

## Grammar Punk: What's all this about?

Grammar Punk is a dice game that helps students master many common grammar and punctuation rules. The game will be used frequently in class. No wagering!

### The Dice

There are six dice: *consonants, vowels, numbers, parts of speech, punctuation marks, and topics.*

### The Game

While there are many variations on how we will use the game in class and exactly how competitive it becomes, the basic idea is as follows:

- 1) Roll the dice.
- 2) Write sentences that meet the requirements of the dice roll. **Sentences must be grammatically correct, but they do not have to make any logical sense.**
  - a. Who can finish an acceptable sentence first?
  - b. Who can write the shortest sentence that still meets all the requirements?
  - c. Who can use words no one else thinks of?
  - d. Who can write a sentence that is actually true and/or logical as well as grammatically correct?
- 3) Share the most engaging and entertaining sentences.

### Example: Roll the Bones!

Vowel: <b>A</b>	Punctuation: <b>comma (,)</b>	Consonant: <b>T</b>
Topic: <b>Sports</b>	Number: <b>4</b>	Part of Speech: <b>Adjective</b>

Based on this dice roll, students would need to write a sentence about sports with four (4) *AT* words (words that contain both an *A* and a *T*), a correctly used comma, and an adjective. The sentence can contain as many words as the writer wants, but four of them have to contain both an *A* and a *T*. The *A* and the *T* do not have to be right next to each other in the word, nor does the word have to start with *A* or *T*. The sentence must correctly illustrate at least one comma rule. It may illustrate other punctuation rules as well, but in order to meet the requirements of this dice roll, it must use a comma correctly. (Sometimes the specific punctuation rule will be named when the dice are rolled; other times it will be up to the student.) Somewhere in the sentence, there needs to be an adjective – doesn't matter where. The topic of the sentence should be sports, but the mere mention of a sporting term will work. Here are some sentences that would meet this requirement:

- 1) Carl's baseball bat wasn't very *strong*, so it shattered and the team lost.
- 2) I usually eat at the table, but today I'm dining with a *little* rat named Winston on the soccer field.
- 3) Sheila likes athletes who play football, and they usually find her anatomy *attractive*.

**Strategies to Start:** Make a word pool; look for words in the pool that you can relate to the topic; identify words in the pool that are the required part of speech; identify the punctuation rule you will use in your sentence; look for creative, humorous, or entertaining combinations; write your sentence; check to see that you have met all the requirements of the dice; revise if necessary; share; submit

## Grammar Punk Practice

What do the dice say? \_\_\_\_\_

Word Pool

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Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

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Checklist

? # of dice words				? Punctuation		? Topic		? Part of speech			
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

What do the dice say? \_\_\_\_\_

Word Pool

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Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

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Checklist

? # of dice words				? Punctuation		? Topic		? Part of speech			
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## Punctuation Patterns

### *Another Way of Looking at the Punctuation Rules*

1. **Sentence.**

Example: I went to the swimming pool.

2. **Sentence. Sentence.**

Example: I went to the swimming pool. I swam twenty laps.

3. **Sentence, coordinating conjunction sentence. (Comma Rule #1)**

Example: I went to the swimming pool, and I swam twenty laps.

4. **Sentence; sentence. (Semicolon Rule #1)**

Example: I went to the swimming pool; I swam twenty laps.

5. **Sentence; independent marker, sentence. (Semicolon Rule #2)**

Example: I went to the swimming pool; however, I did not swim very far.

6. **Introductory material, sentence. (Comma Rule #5)**

Introductory word: Generally, I swim twenty laps every morning.

Introductory phrase: Hoping to stay in shape, I swim twenty laps every morning.

Introductory (dependent) clause: Because I hope to stay in shape, I swim twenty laps every morning.

7. **Sentence, phrase. (Comma Rule #7)**

Example: I swim twenty laps every morning, hoping to stay in shape.

8. **Sentence\*: word or phrase or list or sentence. (Colon Rule #1)**

There is one main benefit of swimming: health.

I have a simple motto: "Born to swim."

I swim for many reasons: health, endurance, strength, and fun.

\*A complete sentence must come before the colon!

## Other Punctuation Rules

**Non-essential interrupters are enclosed in commas. (Comma Rule #3)**

I swim, as do both my children, for exercise.

Elizabeth, my daughter, is trying to get a swimming scholarship.

The pool, which was closed on Labor Day, is where I swim.

*(Non-essential interrupters can be removed without changing the meaning or clarity of the sentence. If you can remove an interrupter and the sentence is still clear, you need the commas around it...both of them!)*

**Three or more items in a series are separated by commas. (Comma Rule #4)**

Have one fewer commas than there are items. (Yes, put a comma before the *and*.)

