

DNRC Webinar Series on Grant Writing: No. 2 – Writing for Success

Writing for Success

1. Developing Content
2. Improving Organization
3. Grammar Refresher: Common Mistakes

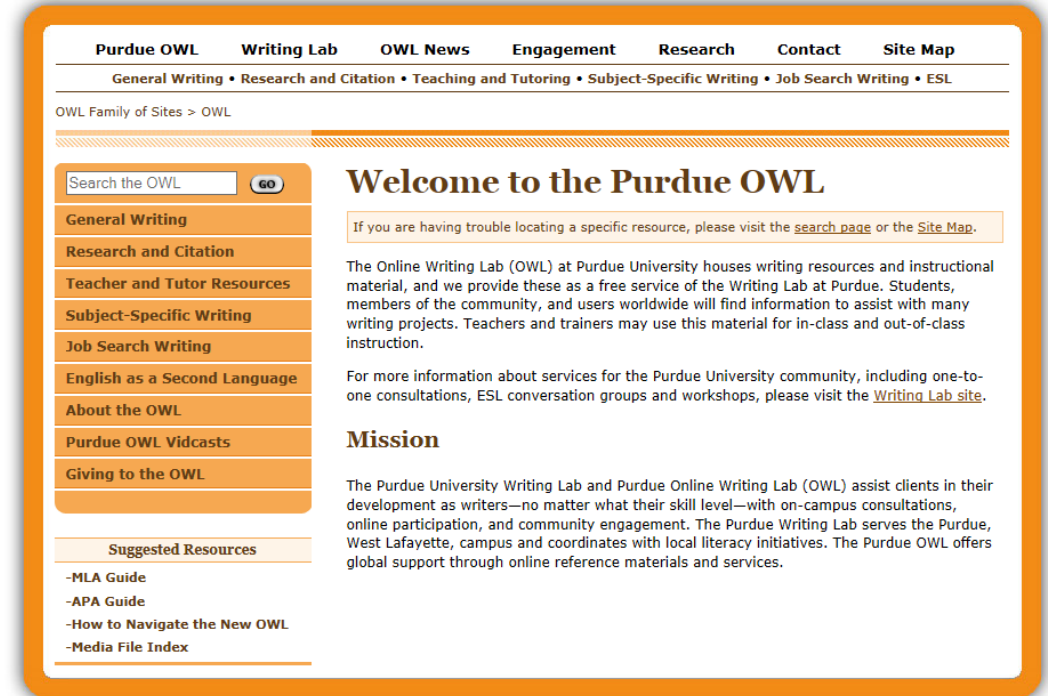
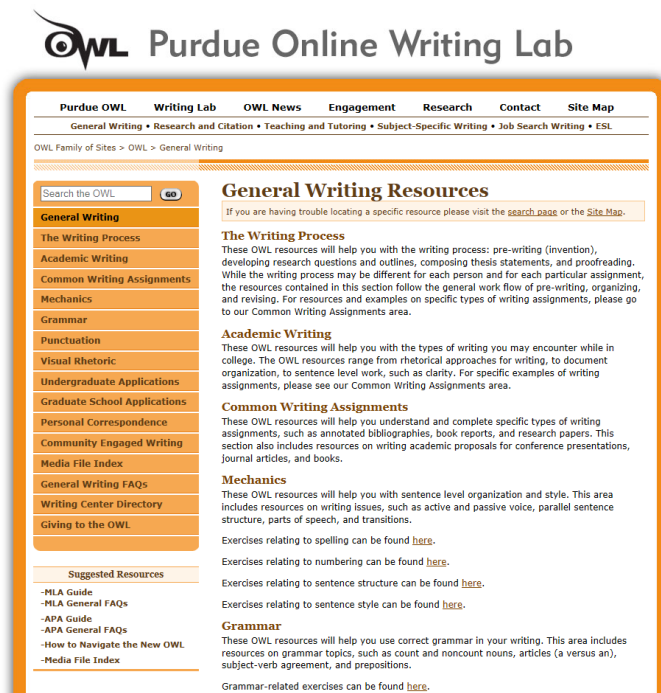


Conservation and Resource
Development Division

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A great resource...

