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English 2500

Style Guide Final Reflection

Compiling the Style Guide for this course has been a deep learning experience. This guide is a reflection of my new understanding of rhetorical grammar and the basics of clarity and style. Over the course of the semester, I was able to detail basic rules for a variety of grammar topics and punctuation while also adding information on how to use these devices rhetorically. For example, I was able to understand the many uses of adverbial phrases, how to construct them correctly, and place them strategically in my writing to create the kind of emphasis and intention I desire. Creating the Style Guide has solidified my knowledge of basic grammar rules while also expanding my understanding of their rhetorical effects.

While creating my Style Guide, I used specific design effects to make the guide accessible and easy to read and use. First, I divided sections into a hierarchical structure giving sections and subsections each their appropriate heading and subheading. I created a variety of headings and subheadings using different size, color, and style of fonts, while always sticking to a readable sans serif font. I used white space to separate sections spatially and make transitions between paragraphs smoother. I utilized tables and examples to demonstrate how the concepts work. I also added a few links for reference using hyperlinks that describe what the resource is.

I anticipate my Style Guide being an effective tool towards reaching my writing goals. Compiling the Style Guide has helped me develop an analytical eye for text. Where before I could recognize successful writing but not understand what made it successful, now I will be able to break down writing I find effective to understand what works. For example, I can utilize my section about cohesion by checking to see how sentences connect to one another and seeing if the author uses the known-unknown contract as they bring readers along. This analytical skill will also be helpful in editing my own and others documents. Not only will I be able to apply correct grammar principles, I will understand how those grammatical choices will affect the writing's intention and purpose. I have plans to submit my writing for publication, and I hope to use the Style Guide as a reference to improve and polish my work.

Overall, the Style Guide project has been helpful in driving home the concepts and principles I have learned over the course of the semester.

Style Guide

Glossary of Key Terms

Style: the way an individual writer uses language.

Grammar: the structure of language.

Usage: refers to the ways in which members of a language community use language for particular contexts and purposes.

Word Class: a category of words which have similar form, function, and properties.

Noun: a word that can be made plural or possessive.

Verb: a word that can show tense.

Adjective: a word that modifies a noun; answers the question which one or what sort

Adverb: a word that modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb; usually related to time, space, and connection.

Phrase: a group of words used to express meaning, but is not complete thought because it doesn't contain a subject and a verb.

Clause: a group of words with both a subject (noun) and a predicate (verb).

Coordination: putting sentences together

Subordination: sentences with dependent clauses

Language Principles

Usage:

- Socially accepted ways of using words and phrases;
- The meanings of words in particular contexts;
- Socially constructed rules or conventions about language correctness;
- The ways that people actually use language (which may be different from how some people think that language should be used);
- Constantly changing social rules about how language should (and shouldn't) be used.

Grammar:

- Social rules related to correctness (socially acceptable language)
- The patterns and knowledge that native speakers of a language use (which are typically subconscious)
- The study of patterns, structures, and systems of a language
- The social rules that determine socially acceptable uses of language (or usage)

Social and Cultural Influences on Grammar

- Those in positions of influence and power dictate “appropriate” grammar and usage.
- Grammar “rules” are constructed by people whether by small group consensus of what will be published in a dictionary or widely accepted and used slang by the masses.

Grammatical Concepts

Prescriptive versus Descriptive Grammar:

Descriptive Grammar: examining the rules or patterns that underpin a language, the way speakers use language in their everyday lives; the study of linguistic habits.

Richard Nordquist gives the following definition:

“The term *descriptive* grammar refers to an objective, nonjudgmental description of the grammatical constructions in a language. It's an examination of how a language is actually being used, in writing and in speech. Linguists who specialize in descriptive grammar examine the principles and patterns that underlie the use of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences (‘Descriptive Grammar’).”

Prescriptive Grammar: enforcing the rules and patterns of what they believe to be the correct structure and form of a language.

Nordquist gives this definition:

“The term *prescriptive grammar* refers to a set of norms or rules governing how a language should or should not be used rather than describing the ways in which a language is actually used.”

And more: see reference article [“10 Types of Grammar \(And Counting\)”](#)

Word Classes:

Open Class: words that make meaning, can stand alone, and are open to change

Examples: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

Closed Class: are words that provide structure, holding phrases together, and show how open class words relate to each other. These words do not change often.

Examples: determiners, auxiliaries, qualifiers, prepositions, conjunctions

Punctuation

Commas:

Non-Comma Rules:

Do not place a comma when it separates:

- The subject from the verb
- The direct object from the object complement
- The indirect object from the direct object
- The verb from the subject complement
- The verb from the direct object
 - Exception: She said, "I will have the cheeseburger."

