

## LEARN IT: Tone and Meaning in Poetry

**Tone** is the poet's attitude toward a subject. The tone of a poem, for example, may be bitter, eerie, joyful, regretful, ironic, serious, or light. Determining the tone can help you explore the poem's meaning or identify the message, or theme. To convey tone, poets use a variety of techniques including word choice, line length, rhythm, and punctuation.

### Word Choice

Poets carefully choose each word in a poem. Certain words are rich in connotations, or emotional suggestions. These words provide clues about the tone, or the poet's attitude about the subject of the poem.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read these lines from a poem.

The way ahead is long for me / And the road is bare and dark.

**Which words from the poem suggest that the tone is gloomy?**

- A bare, dark
- B way, me
- C ahead, long
- D long, road

**Step 1** Read the lines carefully and infer the situation described in the poem.

*The speaker is on a journey and describes the road ahead.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully. Which words make you feel gloomy?

*Choice A has a negative effect on me. Bareness and darkness make me feel gloomy. The other choices do not have this kind of effect, so choice A is the correct answer.*

## Line Length, Rhythm, and Punctuation

The lengths of the lines in a poem, as well as their punctuation, determine how the poem sounds when read aloud. Also, the rhythm of a poem—for example, hurried, plodding, or regular—can give clues about the tone.

### EXAMPLE

**2** Read these lines from the poem “Spring” by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

*To what purpose, April, do you return again?  
Beauty is not enough.*

**What is the effect of the short answer that follows the long question?**

- A The speaker sounds joyful and excited.
- B The speaker sounds bored and uninterested.
- C The speaker sounds hesitant and cautious.
- D The speaker sounds certain and confident.

**Step 1** Read the lines aloud to yourself. What happens to your voice when you move from the long question to the short answer?

*My voice typically goes higher at the end of a question. The short answer that follows has a strong, regular beat that contrasts with the longer, wordier question.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which one matches the sound of your voice when you read the lines aloud?

*Perhaps if the shorter line had ended with an exclamation point, it would have sounded joyful and excited. As it is written, however, answer choice A does not seem correct. The second line’s strong, even beat does not sound bored and uninterested, nor does it sound hesitant and cautious. Such a short, quick answer suggests that the speaker is confident and certain that the answer is right. D must be the correct answer choice*

In addition to the techniques already mentioned, poets use other techniques to convey tone. The following chart lists some of the key ones.

Ways to Convey Tone	How It Works	Example
<b>Figurative Language</b>	Imaginative descriptions are used to create vivid, memorable images. Words are used in ways that go beyond their literal meanings.	The phrase “A silence so thick you can cut it with a knife” does not literally mean silence is something thick that you can cut. Instead, it creates a strong image in the reader’s mind; the thick silence and the sharp knife convey a mysterious, suspenseful tone.
<b>Repetition</b>	Repeated words or lines affect readers in different ways, depending on whether the repeated words are positive, negative, or neutral. Repeated lines can emphasize an idea, create a pleasant, song-like refrain, or even indicate a change in perspective.	Coleridge’s “Rime of the Ancient Mariner” uses repetition in several memorable ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coleridge emphasizes the lack of water in these lines: Water, water, everywhere, And all the boards did shrink; Water, water, everywhere Nor any drop to drink.</li> <li>• Coleridge signals a change in perspective from the sea to the deck in these lines: I look’d upon the rotting sea, And drew my eyes away; I look’d upon the rotting deck, And there the dead men lay.</li> </ul>
<b>Rhyme</b>	Repeated vowel and consonant sounds in a poem can also create different effects and contribute to the tone.	In Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Bells,” the crisp, tinkling rhymes create a merry tone that sounds like ringing bells: “While the stars that oversprinkle All the heavens, seem to twinkle With a crystalline delight . . .”

# PRACTICE IT: Tone and Meaning in Poetry

**Directions:** Read the poem and answer the questions that follow.

## Wild Nights

*By Emily Dickinson*

Wild nights! Wild nights!  
Were I with thee,  
Wild nights should be  
Our luxury!

5 Futile the winds  
To a heart in port,—  
Done with the compass,  
Done with the chart.

10 Rowing in Eden!  
Ah! the sea!  
Might I but moor  
To-night in thee!

**1** Which mark of punctuation does the poet use to express strong emotions?

- A an exclamation point
- B a dash
- C a comma
- D a period

**2** Read these lines from the poem.

Done with the compass, / Done with the chart.

**Why does the poet use repetition?**

- A to express a change in the speaker's feelings
- B to create a song-like refrain
- C to emphasize the importance of the chart and compass to love
- D to express that the speaker abandons logic for the sake of love

**3** Which words convey strong feelings in the first stanza?

- A were, I
- B wild, nights
- C with, should
- D thee, be

**4** How does the poet achieve a tone of longing in the last stanza?

- A She imitates the sound of sighing.
- B She does not use figurative language.
- C She uses a variety of punctuation.
- D She does not use rhymes.



## LEARN IT: Speaker and Point of View

Being able to identify the **speaker** and **point of view** will help you figure out who is narrating the literary work. This, in turn, will allow you to better understand what is happening in the text.

### Identify the Speaker

The **speaker** is the voice that communicates with the reader. Sometimes the speaker's voice is that of the author, and sometimes it is the voice of a character that can be either inside or outside the literary work.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read the passage.

My Uncle Harry is an incredible person. He lived in Zaire, a country in Africa, for four years, teaching English to high school students. He plays three musical instruments and is now taking tuba lessons. He taught himself how to sew and makes almost all the clothes he wears. Last weekend he wore a polka-dotted shirt that he had made out of the curtains that once hung in his kitchen. He volunteers at the local hospital, reading mail and newspapers to patients. When one patient told him how much she missed being outside, he brought her a handful of blooming flowers. She was so thrilled that tears came to her eyes. My uncle is wonderful, and I love him.

Who is *most likely* the speaker of this passage?

- A Uncle Harry
- B Uncle Harry's niece or nephew
- C the patient
- D the hospital patient

**Step 1** Read the passage. What information does it give about the speaker?

*The passage tells us that the speaker has an uncle named Harry who has done many interesting things in his life, such as teaching in a foreign country and reading to hospital patients.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices. Which choice matches what the passage tells us about the speaker?

*If the passage is about the speaker's Uncle Harry, then the speaker cannot be Uncle Harry. Instead, the speaker must be the niece or nephew of Uncle Harry. B is correct.*

## Recognize Point of View

**Points of view** include the following:

- 1) **First-person point of view:** A narrative with a first-person point of view is told by one of the characters, using first-person pronouns such as *I*, *my*, and *me*.
- 2) **Third-person limited point of view:** The story is told by a narrator who focuses on a single character, using third-person pronouns such as *he* and *her*.
- 3) **Third-person objective point of view:** The speaker tells only what is happening in the story and does not tell what the characters are feeling or thinking.
- 4) **Third-person omniscient point of view:** In this point of view, the speaker is able to tell what every character is feeling or thinking.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read the passage below.

For show-and-tell, Kelly told our class how much she likes the color green. When she was a baby in her crib, she clutched her lime-green polar bear and ignored the stuffed animals that were white or blue. Now, at twelve, Kelly prefers to eat salads and kiwi fruit, always choosing green food on a menu. When she grows up, Kelly wants to drive a green car, live in a green house, and visit Greenland. I think that's cool.

**From which point of view is the passage narrated?**

- A first-person
- B third-person limited
- C third-person omniscient
- D third-person objective

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully and look for information about the narrator.

*The narrator is talking about the main character, Kelly. The narrator describes the actions that reveal how much Kelly likes the color green.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully. List the reasons that an answer choice may or may not be the correct answer.

*Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because the narrator uses the first-person pronouns *our* and *I* to narrate the passage. Choice A is correct.*

## PRACTICE IT: Speaker and Point of View

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

### The Painter's Pupil

- 1 Marie's family lived in the house of the great painter Pablo Perez. Her father worked in Perez's kitchen as the chef. One day, Marie's father asked her to go to the pantry to get some flour. To her surprise, Marie found that she could hear everything that Mr. Perez said through the thin wall of the closet. He was conducting an art class in his studio. Marie took the flour to her father and then quickly returned to the pantry to listen.
- 2 Mr. Perez loved to teach. He told his students how to use light and shadow in their painting, how to make figures in their pictures appear closer or farther away, and how to make them seem more lifelike. That night, Marie lay awake in her bed, thinking about all that Mr. Perez had said. She wanted to try painting too.
- 3 "Dad, may I have some paint?" Marie asked at breakfast the next morning.
- 4 Marie's father was uncertain. "Paints are expensive, Marie," he said. "We might manage some for your next birthday, though." Marie was disappointed. Her birthday was months away. Marie's silence caught her father's attention. He joined Marie at the table.
- 5 "I'm sorry, Marie." He said. "I know that you would like them right now, but—" Marie's father stopped in the middle of his sentence. He hated to see his daughter disappointed.
- 6 "I had forgotten about this," he said as he returned to the table with the dusty volume.
- 7 "I don't believe it!" Marie laughed when she saw the title: *101 Paint Recipes*.