- Recommended website:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>



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Developing Content

What message are you trying to convey?

- Picking a topic/message is like writing goal and objective statements. You want the reader to know the goal of the paper.
- Make the topic/message clear throughout.
- Provide support for your topic/message.
- Know your audience.



Clear Message

- Narrow down the topic of your paper.
 - What is the goal of what you are writing?
 - What do you know about the topic?
 - What information is important to convey?
 - What makes the topic interesting to the audience?
- The more complex the topic, the more carefully you will need to pay attention to organization.



Styles of Writing

Where
does grant
writing fit?

Choose a style(s) that fits the message/topic.
You may pick more than one within a paper.

- **Expository:** Explains a concept(s) by focusing on facts, not opinions. → Examples: textbooks, recipes, technical reports
- **Descriptive:** Paints a picture in words of a person, place or thing, but does not include persuasion. → Examples: poetry, plays
- **Persuasive:** Tries to convince an audience of a position or belief. → Examples: cover letters, letter of recommendation
- **Narrative:** Tries to impart information and constructs and communicates a story. → Examples: novels, short stories, anecdotes

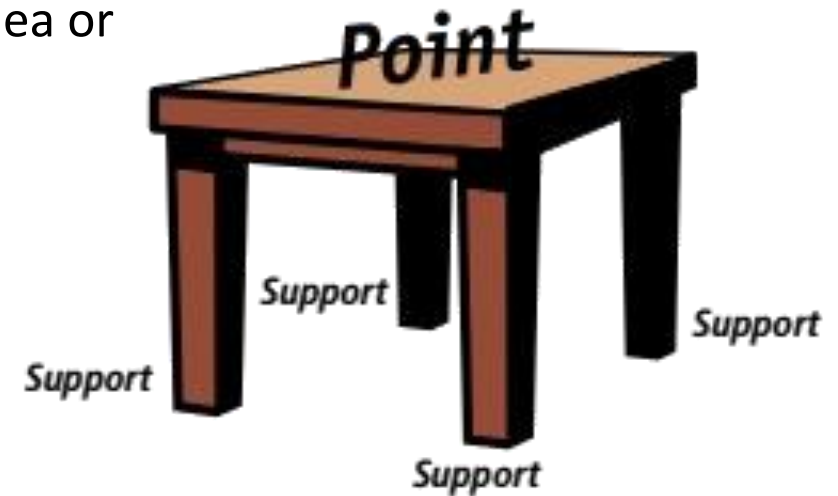


Supporting Details

- Provide support for the main ideas or arguments of your paper.
 - It should be clear what point you are supporting with the information provided.
 - If it doesn't support your main idea, or you can't support the statement made, should you include it? Probably not.
 - Use images, diagrams, and graphs to help support your idea or to portray a story. Give them context.
- Be strategic about supporting information.
 - Should it be in the text or in the appendix?
 - Quality, not quantity.

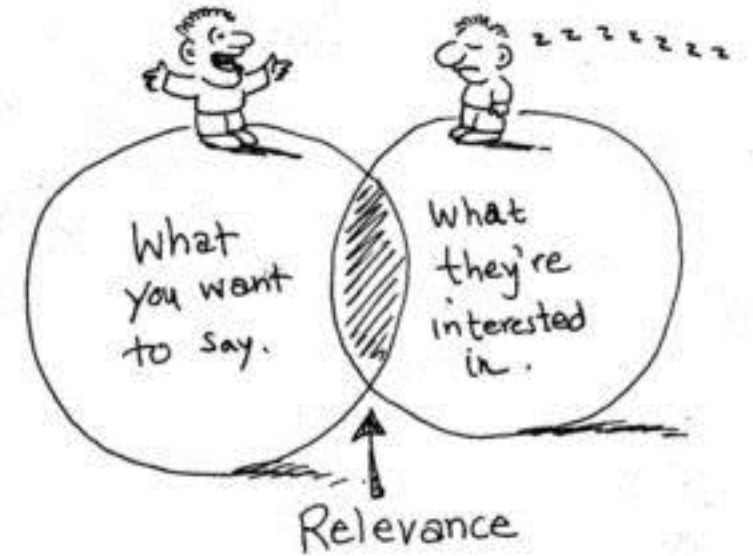


"That's okay, I don't know what the chart means either."