Do not place a comma with a coordinating conjunction when it joins two sentence units.

Comma Rules:

- **Coordinating Conjunctions:** Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction when it joins two independent clauses.
- **Adverbial Clauses:** Use a comma to offset adverbial clauses when those clauses are located at the beginning or middle of a sentence. Use a comma to offset an adverbial clause at the end of a sentence if the information is not essential.
 - If it is a cause - no comma.
 - If it is a reason - use a comma.
- **Lists of adjectives:** use a comma if the adjectives and nouns can be separated by "and".

Example: The beautiful and cozy house
 The beautiful, cozy house

NOT

 The military safe house
 The military and safe house

Semicolon:

- **Replacement for comma-and.** Tighter grammar.
Example: Recently, the weather had turned; I found myself feeling restless.
- **Semicolon-plus-conjunction:** Used when one of the connecting independent clauses already contains a comma.
Example: The house is red, located in a small neighborhood; this is where I grew up.
- **Semicolon-plus-conjunctive adverb:** With the ability to move the adverbial conjunctive you can place emphasis on different parts of the sentence.
Example: The house is for sale; however, there are many buyers who are already interested.

Colon:

- Alerts the reader that an explanation or elaboration is coming. Also, the colon can introduce a list or a block quote.

Example: The house at the end of the street is for sale: it has been a significant landmark in the neighborhood for years.

- A signal for an appositive. Puts emphasis on the appositive. Must be preceded by an independent clause.

Dash:

- Informal colon, in place of a colon.
- List of appositives: When a list of appositives occurs in the middle of a sentence, use dashes. Use dashes to set off appositives that already have internal punctuation.
- Sentence Appositive - set off by dashes.

Hyphen:

Makes clear that the two words together or complete phrases make the modifier, except when the first word ends in -ly.

Examples: a highly suspicious situation - NO hyphen
the English-speaking citizen
the off-the-cuff remark

Sentence Structure

Types of Sentences:

Interrogative: a question; subject can be in a different place in the sentence than is typical.

Example: Who is going to the movies?

Declarative: a statement

Example: My friends are going to the movies.

Imperative: a command; the subject “you” is removed from the sentence

Example: Go to the movies!

Simple: a sentence containing one independent clause

Example: The dog runs.

Compound: linking of two independent clauses

Example: The dog runs, and the cat jumps.

Sentence Structure Table

Type	Form	Emphasis	Examples
Be Pattern 1	Subject + Be + Adverbial	On time, space, and connection	The horse is in the barn. (Prepositional Phrase) The opening is very soon. (Adverb Phrase)
Be Pattern 2	Subject + Be + Subject	On adjective,	I am a puzzler. (Noun Phrase)

	Complement	Specifies a quality of the subject	The summers are very hot. (Adjective Phrase)
Linking Verb Pattern 3	Subject + Linking Verb + Subject Complement (five sense verbs, become, remain, seem, seem, appear)	On the subject complement	The house looked expensive. (Adjective Phrase) My daughter became a teacher. (Noun Phrase)
Intransitive Verb Pattern 4	Subject + Intransitive Verb (Predicate is verb alone - action verbs)	On action verb	Life happens. Cows moored.
Transitive Verb Pattern 5	Subject + Transitive Verb + Direct Object (the action is directed to an object)	On the transmission of action	My friend borrowed my jacket. Foxes chase rabbits.
Transitive Verb Pattern 6	Subject + Transitive Verb + Indirect Object (recipient of direct object) + Direct Object (sending or giving)	Place indirect or direct object at end of sentence for emphasis	Sara sent Emily a box of cookies. She gives her students lessons on grammar.
Transitive Verb Pattern 7	Subject + Transitive Verb + Direct Object + Object Complement (a noun phrase that has same referent as direct object)	On Object Complement	The critic considered the meal dry and bland. My dad called the game exciting.

Compounding:

Subjects

Example: Heat and humidity made the race unbearable.

Predicates:

Example: I went for a walk in the morning and a drive in the afternoon.

Direct Objects:

Example: You can watch a movie or a TV show after dinner.

Coordination: Compounding Sentences

Coordinating Conjunctions: words that connect two independent clauses, such as *but, and, or, for, yet, so, nor.*

Example: The house is blue and the door is red.

Parallelism: parts on either side of the conjunction are the same.

Example: My days consist of breakfast, lunch, and dinner interwoven between reading, writing, and reflecting.

