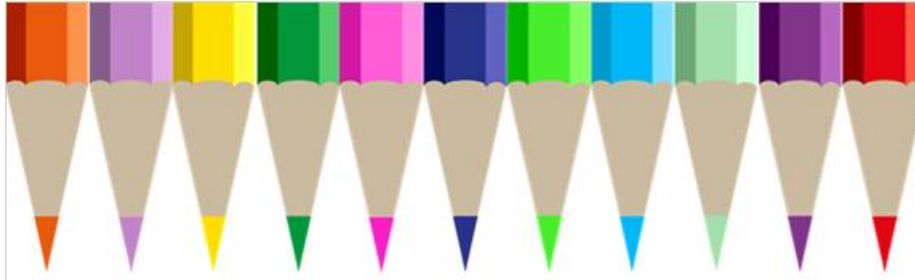
Declarative sentences that use the active voice rather than the passive voice are more effective and have stronger meaning. To use the active voice, follow a basic sentence pattern of subject-verb-object.

Incorrect: The letters are read by Amir.

Correct: Amir reads the letters.

Module 7: Balancing the Individual and Society
Topic 6 Content: Common Errors in Language and Usage

Nominative Versus Objective Pronouns



Nominative Versus Objective Pronouns

If a pronoun is the subject, it should be in the nominative case (*I, you, he, she, they, or we*). If a pronoun is a direct or indirect object or the object of a preposition, it should be in the objective form (*me, you, her, him, them, or us*).

Incorrect: This secret is between you and I.
Correct: This secret is between you and me.

If a pronoun is the subject, it should be in the nominative case (*I, you, he, she, they, or we*). If a pronoun is a direct or indirect object or the object of a preposition, it should be in the objective form (*me, you, her, him, them, or us*).

Incorrect: This secret is between you and I.
Correct: This secret is between you and me.