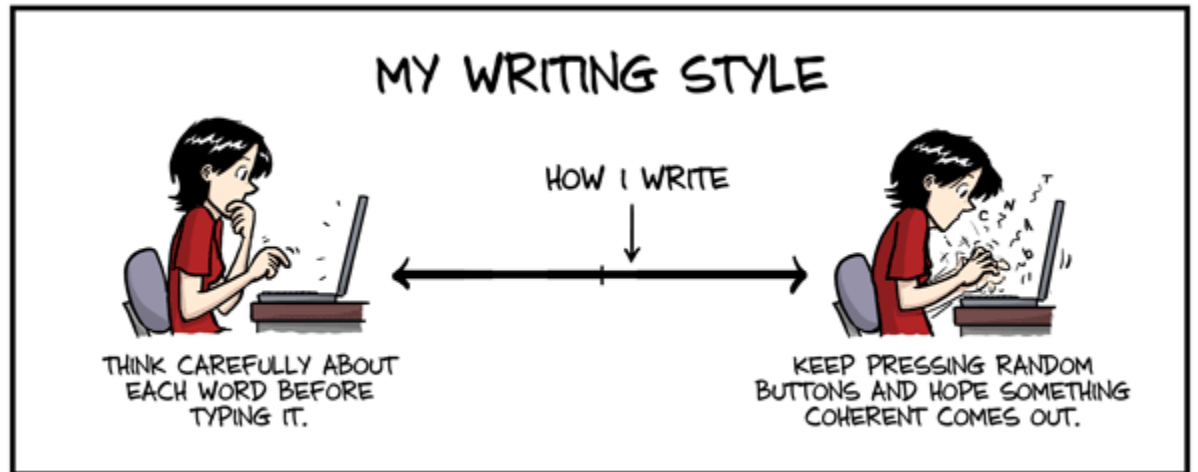
Know your Audience

- Who will be reading your paper?
 - Know your audience! Write to them and no one else.
- Use language they will understand.
 - Avoid technical language.
 - Use key terms consistently.
 - Buzz words are their words - Learn their language!



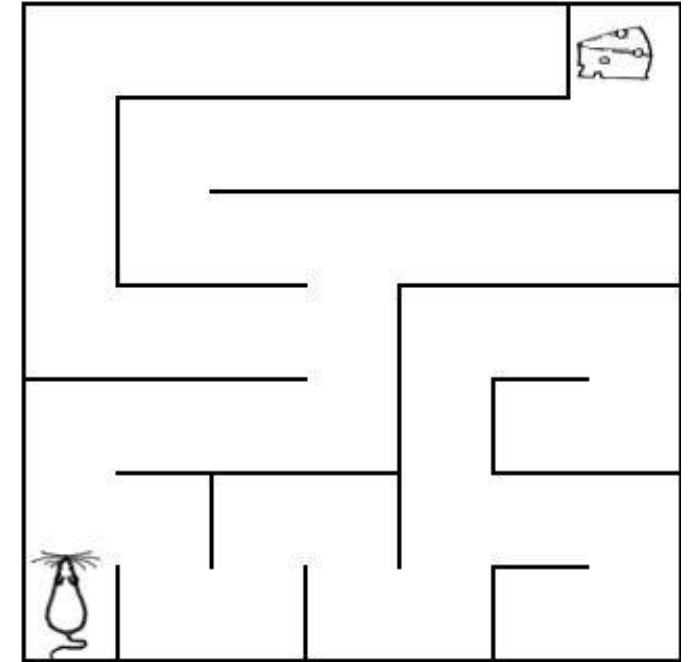
Brainstorming

- Having trouble determining content or support? Try brainstorming.
- Be careful! Your paper shouldn't look like it was just your brain dumped on paper.
- Organize your ideas!