A Series: a list of related words each separated by a comma.

Example: We will travel to Nevada, Arizona, and Texas.

Climax: the arrangement of the series follows an increase in length or importance.

Example: I saw her fine clothes, the curl of her hair, the color of her lipstick.

Correlative Conjunctions: to conjunctions that are often seen together that set up expectations of contrast, comparison, and emphasis for the reader. They include:

Both - And

Either - Or

Not Only - But Also

Neither - Nor

Examples:

Both the parents and the students need to attend the meeting.

Not only should we be concerned about the student's grades but also the student's behavior.

Subject-Verb Agreement: an issue in sentences with compound subjects. Most commonly an issue in present tense -s ending verbs.

- To identify the verb form, replace the noun with a pronoun.
- When subjects are joined by "and" or "both-and" the verb is plural.
- When subjects are joined by "or" or "either-or" the verb form is determined by the subject closest to the verb.
- When subjects include phrases like "along with" or "in addition to", these phrases are not included as part of the subject so the verb form follows the subject.

Conjunctive Adverbs and Transitional Phrases: similar to coordinating conjunctions but with movability. Keep in mind though that where you place the connector in the sentence influences its impact. Think about when the reader needs the signal. Normally set off with commas.

Examples:

Addition: moreover, furthermore, further, also

Time: meanwhile, then, afterward, previously

Contrast: however, instead, rather

Result: therefore, consequently, thus

Concession: though

Reinforcement: indeed, nevertheless, still

Subordination: Dependent Clauses

Subordinate clause is another way of saying dependent clause. Subordinate clauses cannot stand alone. They function as an adverb, adjective, or noun in a sentence.

Adverbial Clause: a dependent clause that begins with a subordinating conjunction (because, although, or when). Check for movability.

- When a sentence begins with an adverbial clause, it is followed by a comma.

Nominal Clause: functions as a noun

Phrases:

Noun phrase: a group of words where the headword is a noun and includes a determiner (pronouns, possessive, demonstrative pronouns, proper nouns). Personal pronouns can be substituted for a noun phrase.

Example: the tall, brown building

Verb phrase: a group of words where the headword is a verb plus its modifiers

Example: clapped vigorously

Prepositional Phrases: a preposition (reference to time, space, or connection) followed by a noun phrase.

Example: in the gymnasium

Adjectival Phrase: a group of words that modifies a noun.

Example: Backpacks in the office will be sent to the lost and found. (Modifies backpacks: what kind of backpacks?)

Adverbial Phrase: a group of words that modifies a verb, adverb, or adjective. Check for movability.

Example: You will find a ball at the gymnasium. (Modifies find: where will you find it?)

Clauses:

A group of words which are understood as a thought; the building block of a sentence.

Example: The woman runs.

Independent Clause: the main meaning of a sentence which can stand alone.

Subject + Predicate

Example: The dog eats.

Dependent Clause: are not complete sentences or thoughts, require an independent clause to make meaning. Subordinating Conjunction + Subject + Predicate

Example: Because I left early.

Adverbials:

Provide information about time, place, frequency, purpose, reason, manner (adding -ly to adjectives, for example quickly) etc. The questions the answer are: when, where, how often, and why?

Movability: they can be placed in various locations throughout a sentence.

Beginning of sentence: sets the scene, orients the reader to place and time, helps explain events along a timeline, or repeats known information that is important to the new information that will be shared in the main sentence.

Middle of sentence: an interruption that brings emphasis to the subject

End of sentence: additional information

Types of Adverbials:

Adverbs of Manner: adding -ly to adjectives

Examples: quickly, carefully, seriously

- More stress is given to the adverb when it follows the verb.
- When you open a sentence with an adverb, you are modifying the entire sentence.
- Single word sentence modifiers are most always adverbs.

Example: Carefully, the woman entered the house.

Prepositional Phrase: adverbial information that prepositions provide

Direction: toward, beyond, across

Place: near, on, along

Time: on, at, in

Duration: until, for, during

Manner: with, by, in

Reason: because, for

- Watch for overuse of “of” and “to”.
- Watch for long strings of short phrases. Look for awkwardness in length and rhythm.
- Readers are looking for end focus. Long strings of prepositional phrases tend to lose focus confusing the reader. Edit unnecessary information. Edit for redundancy.

Example: I walked along the ridge.

Noun Phrases: they look like prepositional phrases with their prepositions missing. They may look like objects, but they are adverbial.

Example: I studied every day for my test.
I worked five hours.

