

## **Essential Grammar: A WRITE IT WELL GUIDE**

Just what you need to write professionally  
and correctly in today's workplace

**A Training Program**

### **LEADER'S GUIDE**

This extended excerpt includes all the leader guide's introduction pages, and sample pages for leading *Essential Grammar* lessons.



**Write It Well**

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This Leader's Guide is to be used in conjunction with the book *Essential Grammar: A Write It Well Guide*. Please contact Write It Well to order the book or additional copies of this guide.

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# Introduction

## How to Use This Guide

This Leader's Guide is designed to accompany *Essential Grammar*, a program that explains how to write business documents with grammar, punctuation, and word usage that reflect the guidelines for standard U.S. English.

You can use the book in workshops, for small-group study, or in individual coaching programs. Although it's helpful for a trainer to have a background in writings, it is not essential for success with this program. *Essential Grammar*, along with this Leader's Guide and the accompanying PowerPoint slides, provide the content and activities you will need to conduct a successful training program.

The guide is organized into three major units: introductory guidelines to help you prepare for training; step-by-step lesson modules; and an appendix containing sample letters, checklists, and frequently asked questions.

The eight lessons outlined in this guide are designed as modules that can be taught as units in a program lasting one day. Each lesson in the guide has an easy-to-follow layout complete with color coding and icons for quick reference during training. Each lesson is also designed so that it can be taught in a study group or coaching setting. For a detailed explanation of how to work with the lesson plans, see the Sample Agenda, the Lesson-by-Lesson Guide, and the Text Colors and Icons guide on pp. 19–22.

## Preparation Equals Success

Ideally, as a trainer or coach, you should spend at least 8 hours preparing for a day of training when working with new materials. To ensure training success, please read both the primary text for this training program, *Essential Grammar*, as well as this Leader's Guide in full. Then, follow the step-by-step recommendations for how to prepare for training provided in the next section.

At Write It Well, we are not only instructional designers, but trainers. We're sensitive to the limited time that workplace trainers have for preparation. But over 25 years of experience has taught us that the more time you spend preparing, the more successful your training program will be. So please read

on. In the following pages, you'll find suggestions on how to plan, deliver, and follow up a program to meet the needs of different audiences in different situations.

## Characteristics of a Successful Learning Program

Learning programs differ in terms of the number of participants, the length of time available for training, and the needs of both the organization and participants. But all successful learning programs share these characteristics:

- **Successful learning programs engage participants in the learning process.**

Few people learn new skills simply by reading or listening to a lecture. They learn by thinking about the concepts and information in terms of their own situations and by trying out the new techniques. For writing, that means providing plenty of opportunities for participants to discuss the issues, practice new techniques, and apply the learning to writing projects of their own.

- **Successful learning programs are based on clear, relevant behavioral objectives.**

Objectives should specify what people will be able to do when the training is complete. Then the objectives serve as a road map for designing the learning program and for measuring its effects. The objectives for a given program depend on the needs of the audience and the organization, and on what you can reasonably accomplish in the time available. If possible, ask participants to begin thinking about their objectives before the workshop begins and then share those objectives (if participants are willing) as part of your opening activities.

- **Successful learning programs build on what people already know, and recognize their experiences.**

Everyone in your organization writes already. What they need are tools and techniques that help them write in consistently correct and standard English. You can encourage participants to draw on their own experience so they can identify what they are doing well and develop the skills they need to improve.

- **Successful learning programs use relevant examples and help people apply what they learn to their “real-world” challenges.**

People need to see how what they are learning relates to the kind of writing they do at work. In addition to the examples in *Essential Grammar*, consider providing additional examples of writing from your own organization. Also provide opportunities for participants to apply what they learn.

## Facilitation Guidelines

A successful learning program is one that engages participants and helps them apply what they learn. Below are some suggestions for ways to help the participants get the most out of training and keep the class running smoothly.

- **Encourage questions and discussion.**

People learn by asking questions and discussing the way the techniques they're learning apply to specific situations. Encourage discussions, but manage them so they do not go on too long or veer off track. Bring them to a close when the points have been made, when people begin to repeat themselves or go off on tangents, or when the time is up for that topic.

Be prepared to respond to issues and questions that are not addressed in *Essential Grammar*. You might also want to do some additional reading and research on your own so that you feel comfortable with questions. (See the Resources section at the back of the book itself.)

If someone asks a question you can't answer, you might turn the question back to the class—someone else might have an idea. And you should always feel free to say, “Sorry, but I don't have an answer to that question. I'll do some research and get back to you.”