Improving Organization

- What do you want to accomplish with this piece of writing?
- Everything that appears in the paper must be related to your main idea.
- Direct the readers focus toward the main idea so they can follow your argument or point throughout the paper.
- **Organization is the key to successful writing.**



Outlines

- Why use an outline?
 - Outlines help to organize and focus your ideas in a paper.
- How to write an outline?
 - Identify a topic.
 - Decide what points you would like to make.
 - Put your points into a logical order so that each point connects back to your main point.
 - Think about how you will tie those points together through transitions.

Outline

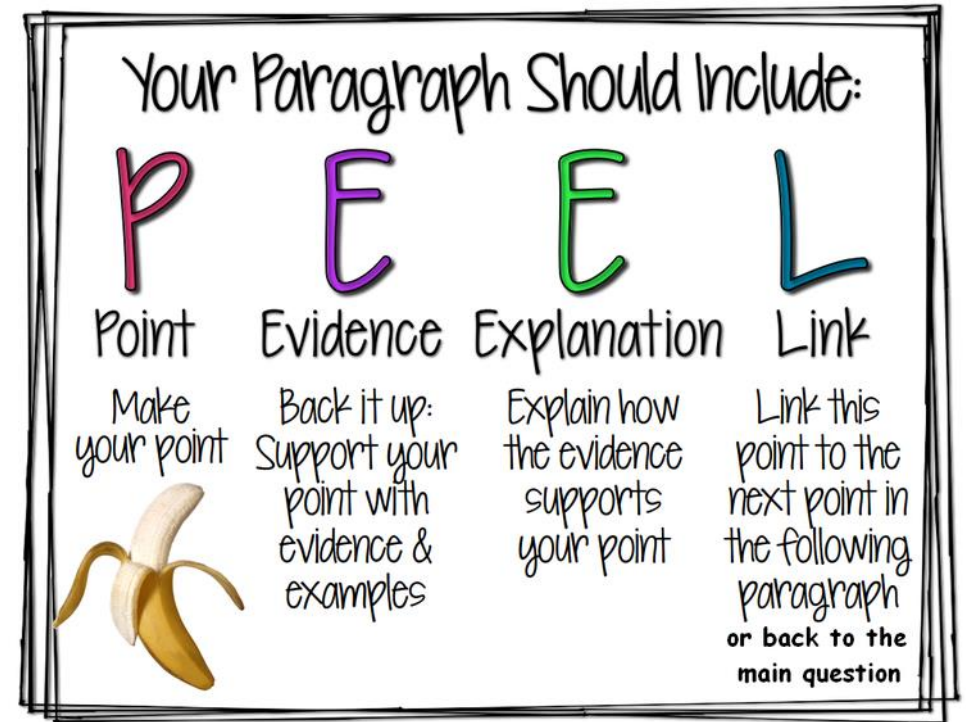
- I. Intro
- II. First point
 - A. Detail
 - B. Detail
 - C. Detail
- III. Second point
 - A. Detail
 - B. Detail
 - C. Detail
 - D. Detail
- IV. Third point
 - A. Detail
 - B. Detail
 - C. Detail
- V. Conclusion



Paragraph structure

Basic Rule: Keep one idea to one paragraph.

- A paragraph is a collection of related sentences dealing with a single topic.
- The reader should be able to identify what the paragraph is about.
 - Use topic sentences to indicate the idea the paragraph will discuss.
- Use transitional words, phrases, or sentences to help the reader move to the next paragraph.



Transitions

- Sentences and paragraphs should be coherently linked.
- Use transitional words and phrases to tie different ideas together within a paragraph or between paragraphs.
- Transitional paragraphs can be used to tie larger parts of a paper together.