Verb Phrases: also known as an infinitive phrase. The verb in the phrase has no tense. Preceded by “to”, meaning “in order to”.

Example: I attend school to study writing.

- The infinitive dangles when the subject of the verb phrase is not clear. Although the reader will often understand, the writer can achieve more clarity by naming the subject.

Example: To maintain your health, a balanced diet is important.

To maintain your health, you should eat a balanced diet.

Dependent Clauses: subject + predicate structure. Able to provide more information and has the quality of a complete sentence.

Subordinating Conjunction: indicates the relationship between the two sentences.

- See Rhetorical Grammar Page 82 for examples of subordinating conjunctions
- Generally appears at the beginning of a sentence.
- Add variety to a paragraph.

Elliptical Adverbial Clause: an adverbial clause with something missing. By removing subjects the text becomes crisper and tighter.

- The subject of the main clause is always the subject of the elliptical clause.

Adjectivals:

Adjectivals modify nouns. The location of adjectivals in relation to the noun headword varies. Each of the forms have their proper place. The general structure is as follows:

Determiner Adjective Noun HEADWORD Phrase Clause

Preheadword Modifiers:

Determiners: includes articles, possessives, demonstrative pronouns, and numbers. Are bridge builders between sentences.

Examples: See page 92 *Rhetorical Grammar*

Adjectives and Nouns: descriptors of the headword

Commas are used when items in the list are of the same type.

See Comma Rules.

Postheadword Modifiers:

Prepositional Phrases: it is identical in form to the adverbial prepositional phrase but the function is different. It distinguishes the noun, answering which one.

Examples: The student sitting in the office is sick.

Some prepositional phrases may work better as preheadword modifiers.

Examples: the girls with the red hair
 the redheaded girl

Adjective Phrases: when adjectives are linked or expanded with qualifiers (-ly) they can be located post headword and offset by commas.

Examples: The long and dusty road travels for miles.
 The road, long and dusty, travels for miles.

Adjectival phrases can open a sentence when the subject is a personal pronoun.

Examples: Happy to help, she sets the table.

Participial Phrases: a verb phrase headed by the present or past participle. Noun phrases modified by principal phrases have a subject-predicate relationship.

- When a participle is moved to the beginning of a sentence, it is assumed that the subject is the same subject as the main clause. When the subjects do not match, you have a dangling participle.

- Single word participles usually begin the sentence.
 - Example: Shocked, the students left school.
- When placed at the end of the sentence, there is room for expansion and emphasis, bringing it to an end focus.

Note: Participle phrases add whole verbal ideas in a concise way. With a participle phrase, a subject is able to complete two actions. There are flexible tools because of their movability.

Exception: If the participle phrase is a single word (laughing, walking) it takes a preheadword position. However, the participle phrase must match the subject of the main clause, unless it functions as a sentence modifier, like “generally speaking” and “considering”.

Relative Clauses: adjectival dependent clause. Contains a subject and predicate. Introduced by relative pronouns or relative adverbs.

- Restrictive: not offset by commas and clarifies the referent.
 - *Example:* The boy who was wearing the red hat shouted.
- Non-Restrictive: offset by commas and is added non-essential information.
 - *Example:* My father, who loves to play guitar, will be arriving shortly.
- Broad-Reference: instead of referring to a particular noun, it refers to the idea of the entire main clause.
 - *Example:* My daughter missed school, which concerns me.
- Note: For clarity, you can include a noun that sums up the event of the main clause.
 - *Example:* My daughter missed school, an action that concerns me.

Nominals:

Structures that function as nouns.

Appositives: follows a “something is a something” pattern. Renames information that is already given. Could fill the noun phrase on its own.

Restrictive: not offset by commas and clarifies the referent.

Example: My friend Emily likes pancakes.

Non-Restrictive: offset by commas and adds non-essential information.

Example: The principal, a former teacher, will be speaking today.

Sentence Appositive: a noun phrase that renames the entire sentence.

Example: Many people attended the school fundraiser - a huge success.

Gerunds: -ing verb that fills the position of a noun phrase. The gerund is the subject. Gerunds name actions or behaviors as the subject.

Example: Cooking for a large crowd is overwhelming.

Note: When a gerund opens a sentence, the subject of the gerund and the main clause have to match or it dangles.

Infinitives: the base form of a verb with “to”.

Example: To make assumptions is bothersome.
My friend wants to be a chef.

Nominal Clauses: “that” clauses.

- Signal to the reader that a clause is coming.
- Clarifies what is the subject.
- Turns a direct quote into indirect discourse.