**1** Who is the narrator of the passage?

- A Marie
- B Marie's father
- C Mr. Pablo Perez
- D an outside narrator

**2** From what point of view is the passage narrated?

- A first-person
- B third-person objective
- C third-person limited
- D third-person omniscient

**3** Based on the point of view of the passage, this passage would *most* likely be found in

- A a biography of Marie.
- B an autobiography of Marie.
- C an autobiography of Marie's father.
- D an autobiography of Pablo Perez.

**4** Which sentence from the passage shows Marie's thoughts or feelings?

- A Marie's family lived in the house of the great painter Pablo Perez.
- B Mr. Perez loved to teach.
- C To her surprise, Marie found that she could hear everything that Mr. Perez said through the thin wall of the closet.
- D Marie took the flour to her father and then quickly returned to the pantry to listen.

## LEARN IT: Identify Theme: Realism and Fantasy

The **theme** is the main idea of a story, poem, novel, or play. Some works have a stated theme. More frequently, the theme is not stated but is revealed gradually through the story's characters and their thoughts and actions.

### EXAMPLE

#### 1 Read the passage.

Carol was playing in the park with her best friend, Mimi, when they saw a book lying in the bushes. Carol picked it up, and she immediately noticed the seal of the public library on its front page. "Somebody lost a book!" Mimi exclaimed. "Come on, we should go return it to the library," Carol said. Mimi agreed, and the two friends set off for the library.

**In the passage, it is clear that the author wants readers to think it is good**

- A to return lost things.
- B to find lost things at the park.
- C to keep lost things for yourself.
- D to throw away lost things.

**Step 1** Read the example passage carefully. What did Carol say to Mimi when they found the book?

*Carol told Mimi that they should return the book to the library, and Mimi agreed.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice carefully. Which of the choices best describes the actions of the characters?

*Carol and Mimi's returning a lost book to the library gives me the idea that it is good to return lost things. Answers C and D do not describe the actions of the characters in the story. Regarding Answer B, even though they did find the lost book, the more important part of the story is their decision about what to do with it. I know that the correct answer is A.*

**Realism**

A work of **realism** involves characters, plots, and settings that are familiar to real life.

**EXAMPLE****2** Read this passage.

Gabria's mom was still at work when Gabria saw the lightning shoot wildly across the sky. Gabria loved to watch the rain, but when she heard a loud clap of thunder, she trembled. Gabria went to the window to watch the storm approach.

Gabria started checking all the windows to make sure they were closed. In the kitchen, Gabria found an open window. The floor underneath it was soaked. She closed the window and went to look for a mop. She hoped that none of the windows in the house were leaking.

Just then, Gabria remembered that her mother had noticed a crack at the bottom of one of the basement walls when they were playing table tennis last week. Gabria knew she should try to do something to keep the water from coming through the crack. If enough water got through the crack, the basement could flood. She ran down the stairs to the basement. Her mother had left some rags there. Gabria crammed some rags into the crack in the wall.

It looked like no water was coming in. Gabria was relieved. Just then, she heard her mother's car pulling into the driveway. Gabria got to the top of the stairs as her mother opened the front door. "Gabria, sweetheart! Are you okay?" Her mom dropped her bags and started heading toward the basement to check on the crack. "I thought you'd be swimming in here by now!"

"I'm fine, Mom," Gabria said as she followed her mother to the basement. "Let me show you how I blocked the crack in the wall!"

**The author makes this passage realistic by**

- A showing a girl using mysterious powers to stop a flood.
- B illustrating the animal-like qualities of a storm.
- C describing a lifelike problem and solution.
- D depicting a house making sounds that cannot be explained.

**Step 1** Review the definition of *realism*. What is the plot of this passage?

*The passage is about Gabria trying to prevent the basement from flooding.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which answer best conveys an idea or action that is an example of realism?

*A girl using mysterious powers to stop a flood would be unrealistic. A storm acting like an animal doesn't happen in real life. A house that makes strange sounds that cannot be explained is also not the best example of realism. The correct answer is C because the passage describes a lifelike problem and its solution.*

## Fantasy

A work of **fantasy** usually involves the creation of a world where magic rules. Creatures such as dragons and elves populate this world together with human characters who may have superhuman powers. Fantasy stories can express the reader's own desire to travel to such lands. Although they are not set in the real world, fantasies often express themes similar to those in realistic stories.

### EXAMPLE

#### 1 Read this passage.

As he was heading to school, Erwin noticed that his schoolbag had a little rip on the side. Erwin loved going to school, and he did not want to miss a school day over such a small problem. "It's just a little rip," he said to himself. With his schoolbag held close to his chest, he stretched out his magnificently feathered wings and glided through the air, excited to attend classes.

**Which part of this passage indicates that it is fantasy?**

- A Erwin notices that his bag has a rip in it.
- B Erwin heads to school.
- C Erwin holds his bag to his chest.
- D Erwin glides through the air on his wings.

**Step 1** Read the definition of *fantasy* again. Fantasy involves human characters who often have unusual powers. Does Erwin have unusual powers?

*The passage describes Erwin spreading his feathered wings and flying.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices. Which answer best conveys something fantastical?

*Noticing a bag with a rip in it, heading to school, and holding a bag to one's chest are all ordinary happenings. Erwin's gliding through the air, however, is unusual and fantastic. The correct answer is D.*

# PRACTICE IT: Identify Theme: Realism and Fantasy

## Making Music

Glenda was a shy child. She loved playing the piano, but she never dared to perform in front of an audience. She practiced every day, but she always practiced alone.

Unknown to her, a group of elves started listening in on her practice sessions. They loved how she played, and they praised her performance among themselves.

One Saturday afternoon, the elves heard Glenda play such a beautiful piece that they came out from their hiding place and exclaimed, “Marvelous! Magnificent! Brava!”

Glenda stared at the elves in disbelief. “You were listening to me play? Oh, no!”

“But you played so well!” the tall elf replied.

“Really, I’m good?” Glenda asked them.

“Yes!” cried the elves in unison.

Glenda closed her eyes and started playing her favorite piece, a song about friends. Her hands seemed to take on a life of their own; they glided over the keys, making melodious notes. When Glenda opened her eyes, the elves were gone, and her piano teacher stood in front of her. “My dear, you are ready for a recital!” the teacher exclaimed.

**1** Which event is realistic?

- A Glenda plays the piano for the elves.
- B The elves exclaim, “Marvelous! Magnificent! Bravo!”
- C Glenda’s piano teacher stands in front of her.
- D Glenda befriends the elves.

**2** Which event is fantastic?

- A Glenda practices piano.
- B Glenda closes her eyes.
- C Glenda opens her eyes.
- D Glenda stares at the elves in disbelief.

**3** Which sentence below *best* expresses this passage’s theme?

- A Shyness can be lonely.
- B Encouragement can help people succeed.
- C Playing the piano is very difficult.
- D Imaginary friends can help.

**4** Which of the following actions suggest a theme similar to the one in the story?

- A A child learns how to ride a bike while her parents cheer her on.
- B A man goes grocery shopping but forgets his wallet.
- C A woman mows her lawn, even though she doesn’t want to.
- D A boy eats too much birthday cake and gets sick.



## LEARN IT: Literary Devices

Authors use **literary devices** to present ideas in fresh and original ways. Understanding literary devices and their effects on meaning can help you get more out of your reading. Literary devices include **metaphors, similes, and symbols**.

### Metaphors

A **metaphor** is an expression that compares two unlike things. In contrast to a simile, a metaphor states a comparison directly; therefore, there is no use of the words *like* and *as*.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read these sentences.

Brian is always hungry, yet he never gains weight. His stomach is a bottomless pit.