Transition Words and Phrases			
Agreement / Addition / Similarity	in the first place	again	moreover
	not only ... but also	to	as well as
	as a matter of fact	and	together with
	in like manner	also	of course
	in addition	then	likewise
	coupled with	equally	comparatively
	in the same fashion / way	identically	correspondingly
	first, second, third	uniquely	similarly
	in the light of	like	furthermore
	not to mention	as	additionally
	to say nothing of	too	
	equally important		
by the same token			
Conclusion / Summary / Restatement	as can be seen	after all	overall
	generally speaking	in fact	ordinarily
	in the final analysis	in summary	usually
	all things considered	in conclusion	by and large
	as shown above	in short	to sum up
	in the long run	in brief	on the whole
	given these points	in essence	in any event
	as has been noted	to summarize	in either case
	in a word	on balance	all in all
	for the most part	altogether	



Transition Examples

- *Overall, Management Systems International has logged increased sales in every sector, leading to a significant rise in third-quarter profits.*

Another important thing to note is that the corporation had expanded its international influence.

- Overall, Management Systems International has logged increased sales in every sector, leading to a significant rise in third-quarter profits.
These impressive profits are largely due to the corporation's expanded international influence.



Transition Examples



- *Fearing for the loss of Danish lands, Christian IV signed the Treaty of Lubeck, effectively ending the Danish phase of the 30 Years War.*
But then something else significant happened. The Swedish intervention began.
- Fearing for the loss of more Danish lands, Christian IV signed the Treaty of Lubeck, effectively ending the Danish phase of the 30 Years War.
Shortly after Danish forces withdrew, the Swedish intervention began.



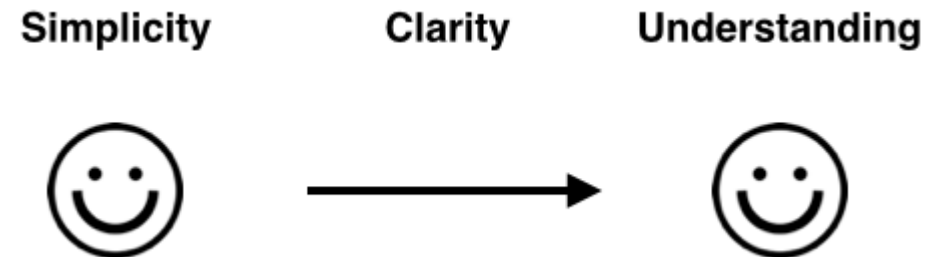
Improving Flow

- Vary word choice, but keep key terms the same throughout.
- Avoid starting successive sentences or paragraphs with the same word or phrase.
- Read out loud.



Clarity

- K.I.S.S. Method
 - Keep It Simple Silly
- It should be clear how each sentence fits in a paragraph.
- Define terms and use them **consistently**.
- Define acronyms. If you define the acronym early on, but don't use it until later, define it again.



Conciseness

- Don't be too wordy. Excess words may cause you to lose your audience's interest.
- Avoid sentences that say nothing.
 - This amazing rock is found in Montana.
 - The results for the area measured were unique.



Conciseness

- Replace several vague words with more powerful and specific words.
 - **Wordy:** Our Web site has made available many of the things you can use for making a decision on the best dentist.
 - **Concise:** Our website presents criteria for determining the best dentist.
- Combine sentences if needed.
 - **Wordy:** Ludwig's castles are an astounding marriage of beauty and madness. By his death, he had commissioned three castles.
 - **Concise:** Ludwig's three castles are an astounding marriage of beauty and madness.



Formatting

- Format is the spacing, font characteristics, and organization of the document.
- If given a format, follow it.
- If not, develop a **consistent** format to guide the reader through the text and help them see how everything is connected.