Note: Nominal clauses can also be introduced by interrogatives (why, who, what)

Delayed Subjects: to make writing sound more conversational, the information in the nominal clause will be delayed and the sentence will start with an anticipatory “it”.

Example: It is widely known that teachers are hard workers.

Verbs:

Regular Verbs: are verbs that follow the standard pattern for tense structure.

Irregular Verbs: are verbs that differ in their form of past tense and past participle.

Be Verbs: has eight different verb tenses and changes form based on tense and pronoun use.

Example: I am. I will be. She has.

Auxiliary (Helping) Verbs: marks a verb, includes be, have, and will.

Examples: I am working. I have driven to school. I will go to the store.

Do-Support: converts positives into negatives, statements into questions, and adds emphasis.

Example: The family didn’t swim last night.
Did the family swim last night?
The family did swim last night.

Five Verb Forms

Verb Form	Examples
Base form	walk, break (irregular), cook
-s form	walks, breaks, cooks
Past tense	walked, broke, cooked

Past participle	walked, broken, cooked
Present participle	walking, breaking, cooking

Verb Tenses

	Present	Past	Future
Simple Basic form; not continuous or discrete	(simple present) walk, walks breaks, breaks cook, cooks	(simple past) walked broke cooked	(simple future) will walk will break will cook
Progressive continuous; is happening	(present progressive) am (is, are) walking, am (is, are) breaking, am (is, are) cooking,	(past progressive) was (were) walking was (were) breaking was (were) cooking	(future progressive) will be walking will be breaking will be cooking
Perfect actions that are finished.	(present perfect) have (has) walked have (has) broken have (has) cooked	(past perfect) had walked had broken had cooked	(future perfect) will have walked will have broken will have cooked
Perfect Progressive a completed part of a continuous action.	(present perfect progressive) have (has) been walking have (has) been broken have (has) been cooking	(past perfect progressive) had been walking had been broken had been cooking	(future perfect progressive) Will have been walking will have been broken will have been cooking

Verb Tenses: Passive Voice

	Present	Past	Future
Simple	is (are) walked on is (are) broken is (are) cooked	was (were) walked on was (were) broken was (were) cooked	will be walked on will be broken will be cooked
Progressive	is (are) being walked on is (are) being broken is (are) being cooked	was (were) being walked on was (were) being broken. was (were) being cooked.	will be walked on will be broken will be cooked

Perfect	have (has) been walked on have (has) been broken have (has) been cooked	had been walked on had been broken had been cooked	will have been walked on will have been broken will have been cooked
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Common Usage Problems

Usage problems:

a language issue that native speakers struggle to remember or is confusing.
The gap between formal, editing English and the daily, informal ways of speaking and writing

Usage Problem General Examples:

- Misconceptions about words
- Grammatical errors in a prescriptive approach to English that are different from how many people actually use language
- Similar words that are difficult to tell apart
- Differences between informal and formal uses of a word
- Differences between spoken and formal written English
- Rules about correctness that don't reflect the way that people actually use a language
- Conventions for formal written or academic English that are different from how people normally use a word or a grammatical structure
- Rules that are difficult for non-native speakers of English to learn and remember

Usage Problem Specific Examples:

Example #1:

<p>He, She, and They</p> <p><i>He/His</i>: male singular pronoun</p> <p><i>She/Hers</i>: female singular pronoun</p> <p><i>They/Them</i>: plural pronoun or singular non-binary pronouns</p> <p>It is important to use inclusive language, but the English language does not always represent the spectrum of human experience, for example the gender spectrum. In English, gender is explicit in the use of third person singular pronouns (<i>she/her, he/his</i>). Until recently, with the inclusion of <i>they/them</i> as grammatical pronouns, there were no personal pronouns to represent a person without identifying the person as explicitly male or female. As <i>they/them</i> pronouns become part of mainstream language, other aspects of grammar will be affected.</p>
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For example, the following sentences are seen as outdated and sexist.

Example: When your child attends school, make sure he has a backpack.

Alternatively, the gendered singular pronouns can be replaced with plural pronouns.

Example: When your child attends school, make sure they have a backpack.

Some people object to the use of plural pronouns stating that they are ungrammatical. However, the use of plural pronouns is becoming more widely accepted in speech and writing.

Source: [“He, She, and They”? Lexico Article](#)

Example #2:

It's or Its

It's: is always short for it is. In informal speech, it can represent “it has”.

Its: represents belonging to something else and is a possessive pronoun.

These two forms are often used interchangeably and are confusing because they both speak to possession in some form.