**What is the purpose of the metaphor used in the second sentence?**

- A to suggest that Brian is a big eater
- B to point out that Brian hardly eats
- C to help the reader understand that Brian represents a bottomless pit
- D to indicate that Brian's stomach is an actual bottomless pit

**Step 1** Read the sentences carefully and determine the metaphor used.

*Brian's stomach is compared to a bottomless pit. That must be the metaphor.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully. Which explains why the metaphor was used?

*Brian, himself, is not being compared to a bottomless pit, so choice C is incorrect. Choice D is incorrect because Brian doesn't literally have a bottomless pit for a stomach. Choice B implies the opposite of the metaphor. Choice A must be correct since the metaphor suggests that Brian's stomach never gets full.*

## Similes

A **simile** uses *as* or *like* to compare two unlike things. The phrase “a person who runs like the wind” is a simile that means a person runs quickly.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read the sentence.

The great warrior fought like a tiger.

**The simile in this sentence suggests that the warrior**

- A fought without courage.
- B fought fiercely.
- C fought without passion.
- D used several weapons.

**Step 1** Read the sentence carefully. What two things are compared?

*The warrior’s fighting is compared to a tiger’s fighting. The word like tells me that a simile is being used.*

**Step 2** Ask yourself, How might a great warrior’s fighting be similar to a tiger’s fighting? Which answer choice shows this similarity?

*A great warrior would fight with both courage and passion, so Choices A and C cannot be correct. A tiger would not use several weapons, so Choice D cannot be correct. Since a great warrior and a tiger can fight fiercely, Choice B must be the answer.*

## Symbols

When a person, a place, an object, or an action represents something else, it becomes a **symbol**. Readers must figure out what a symbol stands for by examining how it is used in a work. A tree may be a symbol for life. A mountain may be a symbol for strength. An island may be a symbol for loneliness.

### EXAMPLE

#### 3 Read this passage.

All this time, she had been a shy little girl hiding in the corner of the room. Now she has grown into a beautiful young woman filled with confidence. In the mornings, I see her in the garden admiring the flowers. It is spring. After a long wait, the flowers are in bloom.

**The flowers in bloom could *best* represent**

- A the season of spring.
- B the shy girl's change into a confident woman.
- C the way the little girl admires the garden.
- D the literal observations of the speaker.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What is the situation that is being described? How is this situation related to the flowers in bloom?

*The speaker is describing a young girl who used to be shy but has now developed into a confident young woman. She is admiring the flowers, which once were seeds but now have bloomed.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices. Which answer choice best connects the flowers in bloom to the situation you just described?

*Flowers bloom in the season of spring, but this answer choice leaves out the young woman, so A cannot be right. The young woman, not the little girl, is admiring the garden, so C cannot be right. The literal observations of the speaker include the flowers, but the speaker focuses mainly on the young woman, so D cannot be right. B is correct because both the shy girl and the flowers in bloom have undergone beautiful changes.*

## PRACTICE IT: Literary Devices

The clouds float in the horizon. They are big balls of white cotton candy in the sky. It seems to me that clouds have not a care in the world. They just float and drift wherever the wind may take them. Lying here in the grass, I watch them float above me, and I wish my life were also free of cares. But then I hear my mother calling me to finish my chores. Her call is like the blare of a horn or a siren. And my daydream is popped like a bubble.

**1** Read this sentence from the passage.

And my daydream is popped like a bubble.

The sentence contains an example of

- A metaphor.
- B simile.
- C symbol.
- D allegory.

**2** The clouds could *best* represent the speaker's

- A desire for a carefree life.
- B need to finish the chores.
- C wish to relax in the grass.
- D taste for cotton candy.

**3** Read this sentence.

They are big balls of white cotton candy in the sky.

What is the purpose of the metaphor used in this sentence?

- A to symbolize the narrator's life
- B to describe how the cloud might taste
- C to help readers visualize how the clouds look
- D to give the clouds human qualities

**4** In this passage, what is both loud and disruptive?

- A the daydream
- B the wind
- C the mother's call
- D the speaker's life

## LEARN IT: Form and Purpose

**Form** refers to the type, shape, or construction of a written work. Different forms of writing can include personal letters, letters to the editor of a newspaper or magazine, poems, reports, reviews, and narratives. Each form of writing has a different **purpose**.

The following are some of the most common forms of writing and their purposes:

Form of Writing	Purpose
Journal	to record personal observations, descriptions, solutions, and questions
Diary	to recall personal impressions and to express personal feelings; usually not meant to be shared with others
Essay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative Essay</li> <li>• Expository Essay</li> <li>• Persuasive Essay</li> <li>• Descriptive Essay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Narrative Essay:</b> to tell a nonfiction narrative that may express the author's feelings and opinions; typically written using first-person pronouns</li> <li>• <b>Expository Essay:</b> to explain or investigate an idea or to evaluate evidence.</li> <li>• <b>Persuasive Essay:</b> to state an opinion supported with factual evidence, examples, and logical reasoning, and to convince a reader to accept an argument</li> <li>• <b>Descriptive Essay:</b> to give a detailed portrayal of an object, person, place, experience, emotion, or situation so readers can see, hear, smell, taste, or feel the subject being described</li> </ul>
Report	to inform readers about a topic by presenting factual evidence or researched information
Review	to evaluate a work, such as a book or a film, pointing out its good and bad qualities
Letter to the Editor	to respond to an article published in a previous issue of a newspaper or magazine
Personal Letter	to share personal feelings or thoughts with another person

**EXAMPLE****1** Read the following sentences.

Seth researched the different endangered species that can be found only in the Hawaiian Islands. He read several books and researched reliable Web sites. He recorded the factual information that he learned from these sources.

**If Seth wants to inform his classmates about what he has learned, he should write a**

- A personal letter.
- B report.
- C letter to the editor.
- D review.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. Look for key words that can be associated with the answer choices.

*Some key words in the passage include the words researched and learned. These words indicate that Seth's writing will be informative and based on facts.*

**Step 2** Now look at the answer choices. Think of the purpose of each form of writing in the choices. Which answer choice matches the key words from the passage?

*A personal letter contains the thoughts and feelings of a person. A report is based on researched information. A letter to the editor is a response to something that has previously been published in a newspaper or magazine. A review analyzes and evaluates something that someone else has created. B is the best answer because Seth researched the Hawaiian Islands and the different endangered species that can be found only there and needs to explain what he learned about those topics.*

Each form of writing has a specific **purpose**. Readers can identify the purpose of a passage by asking what the author of that passage is trying to accomplish. Look for key words that can help you figure out the message that the author wants to convey to his or her readers through a particular form of writing.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read the following passage.

Dear Diary,

July 17, 2007

I wish I could make it clear to everyone just how much I love bike racing. Everywhere I go, every time I step up to the podium for my trophy and hear the announcer call me “the winning girl on the BMX circuit,” my heart gleams like the shine of a trophy.

Even more, I can’t describe or explain how it feels to ask my legs for power and get it! I never want to lose the feeling or forget it.

**The purpose of this passage is to**

- A educate people about the basics of bicycle racing.
- B explain how to ride a bicycle.
- C inform the reader that the author has won a race.
- D recall the author’s personal feelings and thoughts about bike racing.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What form of writing is the author using?

*I noticed that the author is addressing her diary. This must make this passage a diary entry.*

**Step 2** Now look at the answer choices. Which choice best describes the author’s purpose in writing a diary entry?

*Choice D is the best answer because the author is trying to recall her personal feelings and thoughts about bike racing. The author also describes how she feels about winning a race.*

## PRACTICE IT: Form and Purpose

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

Everyone should keep a journal. We all need a place to put our thoughts and feelings. It's like having a special friend to whom you can confide your activities, your ideas, and your dreams. A journal is always there for you. Unlike a person, it listens without even interrupting. After you have written in it for hours, it simply says, "Here are more blank pages. Please, go on!" I know some people may not agree with me. However, I highly recommend keeping a journal.

**1** Which term *best* describes this passage?

- A persuasive essay.
- B narrative essay.
- C review.
- D poem.

**2** The purpose of this passage is to

- A acknowledge a complaint.
- B convince readers of an idea.
- C reject an idea.
- D praise someone.

**3** Which sentence from the passage does *not* help the author achieve his or her purpose?

- A Everyone should keep a journal.
- B We all need a place to put our thoughts and feelings.
- C I know some people may not agree with me.
- D However, I highly recommend keeping a journal.