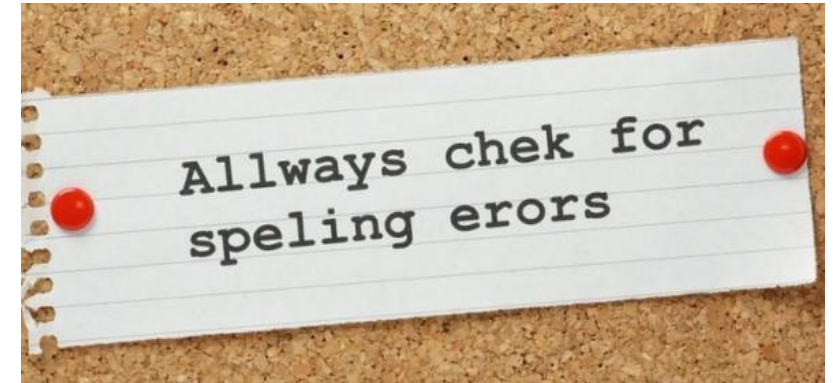
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Common writing mistakes

Spelling errors

- Spelling errors are easily missed.
 - *I cnduo't bvleiee taht I culod aulacfty uesdtannrd waht I was rdnaieg.*
 - Double check titles, headers, captions, etc.
- Don't trust spell check.
 - *Every where she walked, she was reminded of him.*
 - Everywhere she walked, she was reminded of him.



Common writing mistakes

- Missing commas

- *Determined to make their flight on time they rose at dawn.*
 - Determined to make their flight on time, they rose at dawn.

- *David who loved to read history was the first to head to the British Library.*
 - David, who loved to read history, was the first to head to the British Library.

- *Miranda drove her brother and her mother waited at home.*
 - Miranda drove her brother, and her mother waited at home.

Let's eat grandma!



Let's eat, grandma!

**PUNCTUATION
SAVES LIVES!**



Common writing mistakes



- Added commas
 - *Happily, the waiters, sat down during a break.*
 - Happily, the waiters sat down during a break.
 - *The budget sheet can be seen in the application, and in the appendix.*
 - The budget sheet can be seen in the application and in the appendix.
 - *The students rushed the field, they tore down the goalposts.*
 - The students rushed the field; they tore down the goalposts.
 - The students rushed the field. They tore down the goalposts.



Common writing mistakes

Missing Word

- *Soccer fans the globe rejoiced when the striker scored the second goal.*
 - Soccer fans **around** the globe rejoiced when the striker scored the second goal.

Wrong word

- ***Your** going to catch cold without your coat.*
 - **You're** going to catch cold without your coat.

