

Excellence in Business Communication, 12e (Thill/Bovee)
Chapter 17 Handbook of Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage

1) Which of the following is a demonstrative pronoun?

- A) he
- B) this
- C) who
- D) anyone
- E) either

Answer: B

Explanation: B) Demonstrative pronouns such as *this*, *these*, *that*, and *those* point out particular people, places, or things. Examples include, "That is my dog" and "I looked for a broom and found this instead." Don't confuse demonstrative pronouns with demonstrative adjectives: "That dog is mine" (demonstrative adjective) vs. "That is a good dog" (demonstrative pronoun).

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Difficult

Classification: Critical Thinking

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

2) Which of the following possessive phrases is *not* correct?

- A) the team's contract with the players
- B) the teams' contract with the players
- C) its advantages to the players
- D) it's advantages to the players
- E) the plans for the team

Answer: D

Explanation: D) Apostrophes are used for all possessives except possessive pronouns.

Possessive pronouns never take apostrophes to show ownership. So *its* equals the possessive form, not *it's*.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

3) What is the tense of the verb in this sentence? "We had given Tim the money a week before he arrived."

- A) present
- B) past
- C) future
- D) past perfect
- E) auxiliary

Answer: D

Explanation: D) The perfect tenses use the auxiliary verb *have* with a past participle. The past perfect uses *have* in the simple past tense (*had*) combined with the past participle (*given*). The past perfect refers to something in the past that had occurred already at an earlier time. When Tim arrived, he already had the money.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Easy

Classification: Critical Thinking

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

4) Which of the following italicized words is an adjective?

- A) *too* dark
- B) *silent* movie
- C) *into* the theater
- D) *badly* missed
- E) *paid* in full

Answer: B

Explanation: B) An adjective is a word that modifies a noun or a pronoun. The word *silent* modifies the noun *movie*, telling you what kind of movie you have, i.e., a *silent movie*.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

5) Which of the following is a sentence fragment?

- A) The bigger they are, the harder they fall.
- B) He put the package in the mail right away.
- C) Come here.
- D) Moxie, depending on his friends for support.
- E) Try it.

Answer: D

Explanation: D) If a sentence does not have a subject and a predicate then it is a sentence fragment. "Moxie, depending on his friends for support" has a subject, Moxie, but no predicate. To change the fragment to a sentence, simply give it a predicate: Moxie *depends* on his friends for support.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Critical Thinking

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

6) What is the problem with this sentence? "We can give him a small raise, he deserves it."

- A) comma splice
- B) sentence fragment
- C) dangling modifier
- D) excessive infinitives
- E) incorrect participles

Answer: A

Explanation: A) A sentence with a comma splice uses a comma to separate two independent clauses. To correct a comma splice, insert a period and make two sentences: *We can give him a small raise. He deserves it.* You can also use a semicolon to correct a comma splice: *We gave him a small raise; he deserves it.*

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

7) Which one of the following punctuation marks is used to separate a dependent clause at the beginning of a sentence from the rest of the sentence?

- A) semicolon
- B) colon
- C) comma
- D) dash
- E) hyphen

Answer: C

Explanation: C) Here is an example of a comma separating a dependent clause from the main clause of a sentence: *Although we were late, the game was still going on.* The dependent clause, *Although we were late*, cannot stand on its own as an independent sentence. The main clause, *the game was still going on*, can stand on its own, so it is an independent sentence. The comma separates the two clauses and forms a complete sentence.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Difficult

Classification: Conceptual

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

8) Which of the following terms should *not* be hyphenated?

- A) The relationship was long-term.
- B) We had a long-term relationship.
- C) That is one self-confident politician.
- D) I introduced her as my ex-wife.
- E) Please meet my mother-in-law.

Answer: A

Explanation: A) When a compound adjective comes before the noun it modifies, it should be hyphenated as in *long-term relationship*. When the phrase comes after the noun, it should not be hyphenated: The relationship was *long term*.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Difficult

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

9) In the following sentence, which word should *not* be capitalized? "After talking with President Hilda Bruckner, Morton decided that the Insurance industry would provide a suitable career for someone who was a graduate of the Department of Business at Gable University."