Example: The house has a chimney on it's roof.

In this case, “it's” would not work because if this conjunction were written out it wouldn't make sense in writing or speech.

Example: The house has a chimney on it is roof.

In this case, the roof belongs to the house so “its” would be the correct usage.

Example: The house has a chimney on its roof.

Example #3:

I.e. or E.g. I.e. originates from Latin as *id est*, meaning to ‘that is to say’ and is meant to add clarity to what has already been spoken/written or to say it another way

Example: This event requires a ticket for entry, i.e. private event.

E.g. originates from Latin as *exempli gratia*, meaning ‘for example’ and is meant to give examples

Example: The buffet included breakfast foods, e.g. bagels, cereal, and coffee.

These two abbreviations can sometimes be confused.

Online resources for grammar and style with links to websites

- Usage Problems: [Lexico Usage Library](#)

Principles of Style

Style refers to the overall impression of a piece of writing. The way an individual writes.

Clarity

Characters: Readers want concrete characters completing actions. Dense and complex writing often is the result of abstract characters, nominalizations, and passive voice usage.

Revision Guidelines:

- Underline the first seven to ten words of your sentence.
- Find main characters.
- Look for actions.
- Make sure main characters are completing the actions.

Abstractions as Characters

- Turn abstractions into virtual characters that can complete actions
- Abstractions need to be ideas that are familiar to readers.

Noun Strings:

If you have long strings of nouns, especially those with nominalizations, revise by reversing the order of the string.

Grammatical choices

Verb Tenses:

Present tense:

Using present tense to describe past events to make the action more immediate or suspenseful

Diction (word choice)

Showing versus Telling

Paying attention to “be” words and replacing them with action words.

Correlative Conjunctions: to conjunctions that are often seen together that set up expectations of contrast, comparison, and emphasis for the reader. They change rhythm and focus in the sentence. The two structures joined by correlative conjunctions should be parallel in form (two noun phrases, two prepositional phrases, two verb phrases, etc.)

They include:

Both - And Either - Or
Not Only - But Also Neither - Nor

Examples:

Both the parents and the students need to attend the meeting.

We should be concerned not only with the student's grades but also the student's behavior.

Both-And: Adds stress to the subject instead of the predicate. Adds loudness the "and".

Not Only-But: Adds stress to the "but".

Neither-Nor: Rarest form. Most emphasis.

Conjunctive Adverbs and Transitional Phrases: similar to coordinating conjunctions but with movability. Keep in mind though that where you place the connector in the sentence influences its impact. Think about when the reader needs the signal. Normally set off with commas. Without commas the stress is on the word following the conjunctive adverb. With commas the stress is on the preceding word. Choose conjunctive adverbs based on the context: formal versus informal.

Examples of Conjunctive Adverbs:

Addition: moreover, furthermore, further, also

Time: meanwhile, then, afterward, previously

Contrast: however, instead, rather

Result: therefore, consequently, thus

Concession: though

Reinforcement: indeed, nevertheless, still

Examples of Transitional Phrases:

Addition: in addition to

Time: in the meantime

Contrast: in contrast, on the contrary

Result: as a result, in the end

Concession: of course, at any rate, at least

Reinforcement: in fact, above all, in particular

The Role of Pronouns:

Personal Pronouns:

- The noun phrase is the pronoun's antecedent. It is what backs it up.
- Is known information for the reader, but the antecedent needs to be clear. In the foreground of the reader's consciousness. They need to be able to keep the characters clear inside their mind.

Possessive Pronouns:

- Link new information with old.

Demonstrative Pronouns: (this, that, those, these)

- Replace a noun phrase and can connect sentences together.
- Feature proximity in space and time.
- This and These indicate closeness.
- That and Those indicate distance.
- Watch out for broad reference - referring to a whole idea or sentence. Include a headword.

- Pay attention to “it” and “they”. Make sure they have clear antecedents.

Power Words:

- Words that convey strong emotions, are superlative, or absolute quality.
- Adjectives and adverbs preceded by another modifier.
 - Example: secretly pining, most difficult, complete chaos
- Single word adverbials
 - Hardly, also, always, seldom, barely

Syntax (sentence structure)

For Emphasis:

- Sentence length and variety. Think rhythm and feel. Short simple sentences to bring the reader’s attention to an idea. Short is clipped and faster. Longer sentences meander and seem slower. Very long sentences seem cumbersome and overwhelming.
- Using dependent clauses for stylistic reasons in personal writing.
 - Note: Avoid dependent clauses in professional and academic writing.
- Using a comma to separate sentence units connected by a coordinating conjunction to signal a slight pause.

