

Chapter 4: Spelling and Style

Project Assignment

Goal

In Chapter 4, you learned about spelling and word choice, stylistic sentences, proofreading, and inclusive language. You will apply this knowledge by proofreading an essay.

Directions

Part 1

Read the essay in the Materials section.

Part 2

Identify the following items by underlining them and labeling them in the passage with the corresponding letter. Then, track your work by completing this outline.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>a. Three misspelled words</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> <p>iii.</p> | <p>g. Five <i>correctly</i> used coordinating conjunctions</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> <p>iii.</p> <p>iv.</p> <p>v.</p> |
| <p>b. Four incorrect word choices</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> <p>iii.</p> <p>iv.</p> | <p>h. Three <i>correctly</i> used subordinating conjunctions</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> <p>iii.</p> |
| <p>c. Two incorrect verb tenses</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> | <p>i. Two <i>correctly</i> used conjunctive adverbs</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> |
| <p>d. One dangling modifier</p> <p>i.</p> | <p>j. Two sentences with passive voice</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> |
| <p>e. One misplaced modifier</p> <p>i.</p> | |
| <p>f. Two examples of weak parallelism</p> <p>i.</p> <p>ii.</p> | |

Here's an example:

h Even though I eat it around **a** friends, I would rather eat dirt **b** then suffer through another slice of pizza.

h = subordinating conjunction; **a** = misspelled word (friends); **b** = incorrect word choice (than)

Materials

Word processing program or pen/paper

Essay:

As a child, Neveah thought she lived on the flattest, most barren expanse of land on the entire planet. Somewhere two hundred miles north stood a lonely tree. It was another hundred miles before the first grove of trees would be visible. To the east and west, countless miles of highway trailed off into the distance. Neveah loved to stargaze with her telescope, and she believed she could see the great bluffs to the south if not for the curvature of the earth. She didn't want to accept her fate as a lifelong plains dweller. She appreciated her home but wanted to live somewhere else; in fact, she thought anywhere would be better.

Looking through her telescope for hours, unknown landscapes covered the surfaces of other worlds. After she saw the Milky Way for the first time, she realized how full the universe was. She wondered why people thought it was so unlikely that alien life existed somewhere out there. She dreamed of what interstellar civilizations looked like and imagining that she could study them one day.

Neveah's life changed when her family started traveling. They visited places that felt as remote as the other side of the galaxy. One time, they were taken by her mom's job to Portland, Oregon, a short drive from Mt. St. Helens. Neveah had seen footage of the 1980 eruption. She stared at the active volcano and watched smoky plumes rise from its rocky crown. Spraying liquid gold into the sky instead of lava, she imagined a volcano on some distant planet. She thought of the lava that formed Hawaii. What would islands made from gold look like?

On another trip, her family went to Carlsbad Caverns National Park in El Paso, Texas. During the three-hour underground tour, Neveah will have seen enormous stalagmites, a 750-foot elevator went to an underground gift shop, and experienced total darkness for the first time. She wondered if people on other planets live underground instead of on the surface. Since they were accustomed to darkness, would the sun blind them? She decided she would rather have eyes than navigate by echolocation.

By the time Neveah graduated from high school, she had visited nearly all fifty states. Her travels had fed her curiosity about the universe. As a college student, she worked hard; consequently, she qualified for her dream job as a science teacher. More excited than she had ever been, Neveah felt like the whole universe was created just for her.

Checklist

- The essay has been read.
- The following items have been marked:
 - Three misspelled words
 - Four incorrect word choices
 - Two incorrect verb tenses
 - One dangling modifier
 - One misplaced modifier
 - Two examples of weak parallelism
 - Five *correctly* used coordinating conjunctions
 - Three *correctly* used subordinating conjunctions
 - Two *correctly* used conjunctive adverbs
 - Two sentences with passive voice



Writing Assignment

Goal

The goal of this assignment is to write a one- to two-page letter that applies what you've learned about spelling and style.

Directions

Part 1

Choose one of these options. For guidance on formatting business/personal letters, see the links in the Materials section.

- **Write a cover letter to a potential employer.** Explain why the company should hire you. Explain why you want the job and why you're a good fit for the position. Include details about your job experience, education, skills, and volunteer work.
- **Ask your employer for a raise.** You believe your contributions to the company are worth more than you're currently making. Explain why your skills, years of experience, and/or accomplishments are worth a higher salary. Keep in mind who your audience is and what kind of tone is appropriate.
- **Ask your state representative to vote a certain way** on a piece of legislation. Identify the legislation, discuss the topic, and voice your concerns. Consider discussing the impact of the potential legislation on your state, region, community, and/or yourself and loved ones.
- **Reply to a letter from the past** that asks what to expect in the future. Imagine a list of questions the letter has asked, and write responses. Consider whether or not you should answer certain questions or what tone you should use to describe the future (your present-day reality).

Part 2

Make a list of ideas for your letter. Ideas will vary depending on which option you selected. For example, if you chose to write a cover letter, you will write mostly about your interests, experiences, and qualifications. If you chose to persuade a state representative, you will write about why the legislation should or should not be passed, what effect it will have, and what will happen if the representative votes against your advice.

Part 3

Write the letter. Be sure to use an appropriate tone for your audience. If you chose to write to an employer or representative, use business letter formatting. If you chose the final option, use personal letter formatting. Be sure to review and revise your letter once you've written a first draft.

Materials

Word processing program or pen/paper

Check out Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL) for guidance on writing letters:

- Business letters (hawkes.biz/owlbusinessletters)
- Personal letters (hawkes.biz/owlpersonalletters)

Checklist

- A letter option has been chosen.
- Ideas for the letter have been brainstormed.
- The one- to two-page letter has been written with appropriate formatting.