Example: I take a swimsuit, goggles, and a towel to the pool.

Example: I swim twenty laps on Tuesday, thirty laps on Thursday, and forty laps on Saturday.

**Commas separate two or more adjectives that describe the same word.**

**(Comma Rule #2)** If they are *not* joined by a conjunction, two or more adjectives that describe the same noun or pronoun need commas between them.

Example: The cool, blue water in the pool is inviting.

Example: The water in the pool is cool, blue, and inviting.

Example: Look at that bald guy's desperate, thrashing backstroke.

Example: It's almost as bad as his ponderous, uncoordinated, gasping freestyle.

## Common Punctuation Problems

**Run-on Sentence (Fused Sentence):** A run-on sentence is created when you punctuate two complete thoughts (independent clauses) as though they are only one sentence.

Incorrect Example: The pool was closed for Labor Day I could not swim.

Corrected: The pool was closed for Labor Day. I could not swim. (Punctuation Pattern #2)

Corrected: The pool was closed for Labor Day, so I could not swim. (Comma Rule #1)

Corrected: The pool was closed for Labor Day; I could not swim. (Semicolon Rule #1)

Corrected: Because the pool was closed for Labor Day, I could not swim. (Comma Rule #5)

Corrected: I could not swim because the pool was closed for Labor Day.

*(With so many ways to do it right, there is no excuse for doing it wrong!)*

**Comma Splice:** A comma splice is created when you connect two complete thoughts (independent clauses) with only a comma. Some fools believe that if they have a run-on sentence, they can correct it with a comma. **WRONG! VERY BAD! DO NOT DO IT!**

Incorrect Example: The pool was closed for Labor Day, I could not swim.

Corrected: The pool was closed for Labor Day. I could not swim. (Punctuation Pattern #2)

Corrected: The pool was closed for Labor Day, so I could not swim. (Comma Rule #1)

Corrected: The pool was closed for Labor Day; I could not swim. (Semicolon Rule #1)

Corrected: Because the pool was closed for Labor Day, I could not swim. (Comma Rule #5)

Corrected: I could not swim because the pool was closed for Labor Day.

*(With so many ways to do it right, there is no excuse for doing it wrong!)*

**Sentence Fragment:** A sentence fragment is created when you punctuate something that is not a complete thought (independent clause) like it is a sentence.

Incorrect Example: Closed for Labor Day. (*What was closed?*)

Incorrect Example: Diving off the edge of the pool. (*Who was diving?*)

**Do not separate the subject of a sentence from the verb with a comma...or any other punctuation mark.** (Subjects are underlined and *verbs* are italicized in these examples.)

Incorrect Example: The bald man in the pool, *swam* twenty laps.

Corrected Example: The bald man in the pool *swam* twenty laps.

**Commas and *because*\***

**If a *because* clause (dependent clause) begins a sentence, put a comma after it.** (This applies to any dependent marker, but most errors are with *because*.)

Example: Because the pool was closed, the bald man could not swim.

**If a *because* clause (dependent clause) ends a sentence, do not put a comma before it.**

Example: The bald man could not swim because the pool was closed.

\* There is almost never a comma immediately before or after the word *because*.

**Commas and *and***

**Just because a sentence contains the word *and* doesn't mean it always needs a comma. Don't use commas to separate compound subjects or compound verbs.**

Example: The old man swimming in the pool and the kid standing there laughing at him are related. (No comma!)

Example: I put on my goggles and flippers and began to swim. (No comma!)

## Grammar Terms

**Verb:** A *verb* is the word that expresses the action in a sentence.

Example: I swim. (What do I do? I swim. So *swim* is the verb. Get it?)

**Subject:** A *subject* is the person or thing that performs the action expressed by the verb.

Example: I swim. (Who swims? I do. So *I* is the subject. Get it?)

**Phrase:** A *phrase* is a group of words that does not contain both a subject and a verb

Example: swimming in the pool (Who is swimming? No subject here. Get it?)

**Clause:** A *clause* is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb.

Example: I swim. (I = subject; swim = verb – Of course this clause could be part of a larger collection of words: “When I swim....” or “I swim in the lake....”)

**Independent Clause:** An *independent clause* is a group of words that contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought, so it may stand alone as a complete sentence.

Example: I swim three times a week.

**Dependent Clause:** A *dependent clause* is a group of words that contains a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought. A dependent clause by itself is *not* a complete sentence; it is *dependent* on other words to be part of a complete sentence.

Example: Since I swim three times a week... (Not a complete sentence)

**Dependent Marker:** A *dependent marker* is a word added to the beginning of an independent clause that makes it into a dependent clause. Here are some: *after, although, as, as if, because, before, even if, even though, if, in order to, since, though, unless, until, whatever, when, whenever, whether, and while*. (Dependent marker + independent clause = dependent clause.)