**4** If the author wants to tell a friend from a different city about his or her journal, he/she should write a

- A news story
- B factual report
- C journal entry
- D personal letter



## LEARN IT: Expository Compositions

There are several forms of **expository compositions**, including comparison and contrast, cause and effect, analysis, and evaluation. Whatever its form, a piece of expository writing seeks to explain or give information about a concept, a thing, a person, or an event.

### EXAMPLE

#### 1 Read this passage.

Earthquakes are awful events. In just a few seconds, people may be killed by collapsing buildings. Injured people may be trapped for many days in the debris of a quake. Surprisingly, these victims sometimes survive. For rescuers, finding people and getting them out of the wreckage is a race against time. A major earthquake makes rescue difficult and dangerous. Rescue workers themselves sometimes become victims of earthquakes.

Rescuers use several methods to locate people in emergency situations. Special dogs are trained to find people. Thermal-image cameras use infrared radiation to quickly and accurately detect the heat of a living person's body. "Trapped-person locators" use electrodes placed in debris to detect vibrations made by people in the rubble. In general, all three methods of detection are used, but the thermal-image camera is the most reliable device and the one most widely used by rescuers.

#### The author's purpose is to

- A tell a moving story about the rescuers' bravery during earthquakes.
- B teach people about safety measures to take during earthquakes.
- C convince readers that rescuers should be praised for their efforts.
- D give information about earthquake rescue methods and technology.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What kind of writing is it? What is it about?

*It is a passage filled with information about the different ways rescuers look for people trapped in rubble during earthquakes.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which choice best shows the author's purpose for writing the passage?

*I think the author's purpose is to give facts about the way rescuers find trapped people during earthquakes. It does not tell a story, nor does it teach people anything about safety procedures, so Choices A and B are not correct. Choice C also cannot be correct because the passage does not give opinions or try to convince readers of anything. Choice D is correct because it best describes the purpose of an expository passage, which is to give information about a topic.*

The entire expository composition and its paragraphs are organized around a **main idea**, which is stated in a **topic sentence**. The topic sentence usually comes at either the beginning or the end of the very first paragraph. This first paragraph should also state the author's purpose and immediately grab the reader's interest.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read the passage.

Every year, the whole family gathers together to have a touch football game on Thanksgiving morning. We play on a wide-open field in the park in my neighborhood. My uncle takes pride in his defense; he jokes that no one has scored against him in all the years we've played.

Which sentence is *best* added to the beginning of the passage?

- A I scored a touchdown while my uncle was defending me.
- B On Thanksgiving all of my family members eat at my house.
- C Watching football on Thanksgiving is a family tradition.
- D Playing football on Thanksgiving is a family tradition.

**Step 1** Read the passage. What is it about?

*The passage is about how the narrator's family gets together every Thanksgiving to have a touch football game.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which of the choices best states the main idea of the passage?

*Choice A does not give the main idea of the passage because it is just a minor detail about the family's football games. Choices B and C are not correct because they are about ideas that are never mentioned in the passage. B is about eating and C is about watching football. The answer choice that best reflects the main idea of the passage and that grabs the reader's attention is the last one, Playing football on Thanksgiving is a family tradition. The rest of the passage supports this idea by giving details about the field where they play and the narrator's uncle, who takes pride in his defense. D is the correct answer.*

An expository composition's main idea must be supported by details. Each additional paragraph after the first paragraph should focus on one or more of these **supporting details** in order to help explain or elaborate upon the main idea. These details can also paint a picture in the reader's mind about what the author is explaining. The final paragraph of the essay is the **conclusion**; it often takes the form of a detailed summary of everything the author has said.

### EXAMPLE

#### 3 Read the following passage.

Ronnie is a very talented actor. Every year, he aces auditions and is the favorite of the teachers in the Drama Department. His performances are terrific. To keep himself sharp and well-conditioned for any show, he makes sure that he gets enough sleep every night and eats a well-balanced diet. He also takes vitamins and jogs every morning to keep in tip-top shape.

Which sentence *best* serves as a summary to be added to the end of the passage?

- A Ronnie is a good example to all students.
- B Ronnie is admired by his drama teachers.
- C Ronnie is very committed to his acting.
- D Ronnie is always able to perform well.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What is it about?

*The passage says that Ronnie is a very talented actor. He takes good care of himself. He is disciplined so he can perform well onstage.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which summary is supported by the details in the passage?

*The best summary of the details in the passage is Choice C, Ronnie is very committed to his acting. Choice B only repeats one of the details that supports the passage's main idea. Choices A and D are not necessarily true. The passage never claims that Ronnie is a good example to all students or that he always gives a good performance. The best answer is C.*

# PRACTICE IT: Expository Compositions

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

## Three Teachers

- 1 My school has three sixth-grade teachers: Ms. Axel, Mr. Boyer, and Ms. Corwin.
- 2 Ms. Axel stands tall and lean and has long black hair. When she was in college, she was a fast sprinter and competed at track meets. Ms. Axel still runs several times a week. I often see her in the park, sprinting. She lifts weights at the gym and is always eager to try something new. Last summer she went to Alaska by herself.
- 3 Mr. Boyer has short hair, wears glasses, and likes to hide under a big hat. He started writing poetry when he was a little boy and has even published some of his poems in magazines. He wakes up at five every morning and writes for two hours before coming to work. He also volunteers at the local community center to help others.
- 4 Ms. Corwin just came to our school this year. She grew up on a farm in Nebraska and loves to ride horses. She told us that when she was a little girl, she and her family came across a bear as they hiked. She drives a big pickup truck to school and says “howdy.” She is a whiz at math and science, taught herself physics, and reads three books a week.
- 5 The three sixth-grade teachers at my school are all special. I’ll miss them very much when the school year ends.

**1** Read this sentence from paragraph 2.

Ms. Axel still runs several times a week.

**The author supports this statement by saying that**

- A Ms. Axel is a fast sprinter.
- B Ms. Axel stands tall and lean.
- C Ms. Axel sprints in the park.
- D Ms. Axel lifts weights.

**2** Which detail supports the idea that Mr. Boyer loves to write?

- A He wears glasses and a big hat.
- B He wakes up early to write.
- C He reads three books a week.
- D He volunteers at the center.

**3** Which sentence would *best* enhance the end of the first paragraph?

- A Each teacher is special and has unique qualities.
- B Ms. Corwin is the brainiest teacher in the sixth grade.
- C Ms. Axel and Mr. Boyer have been around for a long time.
- D I haven’t decided which of them is my favorite teacher.

**4** The student wrote this report

- A to share information about his teachers.
- B to keep in touch with his teachers.
- C to tell a heartwarming story.
- D to convince the reader that his teachers are the best.

## LEARN IT: Organizational Patterns

There are many different ways to organize a composition. The structure a writer follows to organize his or her ideas is called an **organizational pattern**. Organizational patterns are very useful because they present information or ideas in a systematic and coherent order, making it easier for readers to follow. There are several different types of organizational patterns. Some of the most common are explained in the table below. A writer may use different patterns within a single composition to structure individual paragraphs.

Organizational Pattern	What It Does	When To Use It
Comparison and Contrast	Organizes ideas by examining the similarities and differences between them	Expository and persuasive writing; factual reports
Time Sequence	Organizes details according to the order in which they occurred	Narratives, process analyses, instruction manuals
Spatial Sequence	Organizes details according to their location, from left to right or from top to bottom	Descriptive writing
Categorical Order	Organizes details into groups by category	Factual reports
Order of Importance	Organizes details in order of their importance	Persuasive writing, factual reports
Climactic Order	Organizes details in a way that builds toward a climax, or high point, in the action of a plot	Narratives

**EXAMPLE****1** Read the passage.

Ever since I had an accident when I was a child, I have been afraid of moving too quickly. When I was eight years old, my parents gave me roller skates. I zoomed all over the neighborhood, flying around corners and tearing down sidewalks. Then one day when my mind should have been on the path in front of me, I began to think about all the roller skating competitions I would win when I got older. I didn't see the big banana peel that someone had tossed on the sidewalk—and *kaplat!* I fell hard. My knee healed perfectly, but I still have a tiny scar.

**Which organizational pattern was used to arrange the details in this paragraph?**

- A order of importance
- B climactic order
- C spatial sequence
- D comparison and contrast

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What is it about? What details are given? When are they given?