For examples on how to shift emphasis, see pages 161-163 of *Rhetorical Grammar*.

- It-Cleft
 - It was the NURSE who administered the medication.
- What-Cleft
 - What the nurse DID was administer the MEDication.
- There-Transformation
 - There is A NURSE to administer the medication.
 -

End Focus:

- Readers are looking for sentences to have an end focus, meaning new information is placed at the end of sentences. If you are going to review known information do it at the beginning of a sentence.
- Watch for strings of short phrases that are lengthy and awkward. Edit for redundancy.

Rhythm:

- Closely tied to subject and predicate structure and the known and unknown contract. New information comes in the predicate.

Transitional Phrases and Conjunctive Adverbs:

- Interrupts the rhythm pattern.
- Puts stress on the preceding word. Shifts attention to the subject.
- Where you put these phrases determines the stress.
- Examples: of course, for example, then
 - Consider, for example, the other alternatives.

Absolute Phrases:

Adding details:

- A phrase that adds a detail to the main clause.
- Moves the reader in for a close-view. Narrowing the picture or scene.
- The main clause is the big picture. The absolute phrase the close-up.
- Adds another subject-predicate relationship to the main clause, minus the form of a tense bearing verb.
- Sends the message - Pay Attention!
 - *Example:* The snowy field lay quiet and sleeping, the bushes frozen in place.

Explaining cause or condition:

- Allows the writer to include information implicitly.
- Leaves it up to interpretation.
 - *Example:* My bike having a flat tire, I walked the whole way home.
 -

Ellipsis: Part of a sentence that is simply left out.

- A comma can signal the omission.
- Can create a tightness and crispness to a sentence or series.
 - *Example:* My first class is funny; the second, interesting; the third, boring.
- Also known as a string of periods.

The Deliberate Fragment: Adding detail without the full sentence.

- Show tentativeness.
 - *Example:* I travel home everyday along the same route. An empty winding road.

Patterns for organizing information and ideas

Parallelism: the repetition of whole structures such as phrases and clauses. Repeated elements have the same structure.

- Echoing structures from previous paragraphs and sentences.
- Sends a message to the reader that the ideas are significant and connected.
- Parts on either side of the conjunction are the same.

Example: My days consist of breakfast, lunch, and dinner interwoven between reading, writing, and reflecting.

Climax in a Series: the arrangement of the series follows an increase in length or importance. Narrows the focus of the reader or broadens it.

Example: I saw her fine clothes, the curl of her hair, the color of her lipstick.

Triplets: the satisfying sound of sets of three in writing.

The Coordinate Series: pairs and series of sentences or parts of sentences that bring attention and emphasis.

Polysyndeton:

- Placing an “and” between each word or part of a sentence.
- Puts emphasis on each item in the series with an equal beat.
- Slows down the reader.
- More formality.
 - *Example:* I will be walking and resting and walking.

Asyndeton:

- Removing the “and” and using only commas.
- Speeds up the reader.
- Suggests the list could go on and on.
 - *Example:* I will be walking, resting, walking.
 -

Word-Order Variation: Variation in the classical subject-verb-complement form.

Common in poetry.

Opening a sentence with the complement:

- Reader is not looking for it, so it can bring a lot of attention to the sentence.
- It puts stress on the verb. The verb becomes the end focus.
 - *Example:* Freely, I want to live.

Subject follows the verb rather than preceding it.

- Leaves the reader in suspense.
 - *Example:* See example in *Rhetorical Grammar*, page 131.

Shifting adjectives from their usual preheadword position.

- Puts emphasis on the subject rather than the predicate.
 - *Example:* Exhausted and frustrated, I finally arrived home.

Antithesis: putting contrasting ideas next to each other.

- Contrast sets off the emphasis.
- Enhances the positive side of the contrast.
 - *Example:* If I could walk to school I would, but I have to drive everyday.

Sentence Inversions:

- Placing adverbials at the beginning of a sentence if they repeat known information.

Shape:

- Revise for Sprawl: Check for
 - Long sentences where readers may run out of breath
 - Sentences that are constantly interrupted by clauses
 - How long the reader has to wait for a verb
 - Long, abstract subjects
 - How long it takes to get to the point

Elegance:

“The most striking feature of elegant prose is balanced sentence structure.” (Style, 119)

- Climatic Emphasis:
 - Weighty Words
 - Example: power and might, majesty, enormity
 - Of + Weighty Words
 - Example: the power and might of her actions
 - Echoing Saliency
 - When a stressed word is echoed in a later sentence.
 - Suspension
 - Holding the the climax till the end of the sentence for a big reveal.