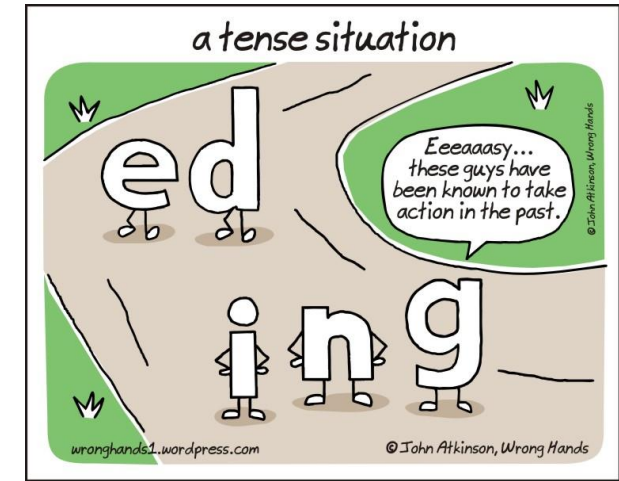


Common writing mistakes

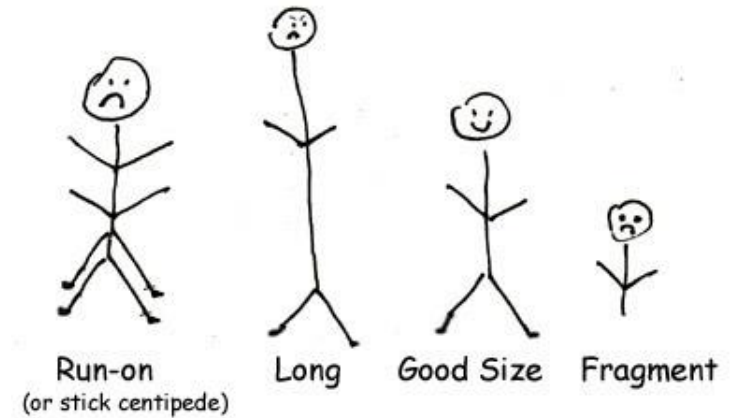
Verb Tense

- Check to make sure it matches.
 - Martin **searched** for a great horned owl. He **takes photographs** of all the birds he **sights**.
 - Martin **searched** for a great horned owl. He **took photographs** of all the birds he **saw**.

- *Active vs. passive voice*
 - *Passive: The game was won.*
 - *Active: We won the game*



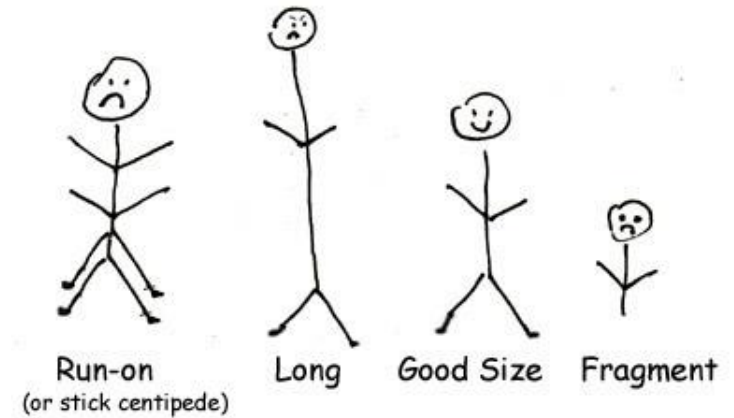
Common writing mistakes



Run-on

- *He wondered what the decision meant he thought about it all night.*
 - He wondered what the decision meant. He thought about it all night.
 - He wondered what the decision meant; he thought about it all night.
- *The house was flooded with light, the moon rose above the horizon.*
 - The house was flooded with light as the moon rose above the horizon.

Common writing mistakes



Fragment

- *The American colonists resisted British taxation. And started the American Revolution.*
 - The American colonists resisted British taxation and started the American Revolution.
- *The pink geranium blooming in its pot.*
 - The pink geranium bloomed in its pot.
 - The pink geranium blooming in its pot decorates the window sill.

Common writing mistakes

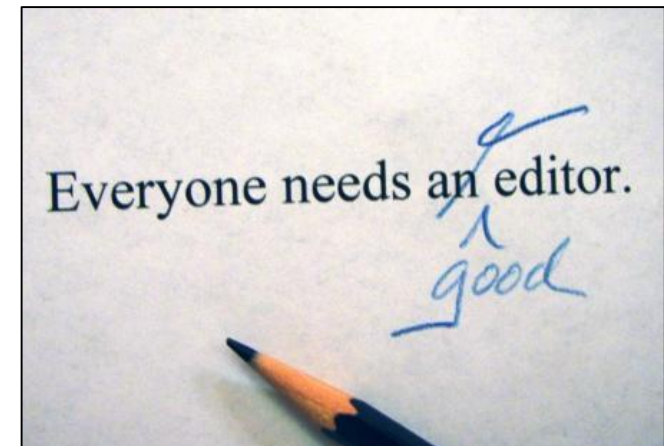
Poor Sentence Structure

- *The information that families have access to is what financial aid is available and thinking about the classes available, and how to register.*
 - Families have access to information about financial aid, class availability, and registration.



Improving Proof-Reading Skills

- Read out loud.
- Slow down. Take time to read each word.
- Take a break and come back. With each review you become less efficient at proof-reading.
- Interrogate every sentence. Does it support the topic?
- Keep a list of your common mistakes so you know what to watch for.
- Double check the title, headings, lists, and captions.
- Get help! Ask someone else to look it over.



Questions?

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We are here to help!

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