*The passage is about how the author is afraid of moving too quickly because of his roller skating accident when he was eight years old. He slipped on a banana peel while skating. This detail is given at the end of the passage.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. In which of these organizational patterns are the details in the paragraph arranged?

*I think that the details are arranged in climactic order because the story builds to its climax, which is when the author fell while skating. The details are not organized in order of importance, since important pieces of information come at the beginning as well as at the end. The passage does not describe a place or an object, so the details cannot be arranged in spatial sequence. The passage also does not compare or contrast major details. Choice B is the correct answer.*

**EXAMPLE****2** Read the following passage.

My sister prefers dark chocolate while I love white chocolate. She says that dark chocolate has more cocoa and white chocolate has more butter. But I tell her that white chocolate is creamier. She also claims that dark chocolate goes well with fruits and nuts. But I always argue that white chocolate makes good fondue and is perfect for cookies.

**Which organizational pattern was used to arrange the details in this paragraph?**

- A order of importance
- B categorical order
- C comparison and contrast
- D time sequence

**Step 1** Read the paragraph carefully. What is it about?

*The paragraph is about two siblings arguing over which kind of chocolate is better, dark or white. One sibling presents the reasons why dark chocolate is better, while the other sibling makes the case for white chocolate.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. In which of these organizational patterns are the details in the paragraph arranged?

*I think the paragraph is comparing and contrasting dark and white chocolate because the two siblings take turns giving reasons why one type of chocolate is different, and therefore better, than the other. The paragraph does not suggest that any one argument is more important than another, nor does it use categories to organize the information. There are no events narrated in the passage, so time sequence cannot be correct. Choice C must be the answer.*

## PRACTICE IT: Organizational Patterns

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

### Nat King Cole

- 1 Nat King Cole was a famous American pianist and singer. Cole was born in 1917 in Montgomery, Alabama, but grew up in Chicago, Illinois. When he was fifteen years old, he decided to become a jazz pianist. Eventually, he formed the King Cole Trio.
- 2 There are some well-known stories about Cole and his trio. One night, the King Cole Trio was playing in the Swanee Inn when a customer asked Cole to sing a certain song. Cole said he did not know that song, but the customer was insistent. To humor the customer, Cole sang “Sweet Lorraine,” one of his more popular songs. The trio was tipped a nickel each. But when the customer requested another song, Cole said he did not know that song either. Cole asked, “Is there something else you would like?” The customer said yes, and told him to give his tip back.
- 3 Cole produced a number of hits that established him as one of the musical icons in history. In 1943 he earned fame as a singer with his recording of “Straighten Up and Fly Right.” In the song “Nature Boy,” he started to veer away from jazz toward pop music. “Mona Lisa,” a song he didn’t particularly like, sold three million copies. “Mona Lisa” made him the most popular African-American singer of his time.
- 4 Cole died in 1965. Today one of his daughters, Natalie Cole, is also a very successful singer. After his death, she overdubbed her voice on a song made famous by her father, “Unforgettable,” to form a father-daughter duet. Truly, Nat King Cole remains unforgettable.

**1** Which organizational pattern was used to arrange the details in paragraph 1?

- A time sequence
- B order of importance
- C comparison and contrast
- D spatial sequence

**2** Which organizational pattern was used to arrange the details in paragraph 2?

- A spatial sequence
- B categorical order
- C order of importance
- D climactic order

**3** Which organizational pattern was used to arrange the details in paragraph 3?

- A spatial sequence
- B climactic order
- C order of importance
- D comparison and contrast

**4** Which organizational pattern could *best* be used if the author were to describe differences between Nat King Cole and Frank Sinatra?

- A climactic order
- B time sequence
- C order of importance
- D comparison and contrast



## LEARN IT: Electronic Text

### Keyword Searches

New technologies make research easier today. **Organizational features of electronic text**, such as keyword searches, can help you locate information that you need. When performing searches, make sure that you type specific words in order to get the most accurate results.

### EXAMPLE

- 1** Jack needs to write an article about a country in West Africa called Liberia. He wants to know the official language used in the country. Jack uses a Web site to help him research his topic. Look at a portion of the Web page below.

#### Online Encyclopedia

Type in Keywords to Search: \_\_\_\_\_ (Search)

To find the *most* specific information about his topic, which word(s) should Jack type into the search engine?

- A languages
- B people of Liberia
- C Liberian language
- D West Africa

**Step 1** Read the question carefully. What does Jack want to know about Liberia?

*Jack wants to find out the official language spoken in Liberia.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which keywords are *specific* to the information Jack is looking for?

*The keywords that match Jack's query are Liberian language. Languages, people of Liberia, and West Africa are broad topics that won't produce as accurate a search. C is the correct answer.*

## Using Tabs to Navigate Web Sites

Web sites are often divided into multiple pages of information, which can be accessed by clicking on tabs located on the main page, or home page, of the Web site. These tabs often have a one- or two-word description of the type of information you will find when you click on them.

### EXAMPLE

- 2** Byron wants to tour Italy. He finds the Web site of a travel agency. He wants to e-mail the travel agency to inquire about student discounts. Look at a portion of the Web page below.

<b>Allied International Travel Agency</b>			
We guarantee comfortable and exciting journeys at reasonable prices!			
<b>Flight Schedule</b>	<b>About Us</b>	<b>Careers</b>	<b>Contact Us</b>

**Byron should click on which tab?**

- A Flight Schedule
- B About Us
- C Careers
- D Contact Us

**Step 1** Read the sentences carefully. What does Byron want to do?

*Byron wants to e-mail the travel agency.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which of the tabs would allow Byron to e-mail Allied International Travel Agency?

*In order to be able to e-mail the travel agency, Byron should click the Contact Us tab, so choice D must be the correct answer.*

## PRACTICE IT: Electronic Text

**Directions:** Read the Web site below and then answer the questions that follow.

Type in Keywords to Search: \_\_\_\_\_ (Search)

### **Burkina Faso**

Click on the tabs below for more information.

**History**

**People**

**Geography/Climate**

Surrounded by land, Burkina Faso lies about six miles from the Atlantic Ocean. Burkina Faso covers 103,456 square miles, which means it is slightly larger than Oregon but smaller than Arizona. The country is home to more than 13 million people. Grassy and wooded plains cover much of the country, but the landscape is green for only a few months out of the year. From November to February, the country's climate is cool and dry, but it is hot and dry in March and April. Between May and October, the climate is hot and wet. On average, the temperatures in Burkina Faso range from 68 to 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Photos**

**Articles**

**Links**

**Home**

- 1** According to the Web site, Burkina Faso's average temperature is
- A 25 to 40 degrees Celsius.
  - B cool and dry.
  - C 68 to 95 degrees Fahrenheit.
  - D hot and wet.
- 2** To find information about the wildlife in Burkina Faso, which word or words should you type into the search engine?
- A African wildlife
  - B Burkina Faso
  - C wildlife
  - D Burkina Faso wildlife
- 3** Which tab will lead you to a list of other Web sites with related information?
- A History
  - B Links
  - C Photos
  - D People
- 4** To see what Burkina Faso looks like, you should click on
- A Geography/Climate.
  - B Articles.
  - C Photos.
  - D History.

## LEARN IT: Revision

When you edit your work, it is important to look at the overall organization and consistency of the writing. **Organization** refers to how information in a text is arranged. **Consistency** means the logical connections between ideas. You want to make sure that your writing is organized in a way that makes sense. No idea should stand out awkwardly from the rest. To make a text consistent, evaluate each detail and make sure it refers to the main idea and fits with all the other details.

### EXAMPLE

#### 1 Read the following passage.

William Carlos Williams was a famous American poet. People around the world continue to read poetry every day. He wrote in free verse, which means his poems did not rhyme. Many of Williams's poems are about everyday experiences and objects.

Williams was born in Rutherford, New Jersey, in 1883. He became a medical doctor in 1906 and four years later set up a family practice in his hometown. He remained in Rutherford for the rest of his life. He wrote poems in the mornings and evenings, before and after work.

William Carlos Williams died in 1963.

#### Which sentence could *best* be removed from the first paragraph?

- A William Carlos Williams was a famous American poet.
- B People around the world continue to read poetry every day.
- C He wrote in free verse, which means his poems did not rhyme.
- D Many of Williams's poems are about everyday experiences and objects.

**Step 1** Read the first paragraph carefully. What is the main idea?

*This paragraph introduces William Carlos Williams, a famous American poet, and talks about how he wrote his poetry.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully. Which choice is not connected to the main idea of the paragraph?