- **Explain what is not covered in the workshop.**

People may come expecting to learn how to diagram a sentence or hear a specialist's definitions of pluperfect verb tenses. When you review the objectives at the beginning of the workshop, explain that the purpose of the *Essential Grammar* textbook is to help a general audience of businesspeople master the essentials of grammar and punctuation in U.S. English. Further resources for learning about grammar and punctuation are listed at the end of the textbook.

- **Vary the way that participants do the exercises.**

Instead of asking participants to do all the exercises individually, suggest that they work with a partner or in groups of 3 to 5 to complete some of the activities. Rotate the pairs and groups so people have an opportunity to work with others.

- **Watch the time.**

The times indicated in this Leader's Guide are approximations. The actual time it takes to run a training session depends on such factors as whether you cover all the material and do all the practice exercises, the size of your group, and how inclined the group is to ask questions.

Be sure to leave extra time so that you do not have to rush through anything, leave out the interactions that are crucial to the success of training, or skip over any important content. If you finish a section early, you can always add an activity or cover more material from *Essential Grammar*.

- **Practice.**

Before running a training program for the first time, go through each section carefully. Decide which exercises you will ask the group to do in class, which you will use as pre-work or between-session assignments, and which you will leave for people to do on their own. Practice delivering the introductions and explanations, and time yourself. See how long it takes you to do the exercises yourself.

- **Remember that people work at different speeds.**

Some participants will finish the practice exercises quickly. Others like to take lots of time and are usually still working when the time runs out.

The best you can do is to try for the middle. Provide additional activities for those who finish early and explain that those who don't have a chance to finish will have an opportunity to complete the assignments on their own (one of the advantages of a self-study program). Explain that it's not always important to finish an exercise to get the full advantage.

# The Training Program

## Planning a Training Program

Planning a successful training program requires some time and attention. In the following section, you'll find suggestions and guidelines that will get you started. Here is an overview of the steps:

- Learn about your audience
- Review *Essential Grammar*
- Choose the type of training
- Communicate with participants
- Consider pre-work
- Review participants' writing samples
- Follow-up for the training

## Learn about Your Audience

The English language offers an endless field of study, and everyone can learn more about grammar and punctuation or build a larger vocabulary.

What experienced managers and supervisors need are strategies and techniques that will help them write correctly and project a consistently credible image of their organizations. New supervisors might need to learn more about grammar and punctuation so that their writing skills equal their growing professional expertise. And all participants can build on what they are already doing well—learning clear guidelines for correct writing and increasing their confidence as business writers.

Begin planning your learning program by finding out as much as you can about what participants already know, and what they need to know. Here are some steps to take:

Talk with key people in the organization to identify the grammar and punctuation problems that come up when people write—internally and externally.

Interview stakeholders and/or participants to gather information about participants' objectives for training. (See more on p. 14 in the section "Customize the Course for Your Organization and Audience.")

Review representative samples of the kind of documents people write to identify the kinds of problems that need to be addressed. (See more in the "Customize the Course for Your Organization and Audience" section on p. 14.)

## Review *Essential Grammar*

Even if you are an experienced writing-skills teacher, begin by going through *Essential Grammar: A Write It Well Guide* as if you were a workshop participant. Do the exercises and assignments so you will know firsthand what you are asking the participants to do. Keep track of the time it takes you to complete each exercise. Although this guide includes approximate times for the lessons, you may want to refer to your own times as you plan your program.

After you are familiar with *Essential Grammar*, study the Sample Agenda, the Lesson-by-Lesson Guide, and the Text Colors and Icons guide on pp. 19–22.

Keep the following in mind:



The "workbook" icons like the one on the left indicate the pages of *Essential Grammar* that your participants will need to turn to during the workshop.

When this Leader's Guide asks you to **READ ALOUD** a portion of the workbook text, you can ask for volunteers to read. You can also summarize the text in your own words as long as you convey the message accurately.



The practice exercises in each lesson are indicated by the icon on the left. Be sure that you are familiar enough with each practice to give participants clear instructions and answer their questions.

## Choose the Type of Training

You can use *Essential Grammar* in different types of learning programs, including the following:

- Workshops and other classroom training
- Small-group training, such as study groups
- Individual coaching programs or tutorials

The type and duration of the program will depend on your audience's needs and learning preferences, and on the time that participants have available.