Example: Since I swim three times a week... (*Since* is the dependent marker.)

**Independent Marker:** An *independent marker* is a connecting word used at the beginning of an independent clause. These words can always begin a sentence that can stand alone. Here are some: *also, consequently, furthermore, however, moreover, nevertheless, and therefore*. They are usually followed by a comma.

Example: I swim three times a week; consequently, I have big lungs.

Example: Also, I am always exhausted.

**Coordinating Conjunction:** *Coordinating conjunctions* connect words, phrases, and clauses. There are seven of them: **for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so**. Remember them by thinking of this acronym: FANBOYS -- for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.)

## Sentence Types

**Simple Sentence:** A *simple sentence* is one independent clause: one subject, one **verb**.

Example: I swam twenty laps on Thursday morning.

**Compound Sentence:** A *compound sentence* is two (or more) independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction or a semicolon.

Example: I swam twenty laps this morning, and all day I was tired.

Example: I swam twenty laps this morning; all day I was tired.

**Complex Sentence:** A *complex sentence* is made up of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. (Dependent clauses are underlined in these examples.)

Example: Since I swam twenty laps this morning, I am very tired.

Example: I am very tired because I swam twenty laps this morning.

**Compound-Complex Sentence:** A *compound-complex sentence* is made up of two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses. (*Dependent clauses* are *italicized* in this example, and independent clauses are underlined.)

Example: I swam twenty laps this morning *before the sun came up*, but I did not get to school on time *because I swam so slowly*.

## Parts of Speech: Grammar (Punk) Rock

Noun: a word used to name a person, place, thing, or idea. Nouns can be concrete (telephone) or abstract (love).

1. What are some of the nouns mentioned in the song?
2. According to the song, what three types of words can be nouns? (What kind of noun does the song not include?)

Pronoun: a word used in place of a noun. Examples: I, myself, who, everybody, she, her, they, his, whom, they, someone, nobody, us, those, me, you, us

1. What are some pronouns in the song that are not mentioned above?
2. Why is it good to use pronouns?

Adjective: a word used to describe (modify) a noun or a pronoun. Tells what kind: blues eyes, which one: this man, how many: several people.

1. What are the three endings that can be added to a noun to make it an adjective?
2. What two things does the song say an adjective can do?

Verb: a word that expresses action, existence, or condition. Examples: hit, fled, play, went, felt, was, crushed, do, is, are, appeared, can, struggle, had, bites, laugh, look

1. What other part of speech can you sometimes "bend" to make verbs?
2. Besides a verb, what else is required to make a sentence?

Adverb: a word that modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. Adverbs give more information about an action by telling how (often ends in -ly), when, or where : How (quickly, slowly) when (now, then) where (here, outside)

1. What parts of speech does an adverb modify?
2. What seven things do adverbs "deal with?"

Preposition: a word used to show the relationship of a noun or pronoun to some other word/phrase in the sentence. A preposition is always part of a phrase. Common prepositions: about, above, across, after, against, along, amid, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, by, concerning, down, during, except, for, from, in, of, on, to, with, within, up

1. Why is the metaphor of the "busy" bugs appropriate for prepositions?
2. What are the most common prepositions?

Conjunction: a word which joins words and groups of words. The most common conjunctions are the FANBOYS words: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so. (Other words are sometimes used as conjunctions: either, neither, although, whereas, if, both, before, until, because, since, as, while, whether.)

1. What are the three most common conjunctions mentioned in the song?
2. What are each of them used for?

Interjection: a word that expresses emotion and has no grammatical relation to other words in the sentence. Interjections usually appear at the beginning of a sentence. Examples: oh, ah, hurray, my goodness, ouch, alas, bravo, ha, yippee, mercy, sure, wow, hey, oh no, yikes

1. What punctuation marks usually separate an interjection from a sentence?
2. What two things are interjections used to show?

Indicate the part of speech of each underlined word.

From "Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
The frumious Bandersnatch!"