*Choices A, C, and D all describe Williams and his poetry. Only Choice B, People around the world continue to read poetry every day, is not connected to the main topic of the paragraph. The main topic is William Carlos Williams and how he wrote his poetry, but this sentence is about poetry in general. It breaks the logical flow of ideas in the paragraph and should be removed. Choice B is the correct answer.*

To make your writing clearer, you can use **transitions**. Transitions are words, phrases, or sentences that make connections between ideas easier to understand. Transitions can be used within or between paragraphs so that readers can follow the flow of information in the text. Looking at transitions can be very helpful when you are revising your work; transitions can help you make your writing organized and consistent.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read the following passage.

- 1 Games similar to field hockey have been around for thousands of years. Ancient carvings show athletes using sticks to advance a ball toward a goal. Nearly every culture has developed stick-and-ball games.
- 2 Ice hockey is a more recent invention. Influenced by both English and American stick-and-ball games, it was introduced to Canada by British soldiers in the mid-1800s. The first recorded use of a puck was at Kingston Harbour, Ontario, in 1860.

**Which of these phrases would make a good transition at the beginning of paragraph 2?**

- A However,
- B As a result,
- C In conclusion,
- D Because of this,

**Step 1** Read both paragraphs. Did the focus change from one paragraph to the other? How are the two paragraphs related?

*The first paragraph talks about stick-and-ball games in earlier civilizations. The second paragraph is about the modern game of ice hockey. In the second paragraph, modern ice hockey is contrasted with the ancient games discussed in the first paragraph.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which transition correctly signals the idea that will be discussed next?

*The transitions in Choices B and D signal that the next idea will be a result of the ideas in the first paragraph. Choice C indicates that the second paragraph will summarize the first paragraph. Only Choice A correctly signals that the second paragraph is introducing a new idea that will be contrasted with the first paragraph. Choice A is the answer.*

## PRACTICE IT: Revision

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

**The following is a rough draft of a student’s essay. It contains errors.**

- 1 Potatoes grow best in cool environments and in sandy soil. They are usually grown from pieces of the tuber, or underground stem, instead of from seeds. For a new plant to develop, each tuber must have one or two buds. The new plant will be identical to the tuber it came from. Potatoes are used to make adhesives and alcohol.
- 2 Because potatoes are easy to grow, they also have many enemies. The Colorado potato beetle, or potato bug, is one of the worst. The bug feeds on the leaves of the plant. The potato bug also feeds on tomatoes and peppers. Other enemies of the potato include worms and fungi. These dangers can sometimes threaten an entire crop of potatoes.

**1** Which word should replace the underlined transition in paragraph 2?

- A While
- B Unless
- C Furthermore
- D Since

**2** Which sentence would *best* be removed from the first paragraph?

- A Potatoes grow best in cool environments and in sandy soil.
- B The new plant will be identical to the tuber it came from.
- C Potatoes are used to make adhesives and alcohol.
- D They are usually grown from pieces of the tuber, or underground stem, instead of from seeds.

**3** Which sentence would *best* be removed from the second paragraph?

- A The Colorado potato beetle, or potato bug, is one of the worst.
- B The potato bug also feeds on tomatoes and peppers.
- C Other enemies of the potato include worms and fungi.
- D These dangers can sometimes threaten an entire crop of potatoes.

**4** Read the following sentence.

However, despite all the difficulties, potatoes continue to thrive.

Where would be the *best* place to insert this sentence?

- A beginning of paragraph 1
- B beginning of paragraph 2
- C end of paragraph 1
- D end of paragraph 2



**Content Standards:** 6WOELC1.1 **Sentence Structure:** Use simple, compound, and compound-complex sentences; use effective coordination and subordination of ideas to express complete thoughts. 6WOELC1.3 **Punctuation:** Use colons after the salutation in business letters, semi-colons to connect independent clauses, and commas when linking two clauses with a conjunction in compound sentences.

## LEARN IT: Varied Sentence Types

Use a **variety** of sentences in your writing to make it more interesting. Avoid using only short sentences. As you revise your work, look for simple sentences—or **independent clauses**—that can be combined by using **conjunctions**. A mixture of sentence structures will help your writing flow smoothly and make it more interesting to read.

Sentence Type	Description	Examples
Simple	One independent clause	I ate breakfast.
Compound	Two independent clauses joined with a conjunction	I ate breakfast, <i>and</i> I brushed my teeth.
Complex	One independent clause and one dependent clause joined with a conjunction	<i>Although</i> I woke up late, I arrived early. I bought the car <i>that</i> I always wanted.
Compound-Complex	Two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause joined with conjunctions	I ordered yogurt <i>because</i> it is healthy, <i>but</i> I really wanted cheesecake.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read these sentences.

Nobody really knows who invented the game of baseball. Historians are sure it was first played in the United States.

Which word could *best* be used to join these sentences?

- A and
- B but
- C so
- D for

**Step 1** Read the two sentences carefully. Does the second sentence support or contrast with the first?

*The second sentence contrasts with the first sentence.*

**Step 2** Look at the possible answers. Which one among the possible answers shows contrast?

*The word but is the only answer choice that links the two ideas by showing contrast. The word and joins related items. The word for indicates a cause, while the word so shows an effect. B is, therefore, the correct answer.*

When writing compound, complex, or compound-complex sentences, certain punctuation marks are sometimes needed to link the clauses together in a way that is easy to read and understand. **Semicolons**, for example, are often used to link together two independent clauses. **Commas** are often placed directly before conjunctions (*and, but, or*) to link independent clauses together.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read this example.

He knew nobody was listening he shouted anyway because he had to voice his anger.

**What is the correct way to write the underlined words?**

- A listening, but he shouted anyway because he had to voice
- B listening, he shouted anyway, because he had to voice
- C listening; he shouted anyway; because he had to voice
- D Leave it as is.

**Step 1** Read the example again. How many complete thoughts are there that can stand on their own?

*There are two complete thoughts in this passage: He knew nobody was listening and he shouted anyway. Because he had to voice his anger is not a complete thought.*

**Step 2** Read all the possible choices. Which answer choice is punctuated correctly to show the connection between two complete thoughts?

*Choice B uses commas but no conjunction, so it is still an incorrectly punctuated run-on sentence. Choice C is incorrect; semicolons are only used to join two independent clauses. The example needs to be punctuated in order to be correct, so D is not correct, either. The correct answer is, therefore, Choice A.*

## PRACTICE IT: Varied Sentence Types

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

The following is a rough draft of a student’s story. It may contain errors.

### Why Possums Have Hairless Tails

- 1 “What’s wrong?” Raccoon asked Possum. “If your head were any lower it would be in a hole.”
- 2 Then Possum buried his pride. He asked Raccoon how he got such a beautiful tail.
- 3 “It was easy,” Raccoon said. “I just wrapped a rope around my tail. I stuck it in a fire. Then, when I removed the rope, I had a beautiful striped tail.”
- 4 Later that day, though Possum was more than a bit scared, he wound some rope around his tail. He stuck it into the flames of a bonfire. It hurt like crazy! All the hair on his tail had been singed off.
- 5 And that is why, today, all possums have hairless tails.

**1** Read the following sentences from the story.

I just wrapped a rope around my tail.  
I stuck it in a fire.

Which word could *best* be used to join these sentences?

- A and
- B so
- C but
- D or

**2** What is the *best* way to combine the sentences in paragraph 2?

- A Then Possum buried his pride, and he asked Raccoon how he got such a beautiful tail.
- B Then Possum buried his pride, asked Raccoon how he got such a beautiful tail.
- C Then Possum buried his pride but asked Raccoon how he got such a beautiful tail.
- D Then Possum buried his pride, asked Raccoon, how he got such a beautiful tail.

**3** Read the following sentence from the story.

If your head were any lower it would be in a hole.

**What is the correct way to write the underlined words?**

- A correct as is
- B lower, it would
- C lower; it would
- D lower: it would

**4** Read the following sentences from the story.

It hurt like crazy! All the hair on his tail had been singed off.

**Which word could *best* be used to join these sentences?**

- A so
- B then
- C because
- D however

## LEARN IT: Pronouns and Verb Tenses

**Pronouns** are words that take the place of nouns. **Indefinite pronouns** are pronouns that do not refer to specific people or things. Look at the chart below for more information.