### Workshops and Other Classroom Training

*Essential Grammar: A Write It Well Guide* can be used as the primary text in a course on business writing, but it can also be used as a supplementary text in any management training program. A classroom setting gives you the opportunity to explain and expand on the material, and allows students to learn from one another through discussion and group practice. When planning your classroom program, consider these issues:

#### Schedule the workshop:

- Be realistic about time. It takes at least two full days to cover the aspects of all eight lesson modules outlined in this guide while giving participants sufficient opportunities for discussion and practice. If you have less time, focus on the topics that are most important for the group. If you try to cover too much in too little time, you'll spend most of your time talking, and people will learn very little.
- Workshop or class sessions should be at least half a day long, and the entire program—not including follow-up activities—should be completed within 2 weeks.
- You can conduct an effective learning program for groups as large as 20–25 people. But the larger the group, the more difficult it is to manage discussions and give people individual attention while they work on their own writing projects. If possible, keep class sizes to a maximum of 15 to 16 people.

**Prepare the workshop environment:**

- To facilitate discussion and learning, avoid the traditional classroom setting, where everyone faces the instructor. If possible, seat people informally at tables in groups of 3 to 5 (the tables create natural discussion groups). Arrange the tables so that participants can easily see each other, you, and the visual aids.
- Arrange for the room and the equipment you'll need well ahead of time: i.e., a laptop and/or slide projector, two flip chart easels with pads and marking pens, a whiteboard, pens, masking tape, writing tablets, reference books, and name tents. If possible, provide refreshments, especially for classes that begin early in the morning.
- Prepare visual aids—a PowerPoint presentation or flip chart pages—to illustrate the key concepts you'll be teaching. This Leader's Guide includes a PowerPoint presentation that you can use as slides or print out. Add any others that you think might be helpful.
- Arrive at class early enough to set out the materials, and make sure the equipment is working and the room is set up properly.

### **Manage the workshop curriculum:**

- If your organization has a style guide and/or writing guidelines, include a review and discussion of those documents and process in your learning program. (Pay particular attention to style guide rules for punctuation—e.g., the series comma, covered on p. 73 of this Leader's Guide and pp. 168–69 of *Essential Grammar*.) Show your participants how what they are learning in the book is related to your organization's writing processes. If there are any significant differences between the lessons in the book and your organization's processes, be prepared to discuss them.
- If you break up the training into multiple sessions, ask participants to do their reading between class sessions so you can use class time for such activities as discussions, practice, and explaining and reinforcing key points.
- Expect participants to raise issues and ask questions that are not covered in the book. Before the class begins, you might want to do some additional reading and research on your own. And always feel comfortable saying, "I don't know the answer to that question, but I'll find out and get back to you."

## Study Groups

Study groups are small groups (usually 3–7 people) who meet for 1 to 2 hours at a time to work together on a learning program. Study groups facilitate the learning process by providing a structure, mutual support, and encouragement. They are excellent ways for team or department members to explore the issues involved in using e-mail effectively and efficiently.

Here are some points to consider about study groups:

- Study groups work best if one person—a group member, a manager, or a training representative—takes on the responsibility of scheduling meetings, reserving meeting space, etc. When possible, study groups should have a private place to meet.
- Group members should do most of the reading and application exercises on their own, using the meeting time to discuss their experiences and observations.
- Study group meetings should be held at least twice a week, for a minimum of 1 hour, and attendance should be required (with exceptions made only for real emergencies). At the end of each meeting, members should agree on specific assignments to be completed by the next meeting. The entire program should be completed within 4 weeks.

The group should use the first meeting to establish objectives and set up a schedule, both of which should be written down and distributed to all participants. The group can also use this meeting to discuss the relationship of the learning program to their day-to-day work and career goals.

- One or two follow-up meetings 4–6 weeks after the end of the learning program can help reinforce what people learned, and give them opportunities to share ideas for continuing to improve.

**Individual coaching programs and tutorials:**

Individual coaching programs, or tutorials, are a more structured version of a self-study program. They can be supervised by a manager, a training specialist, or even a colleague who has gone through the book and has a good grasp of the material. Coaching programs work best when they are completed within a 4–6 week period and then followed up periodically.

The person who is supervising the coaching program usually does the following:

- Works with the participant to clarify the objectives, agree on assignments, and establish a schedule
- Remains available to answer questions while the participant completes the assignments
- Checks in periodically to discuss progress, review the participants' work, etc.
- Follows up in 4 to 6 weeks to help reinforce the learning and discuss remaining issues

## Communicate with Participants

It's a good idea to make contact with the workshop participants before the workshop. You should introduce yourself to the group, ask participants to send you a sample of their writing (or to bring a sample to class), and offer an agenda for the workshop you'll lead.