### Principle Parts of Regular Verbs

MAIN VERB (Regular)	(SIMPLE) PRESENT	(SIMPLE) PAST	PAST PARTICIPLE	PRESENT PARTICIPLE	INFINITIVE
talk	talk(s)	talked	auxiliary + talked	auxiliary + talking	to talk
divide	divide(s)	divided	auxiliary + divided	auxiliary + dividing	to divide
giggle	giggle(s)	giggled	auxiliary + giggled	auxiliary + giggling	to giggle
help	help(s)	helped	auxiliary + helped	auxiliary + helping	to help
<b>EXAMPLES with Regular Verbs</b>					
TALK	I <u>talk</u> to Alice in class.  Alice <u>talks</u> back to me.	I <u>talked</u> to Alice yesterday.  Alice <u>talked</u> back to me.	I <u>have talked</u> to Alice many times.  Alice <u>has talked</u> back to me.	I <u>am talking</u> to Alice right now.  Alice <u>is talking</u> to me.	<u>To talk</u> is the only thing I want to do.  Alice is helping me <u>(to) talk</u> often.
GIGGLE	Michael <u>giggles</u> at Eileen in class.  Then they <u>giggle</u> at the teacher.	Eileen <u>giggled</u> at Michael on the bus.  We <u>giggled</u> at the two of them.	Michael <u>has giggled</u> at Eileen before.  We <u>have giggled</u> at their antics.	Eileen <u>is giggling</u> at Michael.  They <u>are giggling</u> at each other.	<u>To giggle</u> is all they want to do.  They don't need a reason <u>to giggle</u> .

A **main verb** indicates the action or condition. **Auxiliary (helping) verbs** convey the other nuances that writers want to express. Auxiliary verbs include the forms of **BE** (**am, is, are, were, was, been, being**), the forms of **HAVE** (**has, have, had, having**), the forms of **DO** (**does, do, did**), and these modal auxiliary verbs: **can, could, may, might, must, ought to, shall, should, will, would**.

- 1) What is the rule for forming the past tense of a regular verb? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) What is the past participle of the verb *finish*? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) What is the present participle of the verb *stop*? \_\_\_\_\_

### Principle Parts of IRREGULAR Verbs

*\*The simple past and past participle are the ones to watch carefully.*

MAIN VERB (Irregular)	(SIMPLE) PRESENT	(SIMPLE) PAST*	PAST PARTICIPLE*	PRESENT PARTICIPLE	INFINITIVE
bring	bring(s)	<b>brought</b>	auxiliary + <b>brought</b>	auxiliary + bringing	to bring
catch	catch(es)	<b>caught</b>	auxiliary + <b>caught</b>	auxiliary + catching	to catch
swim	swim(s)	<b>swam</b>	auxiliary + <b>swum</b>	auxiliary + swimming	to swim
cut	cut(s)	<b>cut</b>	auxiliary + <b>cut</b>	auxiliary + cutting	to cut
keep	keep(s)	<b>kept</b>	auxiliary + <b>kept</b>	auxiliary + keeping	to keep
fed	feed(s)	<b>fed</b>	auxiliary + <b>fed</b>	auxiliary + feeding	to feed
bend	bend(s)	<b>bent</b>	auxiliary + <b>bent</b>	auxiliary + bending	to bend
tell	tell(s)	<b>told</b>	auxiliary + <b>told</b>	auxiliary + telling	to tell
lay (put/place)**	lay(s)	<b>laid</b>	auxiliary + <b>laid</b>	auxiliary + laying	to lay
lie (recline)**	lie(s)	<b>lay</b>	auxiliary + <b>lain</b>	<b>auxiliary + lying</b>	to lie
feel	feel(s)	<b>felt</b>	auxiliary + <b>felt</b>	auxiliary + feeling	to feel
hang	hang(s)	<b>hung</b>	auxiliary + <b>hung</b>	auxiliary + hanging	to hang
stand	stand(s)	<b>stood</b>	auxiliary + <b>stood</b>	auxiliary + standing	to stand
find	find(s)	<b>found</b>	auxiliary + <b>found</b>	auxiliary + finding	to find
come	come(s)	<b>came</b>	auxiliary + <b>come</b>	auxiliary + coming	to come
begin	begin(s)	<b>began</b>	auxiliary + <b>begun</b>	auxiliary + beginning	to begin
run	run(s)	<b>ran</b>	auxiliary + <b>run</b>	auxiliary + running	to run
know	know(s)	<b>knew</b>	auxiliary + <b>known</b>	auxiliary + knowing	to know
swear	swear(s)	<b>swore</b>	auxiliary + <b>sworn</b>	auxiliary + swearing	to swear

There are hundreds of irregular English verbs, and most native speakers recognize them intuitively. This website contains a comprehensive list:

<http://www.englishirregularverbs.com/irregularverbs.html>

- 1) I **ring** the bell today. Yesterday, I \_\_\_\_\_ the bell. I have \_\_\_\_\_ the bell many times before.
- 2) I **write** in my notebook. Last week, I \_\_\_\_\_ a poem. I have \_\_\_\_\_ a letter to my teacher.
- 3) I **lie** in my bed. Yesterday, I \_\_\_\_\_ down for a nap. I have \_\_\_\_\_ in the sun for hours.