<b>Singular</b>	<i>another, anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, much, neither, no one, nobody, nothing, one, somebody, someone, something</i>	Example: <i>Hakim was sure his brother was hiding <u>something</u> from him, because he was acting strange.</i>
<b>Plural</b>	<i>both, few, many, others, several</i>	Example: <i>I wanted to read two books that weekend, so I borrowed <u>both</u> from the library.</i>
<b>Unspecified (could be singular or plural)</b>	<i>all, any, more, most, none, some</i>	Example: <i>He ate <u>more</u> than he should have.</i>

### EXAMPLE

#### 1 Read the following sentence.

After introducing the players on the home and visiting teams, the announcer asked everyone to stand and join him in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

**Which word from the sentence is an indefinite pronoun?**

- A After
- B announcer
- C everyone
- D him

**Step 1** Read the sentence. Which words in the sentence name a person, place, thing, or idea?

*The words players, teams, announcer, everyone, him, and pledge of allegiance are nouns or words that are acting as nouns. They each name a person, place, thing, or idea.*

**Step 2** Look at the answer choices. Which answer choice is correct?

*Choice A is not correct, because after is not a noun or pronoun. Choice B is not correct, because announcer is a noun, not a pronoun. Choice D is not correct, because even though him is a pronoun, it refers to a specific person. It cannot be an indefinite pronoun. Everyone is a pronoun that does not refer to a specific person. It is an indefinite pronoun. Choice C is correct.*

You may have noticed from the chart on the previous page that there are several singular indefinite pronouns. When a singular indefinite pronoun is the subject of the sentence, the verb that follows it must also be singular. If you aren't sure whether you have the correct verb form, try replacing the indefinite pronoun with a singular noun or definite pronoun such as *he*, *she*, or *it*. It will be easier to see if you have made a mistake.

### EXAMPLE

**2** Read the following sentence.

Nobody \_\_\_\_\_ to go home now even though the party is over.

**Which verb completes the sentence?**

- A want
- B wants
- C wanting
- D were wanting

**Step 1** Read the sentence. Who or what is the subject of the sentence?

*The subject of the sentence is nobody. Nobody is an indefinite pronoun. It is also singular.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which of the answer choices correctly completes the sentence?

*Choice A is incorrect because want is a plural verb, and the indefinite pronoun is singular. Choice C is a progressive verb and does not fit in the sentence. Choice D is a past progressive verb, so it doesn't work either. Choice B is correct because wants is a singular, present tense verb.*

**Step 3** Check your answer by replacing the indefinite pronoun with a definite pronoun.

*When I substitute nobody with a definite pronoun such as he, the sentence is still grammatically correct. Choice B is the correct answer.*

The **perfect verb tenses** are used in writing to show how certain actions relate to each other in time. These tenses include **present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect.**

<b>Present perfect</b>	<i>have</i> or <i>has</i> + past participle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describes actions that began in the past and are still happening in the present</li> <li>describes events that happened at an indefinite time in the past</li> </ul>	<i>Grant <u>has played</u> hockey for many years.</i>  <i>We <u>have never been</u> to the aquarium before.</i>
<b>Past perfect</b>	<i>had</i> + past participle	when two events happened in the past, shows which event happened first	<i>I <u>had opened</u> my book to start reading when the lights went out in my bedroom.</i>
<b>Future perfect</b>	<i>will + have</i> + past participle	describes an action that will be completed before a certain time in the future	<i>Shana <u>will have eaten</u> dinner by the time the movie starts.</i>

### EXAMPLE

**3** Read the following sentence.

My cousin \_\_\_\_\_ before I arrived at my aunt's house for dinner last night.

Which verb completes the sentence?

- A had left
- B has left
- C have left
- D will have left

**Step 1** Read the sentence. What is the sentence trying to say?

*The sentence is trying to say that the speaker's cousin had already left by the time the speaker arrived at his or her aunt's house. The cousin's action happened first.*

**Step 2** Look at the answer choices. Which answer choice is correct?

*Choice B suggests that the cousin left and continues to leave, which doesn't make sense. Choice C does not agree with the singular noun cousin. Choice D doesn't make sense because the sentence describes two events that happened in the past. Choice A shows that the cousin had left and was already gone by the time the speaker arrived. Choice A is correct.*

Remember that sentences with **compound subjects**, or subjects that are plural, will need plural verbs. This rule does not apply to the past perfect and future perfect tenses.

When using the present perfect tense, the auxiliary word must match the subject of the sentence. For singular subjects, use the singular form of the auxiliary word, *has*. For plural subjects, use the plural form of the auxiliary word, *have*. The past participle verb that follows the auxiliary word will not change.

### EXAMPLE

**4** Read the following sentence.

George and Rey had knew each other for ten years, and they are still good friends.

**What is the correct way to write the underlined part of the sentence?**

- A had known
- B has known
- C have knows
- D have known

**Step 1** Read the sentence. What is the sentence trying to say?

*The sentence is trying to say that George and Rey knew each other ten years ago and that they continue to be good friends today.*

**Step 2** Look at the answer choices. Which answer choice is correct?

*Choice A is a combination of the auxiliary word had and the verb known. This is the past perfect verb tense, which doesn't make sense since George and Rey still know each other. Choice B is a combination of the auxiliary word has and the verb known. This is the present perfect tense, but the auxiliary word has is singular, and the subject of the sentence is plural. Choice C is a combination of the auxiliary word have and the verb knows. The auxiliary word is plural, which matches the compound subject. However, the verb knows is not the past participle, so C is incorrect. Choice D is a combination of the auxiliary word have and the verb known. The auxiliary word is plural, which matches the compound subject, and the verb is the past participle form. Choice D is the answer.*



## PRACTICE IT: Pronouns and Verb Tenses

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

### Stitch a Quilt and How a Quilt Is Made

*From the Library of Congress*

#### Stitch a Quilt

- 1 Quilting is the process of taking two pieces of fabric, putting a layer of stuffing in-between, and stitching them together. People all over the world have been quilting clothing and blankets for centuries.
- 2 In America, quilts have kept people warm for generations. Patchwork quilting—taking scraps of cloth arranged in geometric designs and then quilting them to make a bed cover—became very popular in the 19th century. The stitching not only keeps the layers together, but it also adds a decorative element. Quilting is still very popular in America today. Have you saw a quilt?

#### How a Quilt Is Made

- 3 Think about a quilt like a sandwich. The two pieces of fabric are the bread. What's in the middle—wool or cotton filling—is the stuffing. Everything are stitched together so the filling doesn't move around. These layers trap air and hold warmth, keeping the person underneath the quilt snug and cozy.
- 4 Assembling a quilt requires some planning. First, a quilter selects a pattern and cuts pieces of fabric. The quilter then sews them together to form a design. Usually, smaller pieces of material are sewn together into larger blocks or squares, and then those blocks are stitched together to make the top layer of the quilt. Once the top layer is as big as the quilter wants, it's joined together with the padding and the bottom layer using a frame.
- 5 A frame is needed to help finish a quilt because the quilt can get as big as 10 square feet. This would be pretty difficult to handle in your lap! A frame is made of two smooth poles or long bars of wood. The bottom layer is stretched out across the frame. The filling is then spread evenly over the bottom layer, and the top layer is placed in position. The other advantage of a frame is that many people can work on the quilt at the same time, and everyone can help stitch the layers together.

1 Read this sentence from paragraph 2.

In America, quilts have kept people warm for generations.

What is the correct way to write the underlined part of the sentence?

- A quilts has been kept
- B quilts has been keeping
- C quilts have been kept
- D Leave as is.

2 Read this sentence from paragraph 2.

Have you saw a quilt?

What is the correct way to write the underlined part of the sentence?

- A Leave as is.
- B you seen
- C you see
- D you had saw

3 Read this sentence from paragraph 3.

Everything are stitched together so the filling doesn't move around.

What is the correct way to write the underlined part of the sentence?

- A Everything is stitched together
- B Leave as is.
- C Everything were stitched together
- D Everything have been stitched together

4 Read this sentence from paragraph 5.

The other advantage of a frame is that many people can work on the quilt at the same time, and everyone can help stitch the layers together.

Which word in the sentence is an indefinite pronoun?

- A other
- B everyone
- C that
- D together

## LEARN IT: Use Correct Capitalization

There are several basic rules that tell you when a letter in a word should be capitalized.