- A) Department
- B) President
- C) Gable
- D) Insurance
- E) University

Answer: D

Explanation: D) *President* is capitalized because it is a title of a person. *Hilda Bruckner* is capitalized because it is a proper noun, the name of a person. The *Department of Business* is capitalized because it identifies an official organization. *Gable University* is capitalized because it is a proper noun and the name of an institution. *Insurance* is neither a proper noun nor the name of something. It is an ordinary adjective, so it should not be capitalized.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

10) Which of the following words is misspelled?

- A) accomodate
- B) exaggerate
- C) occurrence
- D) receive
- E) forth

Answer: A

Explanation: A) The word *accommodate* has two *m*'s.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

11) The plural of "son-in-law" is "sons-in-law," but the possessive is "son-in-law's."

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: The plural of a compound hyphenated construction goes on the first word: *sons-in-law*. The possessive form of a compound hyphenated construction goes on the last word: *son-in-law's*.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

12) The pronoun "who" is in the nominative case; the pronoun "whom" is in the objective case.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: The nominative case is typically the subject of a sentence. Consider this sentence: *Who* likes the Yankees? The word *Who* is in the nominative case because it is used as a subject. The objective case is used when the word is an object of a verb or preposition. Consider this sentence: Darla is the friend for *whom* we are waiting. *Whom* is in the objective case because it is the object of the preposition *for*.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Critical Thinking

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

13) The verb "do" is an example of a regular verb.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: A regular verb can be conjugated in a standard way, such as *talk*: *I talk*. *He talks*. *They talk*. *She talked* yesterday. The verb *do* is irregular because it doesn't follow a regular verb pattern: *I do*. *He does*. *They do*. *She did* yesterday. As you can see, both the present and past have unusual, or irregular, formations.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

14) The difference between "lie" and "lay" is that "lie" is an intransitive verb and "lay" is a transitive verb.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: Transitive verbs can take an object: *I lay the blanket down*. The *blanket* is the object in the previous sentence. The word *lie* is intransitive; it cannot take an object: *I lie on the bed*. In the previous sentence, there is no object.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

15) Many adverbs are formed by adding "-ly" to adjectives.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: Adverbs that are formed by adding "-ly" include the following: *quiet, quietly; soft, softly; quick, quickly; sudden, suddenly*; and *complete, completely*. Adverbs that do not use the "-ly" form include *early, fast, well, and hard*.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Easy

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

16) A linking verb is always followed by a noun, pronoun, or adjective.

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: Examples of linking verbs include *Paul is a man* (linking verb *is* followed by noun *man*). *Jan seems tired* (linking verb *seems* followed by adjective *tired*).

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Conceptual

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

17) A semicolon is used to separate independent clauses when the second clause begins with a conjunctive adverb such as "however" or "therefore."

Answer: TRUE

Explanation: In the following sentence, two independent clauses are separated by a semicolon that is followed by *however*: *The hour is late; however, I am not sleepy*. Note that the conjunctive adverb, *however*, is separated from the clause that follows with a comma.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

18) You should include a comma when a date consists only of the month and year.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: To express a date of "June 1966" you don't need to place a comma between the month and the year.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Conceptual

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

19) Punctuation goes inside quotation marks if the whole sentence is quoted but outside the quotation marks if only the last part of the sentence is a quote.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: Punctuation should be placed inside of the quotation marks in most cases, for example: It became clear to me that "money doesn't grow on trees." The punctuation goes outside of quotation marks only in specific situations, as when the sentence is a question but the quotation is not a question: Why are people always telling me to "take it easy"?

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Conceptual

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages

20) The following sentence uses all words correctly: She was disinterested in paying me a complement.

Answer: FALSE

Explanation: The word *disinterested* means unbiased; it should be replaced by *uninterested*. When you say something nice, you pay someone a *compliment*, not a *complement*. A *complement* refers to an addition that makes something complete.

AACSB: Written and oral communication

Difficulty: Moderate

Classification: Application

Learning Outcome: Compose and shape business messages