

COPY EDITING QUIZ

USAGE

Circle the correct boldfaced word for each sentence.

1. I felt **bad/badly** that I missed the deadline for the release-to-printer date. Always use bad after feel when you are referring to emotion; feel, like taste and smell, is a linking verb, which links the subject with an adjective. That is why we say “Soup tastes good” instead of “Soup tastes well.” The verb “do” is not a linking verb; therefore we say “Sue did well on the test.”
2. My grandmother still feels the **affects/effects** of the Great Depression. Affect is almost always used as a verb; effect is almost always used as a noun.
3. Neither rejection letters nor your opinion **stop/stops** me from writing poems. When using neither/nor and either/or, the verb agrees with the word closest to it. A good way to avoid errors is to change the wording to the future tense or add “can” before the verb.
4. The list of artists and their best-known works **is/are** arranged alphabetically. The subject and verb must agree; the words that come between them do not affect the agreement.
5. The author’s book, as well as his illustrations, **is/are** on display at the library. Phrases that come between the subject and verb do not affect the agreement.
6. Rosie dedicated her latest book to you and **me/I**. Always use the objective pronoun after prepositions.

GRAMMAR

Correct or rewrite the following sentences.

1. I will read three of Emily Dickinson’s poems, which should be interesting. In this sentence it is not clear if it is the poetry or the experience that will be interesting.
I will read three of Emily Dickinson’s poems that should be interesting.
or I will find it interesting to read three of Emily Dickinson’s poems.
2. While reading “I’m Nobody,” her personality became clear to me. The sentence contains a misplaced modifier. It says that her personality was reading “I’m Nobody.”
When I read “I’m Nobody,” her personality became clear to me.
or While reading “I’m Nobody,” I saw her personality clearly.
3. Having recovered from his illness, his doctor allowed him to return to work. This is another example of misplaced modifier. It sounds as if the doctor was the one who was recovering from his illness.
After he recovered from his illness, his doctor allowed him to return to work.
4. Have all students use their imaginations to create something to contribute. This sentence needs correction as well as editing. The word “all” could be deleted; “their imaginations” should be “their imagination.” Here is one way the sentence could be edited:
Have students use their imagination to create interesting contributions.
5. It hears appeals from local committees, fixes dates for primaries and for holding conventions. In this sentence, the phrase “fixes dates” applies to both primaries and holding conventions and should be preceded by “and.” When “and” is added, there is no need for a comma to precede it. The sentence has a single subject and two predicates.
It hears appeals from local committees and fixes dates for primaries and for holding conventions.
6. When Bradley returned, he asked Brown if he could work in his company. This sentence has an unclear pronoun reference: Is Bradley asking Brown to work in Bradley’s company, or is Bradley asking Brown if he can work in Brown’s company?
When Bradley returned, he asked Brown if he could work in Brown’s company.
or When he returned, Bradley asked Brown if he could work for the Brown company.

PUNCTUATION

Correct or add punctuation as needed.

1. Louisa May Alcott's most popular book, *Little Women*, was published in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1868. The book *Little Women* must be separated by commas. The title is considered nonessential because there was only one most popular book. The city and state are always separated by a comma, and the state is also separated by a comma.
2. I noticed Louisa May Alcott's book *Jo's Boys* on my youngest son's desk. There should be an apostrophe in Alcotts and sons to show possession. In this sentence, the book *Jo's Boys* is essential to the sentence and is not separated by commas. If it were separated by commas, it would mean that Louisa May wrote only one book.
3. The students called out suggestions for ways to raise money. "Let's hold a bake sale." "We can have a car wash." "Let's sell candy bars!" Because more than one student made these suggestions, treat each suggestion as a separate speech and separate with quotation marks.
4. Wilson had three objections to "Moon Dreams": the plot was ridiculous, the characters were flat, **and** the dialogue was unrealistic. Although a period is always enclosed within quote marks, a colon or semicolon is not. The colon in this sentence introduces a list. If the three independent clauses are separated by commas, it is preferable to add "and" before the last one. If they are separated by semicolons, "and" is not needed:
Wilson had three objections to "Moon Dreams": the plot was ridiculous; the characters were flat; the dialogue was unrealistic.
5. The report, which Marshall had tried to suppress, was greeted with hilarity. Clauses that begin with "which" are separated by commas to indicate that the clause is nonessential.
The report, which Marshall had tried to suppress, was greeted with hilarity.
or The report that Marshall had tried to suppress was greeted with hilarity.
6. The teacher stated the rules, and then left without giving further instructions. The sentence has just one subject and two verbs, which make up a compound predicate, so the two verbs are not separated by a comma. Use a comma only to separate two complete thoughts, called a compound sentence.
The teacher stated the rules and then left without giving further instructions.
7. The well-known poet Robert Frost is best known for his poem "Birches." Hyphenate best known and well known only when they appear before a noun. Do not separate Robert Frost with commas, which would mean that he is the only well-known poet.
8. After the rain comes the rainbow. Do not use a comma to separate an adverbial phrase that comes before the verb.

ANSWERS

For the answers, go to www.glennacollettdesign.com. Navigate to For Authors > Copy Editing Quiz and then link to the answer sheet.

Test written by Janet Stone