Cohesion:

The connection between sentences and paragraphs. The flow of the text. How a piece of writing becomes a unified whole.

Reader Expectations: Readers are able to make predictions, to see what is coming. Expectations are built on what has come before, the reader's experience with the author, the title. All of these things create expectations in the reader which are not necessarily conscious.

- Read your own writing objectively. Try to hear your words as someone else would hear them.
- Do they have the prior knowledge to make sense of what is coming next?

Known-New Contract: this is what the reader knows and what the reader expects.

- Sentences stick to the topic.
- Known information usually comes first, giving the new information emphasis.
- Topic sentences are supported by details. The details prove the point.
- Using phrases to signal readers that you are shifting gears.

Repetition: provides links between sentences and paragraphs. However, repetition with no purpose = redundancy.

Lexical Cohesion: related words and synonyms throughout the text.

- Think about what words bear worth repeating or where synonyms would be better.
- Alternate phrasing for the sake of variety.

Isocolon: repetition of the same grammatical form.

Example: I will get up in the morning, get ready for school, and get out of this house.

Anaphora: repetition of an opening clause.

Example: See page 130 of *Rhetorical Grammar*

Motivation: motivating readers to move forward and helping readers know what to expect.

- Preludes: find ways to catch the attention of your reader.

- Introduction: Stating Problems: help readers see the problem as theirs. Think - So What? Why is this interesting to the reader?
 - Establish Shared Context
 - State the Problem
 - Is the problem practical or conceptual?
 - Think about subsections - breaking the problem into chunks
 - Divide the problem into conditions and costs
 - State the Solution
- Conclusion: summarize or wrap up what you have stated. End with an impactful line to bring it all together.

Global Coherence:

- Forecast Themes
 - Begin each section with a segment that states the point and shows how this point relates to the overall theme.
- Readers need to see how each section or whole is relevant to the point.
- Readers need to see how each subsection supports the whole.

Six Principles of Concision - From Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace, page 83

- Delete words that mean little or nothing.
 - Example: kind of, actually, generally
- Delete words that repeat the meaning of other words.
 - Example: full and complete, any and all
- Delete words implied by other words.
 - Example: basic fundamentals, free gift
- Replace a phrase with a word.
 - Example: As you move your body to improve your health vs. As you exercise
- Change negatives to affirmatives.
 - Example: not happy - sad
- Delete useless adjectives and adverbs.
 - Look for adjectives and adverbs before nouns. Cut what isn't essential for the reader.

Punctuation

Commas:

- Using a comma to separate sentence units connected by a coordinating conjunction to signal a slight pause.

Dash:

- The choice is intentional, not merely the error of placing a comma. Added emphasis.
- Setting off a sentence unit with a pause. Use sparingly.

Voice

The Writer's Voice:

When considering voice, consider the following questions:

1. Do your readers NEED to know who is responsible for the actions?
2. Which voice will help your readers transition smoothly from one sentence to another?
3. Which voice will give you readers a more consistent and appropriate point of view?

Active Voice:

- Using simple subjects with action verbs

Passive Voice:

- Shifts the focus of the sentence.
- Useful if you don't know the agent or is irrelevant.
- To add modifiers to the agent by placing it at the end of the sentence. This way the subject is not separated from the verb by a large phrase.
Example: Today a story was written by an author who is traveling through Europe.
- Does not have to be action free and can be an alternative to the "I" in personal writing.
Example: The fireplace radiated heat into my body.
- A way to keep known information in the subject.

Tone:

- Level of formality or informality
- Adjust tone to audience and purpose

Point of view:

- Which point of view best serves the purpose of the writing?

Ethics:

My definition for ethical writing is writing how you would like to be written to. I like this definition because it requires us to look at our writing from the reader's perspective and to consider how what we write will affect them. When we pick up a piece of writing, we are hoping that we can trust the writer - that the writer is not trying to deceive us by making some idea unnecessarily vague or complicated, that the writer is working to be inclusive in their writing so that when we pick up the page we feel like we see ourselves, that the writer's intentions are not to cause harm.

Most of my writing is written for trauma survivors and their supporters, which is a broad and diverse audience. The words I choose and the way I write about trauma is really important to the reader. Some words can feel disempowering and dismissive while other words can feel

validating and strong. My intention in writing to this community is to inform and validate their experience. It is important for me to be clear and transparent about the services and resources I suggest and to be truthful about my own experience.