- The first letter of the word that begins a sentence is always capitalized.
- The first-person pronoun *I* is always capitalized.
- Proper nouns are capitalized because they name specific persons, things, or places. Examples of proper nouns include *Harriet Tubman*, the *Washington Monument*, and *France*.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read this sentence.

the book *Carrie* is my favorite of stephen king's novels.

#### Which is the correct way to capitalize this sentence?

- A the book *Carrie* is my favorite of Stephen King's novels.
- B The book *Carrie* is my favorite of stephen King's novels.
- C The book *Carrie* is my favorite of Stephen King's novels.
- D the book *Carrie* is my favorite of stephen king's novels.

**Step 1** Read the sentence carefully. List all the proper names as well as the first word in the sentence. Which of these words are not capitalized in the sentence?

*The first word of the sentence is the. Proper names are Carrie and Stephen King. The first word is not capitalized, and neither is Stephen King.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully. Which sentence uses correct capitalization?

*In Choices A and D, the first word is not capitalized, so I know that these answer choices are not correct. Choice B has the author's first name in lowercase, so I know it can't be correct, either. Choice C capitalizes the first word of the sentence and all of the proper names, so I know that Choice C is the correct answer.*

**EXAMPLE****2** Read this passage.

Marnie decided to toss a snowball at Samuel. It exploded on his back. He laughed and gathered up some snow of his own. He hurled a snowball back at Marnie, and she screamed with glee. They had a very fun Day.

Every word in the passage is capitalized correctly *except*

- A Marnie.
- B Samuel.
- C It.
- D Day.

**Step 1** Find each answer choice in the passage. How is each answer choice used?

*Marnie and Samuel are both proper nouns. The word It isn't a proper noun, but it is the first word in the second sentence. Day is neither a proper noun nor the first word in a sentence.*

**Step 2** Review the rules of capitalization. Which answer choice does not follow these rules?

*Only Day should not be capitalized. It is a common noun that names a common thing. It is also located at the end of the sentence, not the beginning. D is the correct answer.*

## PRACTICE IT: Use Correct Capitalization

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

Dr. ruby Perez pushed her cart down the aisle. She had come to Bonus Buy, her favorite grocery store, to pick up some milk. Before she knew it, however, she had filled her cart with jelly beans, crackers, laundry detergent, and blueberries. Then she started to reach for chocolate ice cream. surely she didn't need the ice cream. She already had ice cream in her freezer at home. She paused awhile and then took the ice cream anyway. Her niece, Kelly, was coming from southwestern wyoming for a visit. Kelly really loved ice cream.

**1** Read this sentence from the passage.

Dr. ruby Perez pushed her cart down the aisle.

**What is the correct way to write the underlined words in this sentence?**

- A Dr. Ruby perez
- B dr. ruby perez
- C dr. Ruby perez
- D Dr. Ruby Perez

**2** Read this sentence from the passage.

She had come to Bonus Buy, her favorite grocery store, to pick up some milk.

**What is the correct way to write the underlined words in this sentence?**

- A Bonus buy
- B bonus buy
- C bonus Buy
- D correct as is

**3** Read this sentence from the passage.

Her niece, Kelly, was coming from southwestern wyoming for a visit.

**Which word in the sentence should be capitalized?**

- A southwestern
- B wyoming
- C niece
- D visit

**4** Read this sentence from the passage.

surely she didn't need the ice cream.

**What is the proper way to write this sentence?**

- A surely she didn't need the ice cream.
- B Surely she didn't need the ice cream.
- C surely she didn't need the Ice Cream.
- D Surely she didn't need the Ice Cream.

## LEARN IT: Correctly Spell Misspelled Words

Many words are spelled incorrectly because people confuse one word with another word that sounds just like it, such as *they're*, *their*, and *there*. Words that sound alike or nearly alike but have different meanings and different spellings are called **homonyms**. To use homonyms correctly, learn the meaning of each similar-sounding word and figure out which meaning makes sense in the sentence.

For example, here are a few homonyms and their meanings:

### They're/their/there

- *They're* is a contraction of the words *they* and *are*.
- *Their* shows possession.
- *There* means “in or at that place.”

### Bye/by/buy

- *Bye* is a shortened form of the word *goodbye*.
- *By* is a preposition. It may mean “near,” “through,” or “around.”
- *Buy* means “to purchase something.”

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read the sentence.

Marcus and Shane showed they're backpacks to the guard before entering the school.

What is the correct way to spell the underlined word in the sentence?

- A their
- B there
- C theyre
- D correct as is

**Step 1** Read the sentence carefully. How is the underlined word used in the sentence?

*The underlined word is used to indicate that the backpacks are owned by Marcus and Shane.*

**Step 2** Look for the answer choice that shows possession.

*A is the correct answer choice because the word their shows possession.*

Use the following rules to correctly spell frequently misspelled words.

### Spelling *ie* and *ei* Words

This rule is designed to help readers remember how to spell words such as *receive* and *chief*. The rule is relatively simple: *i* usually comes before *e*. The *e* comes before the *i* only if both letters immediately follow the letter *c* (as in the word *deceit*) or if they combine to form an *ay* sound (as in the word *weigh*).

### Change *y* to *i*

When adding a suffix to a word that ends with a consonant and a *y*, change the *y* to an *i* before adding the suffix, except for the suffix *-ing*. So, the word *supply* becomes *supplies* when you add the suffix *-es*, but the word *worry* becomes *worrying* when you add the suffix *-ing*.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read the sentence.

My niece loves to play with her new friend in the neighborhood.

What is the correct way to spell the underlined word in the sentence?

- A niece
- B neace
- C neece
- D correct as is

**Step 1** Read the boxed sentence. Which spelling rule could be applied to the underlined word?

*The underlined word has an i and an e. The spelling rule for words with ie should be used. The rule is that i comes before e except when both letters appear after c or when they form an ay sound.*

**Step 2** Apply the appropriate spelling rule to the underlined word. Which is the correct answer choice?

*The i and the e in the underlined word do not appear after the letter c. Nor is the underlined word pronounced with an ay sound. The correct spelling is niece. A is the correct answer.*

**EXAMPLE****3** Read this sentence.

The skyes were clear after the storm passed.

What is the correct way to spell the underlined word in the sentence?

- A skies
- B skeis
- C skys
- D correct as is

**Step 1** Read the boxed sentence and focus on the underlined word. Which spelling rule should be applied to the word?

*The word ends with a consonant k and a y. It also has an -es ending. The rule is that, when adding a suffix (except for -ing), the letter y is changed to the letter i if it follows a consonant.*

**Step 2** Apply the spelling rule to the underlined word. Then read each answer choice and choose the one that follows the spelling rule.

*When I change the letter y to the letter i, the underlined word becomes skies. A is the correct answer because it follows the rule.*



## PRACTICE IT: Correctly Spell Misspelled Words

**Directions:** Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

**The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.**

### **Thank You, Mrs. Hannah!**

- 1 Mrs. Hannah is the toughest teacher at our school. She teaches English and science. She makes us write three essays a week and read newspapers every day. She gives us a vocabulary test every Friday, and the words she picks are really difficult. She assigns many pages of reading and asks us to think about many different theorys.
- 2 Last week we had to read *Romeo and Juliet* in just four days, and she gave us a pop quiz to make sure we had all finished the play. The quiz was really tough, and many of my classmates failed. She also expects our homework to be neat and nicely done. She wants all our papers on her desk buy the time she enters the classroom. If there are any smudges on our papers, we have to recopy them.
- 3 Mrs. Hannah is always percieved as strict and demanding, but I guess I'm learning a lot every time she comes to the class. Its Mrs. Hannah's last time to teach our class tomorrow. I'll be grateful I had her, and I wish I could have her again as a teacher in the future.

1 Read this sentence from the passage.

She wants all our papers on her desk buy the time she enters the classroom.

What is the correct way to spell the underlined word in the sentence?

- A bye
- B by
- C bie
- D correct as is

2 Read this sentence from the passage.

Its Mrs. Hannah's last time to teach our class tomorrow.

What is the correct way to write the underlined word in the sentence?

- A It's
- B Its'
- C Itss
- D correct as is

3 Read this sentence from the passage.

Mrs. Hannah is always percieved as strict and demanding, but I guess I'm learning a lot every time she comes to the class.

Which underlined word is spelled incorrectly?

- A always
- B percieved
- C guess
- D learning

4 Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

She assigns many pages of reading and asks us to think about many different theorys.

What is the correct way to spell the underlined word?

- A theoryies
- B theoryes
- C theories
- D theories