It's helpful to ask participants to have a sample of their own writing to refer to during the workshop. Ask them to choose samples that have not been edited by anyone else. Explain that the samples will remain confidential—participants will use them from time to time to check their own writing for concepts covered in class.

Engaging people in advance helps participants do the following:

- Tell you what they hope to accomplish in the workshop
- Get “buy in” to the training
- Think about their own writing—what they have trouble with and/or would like to improve
- Have a sample to work on during class which makes the workshop even more relevant.

You can also use the first point of contact as an opportunity to assign pre-work (see p. 12 for the “**Consider Pre-Work**” section) or to get more information from the group that will help you customize the workshop (see p. 14 for the “**Customize the Course for Your Organization and Audience**” section).

## Consider Pre-Work

Depending on the amount of training time you have available and the nature of your group, you might ask participants to complete some pre-work assignments. Asking people to think in advance about the “what and why” of training creates a positive and productive framework for the workshop.

Pre-work might include reading selected material or completing selected exercises in *Essential Grammar: A Write It Well Guide*.

## Review Participants' Writing Samples

A review of participants' writing when you are planning the learning program helps you determine how to focus the program on their needs. Reviewing their writing during and after the program allows you to evaluate their progress and give them useful feedback.

When you review printed copies of participants' writing, make your comments in pencil, not pen—and certainly not in a red pen. Also, be sure to write legibly. If you review the writing online, you can use Microsoft Word's Track Changes feature to insert your comments.

Keep the following in mind:

- Resist the impulse to edit the writing. Instead, explain what is correct and what isn't, and ask the participant to make the revisions.
- Keep all writing samples confidential. Never show any participant's writing to their colleagues as either a good or bad example without the person's express permission.

## **Customize the Course for Your Organization and Audience**

Every organization, every department, and every person is different. While this program was designed to suit the needs of more than one organization, department, and person, you can customize the program to address the particular needs of your audience.

There are a number of ways to customize this course to meet your audience's particular needs. Consider one or more of the following ways:

1. Use the information in the e-mail and survey that you send out (see the **“Communicate with the Participants”** section on p. 11) to see if there are trends in participants' responses, and if what they say in the survey matches what you see in the samples (see more in the **“Review Participants' Writing Samples”** section on p. 13). Use your findings to create new or revised PowerPoint slides of your own in advance of the workshop.
2. Identify the documents that your organization or department writes most often and incorporate them into the workshop. Insert slides, create handouts, and develop exercises for the sample documents.
3. Conduct a few internal interviews with stakeholders to find out more about what the participants should learn. Use that information to focus your attention during the workshop.

## **Consider These In-Class Activities and Exercises**

Every training group is different. You might know that your group will work well individually or you might know in advance that in order to make your workshop a success, you'll need to incorporate more group activities.

There are a number of different kinds of activities and exercises that you can add to this workshop. We've offered a few of them that you can consider adding.

1. At the end of the workshop, ask people to write down a list of ten points of correct English that everyone in the organization should follow when they write to others. Give them 5–10 minutes to write the list. When the time is up, go around the room collecting—and flipcharting—one unique guideline from each participant, until everyone has added at least three guidelines, or participants don't have anything new to add. Ask people to use a marker to “vote” for the top ten guidelines. Tally the vote, type up the list, and send it out to participants when the training is over.
2. Collect samples of your organization's frequently used forms or documents, distribute them, and talk about any problematic language usage.
3. Give participants a few minutes during the opening to talk about their objectives with a partner or in small groups. When the time is up, ask each group to share two or three of their objectives.
4. Hand out a “poor” writing sample (not identifiable as any individual's work) and ask participants to identify grammar errors, punctuation errors, and misused words.
5. Ask participants to revise the writing sample so that it's in correct, professional English.
6. Ask participants to edit something they have written and hand it in to you. Review their assignments to see whether they caught and fixed all the problems, and return them to the participants with your comments.
7. Remind participants that being an observant reader is one way to improve their own writing. Ask them to look for examples of correctly written and poorly written e-mail, letters, and other documents and share their observations of what works and what doesn't with the group.
8. Ask participants to exchange something they have written with a partner. Give the teams time to read their partner's writing. Encourage each person to ask for specific feedback, such as, “Are my pronoun references clear?” “Did you see any incorrect verbs?” “Are there any punctuation errors?” and so on. The rule is that people can only give feedback that their partner asks for.

Additional activities are useful for people who finish assignments early. You can also use them for the entire class to supplement the activities in the book.

For people who finish early:

1. Give them copies of documents with grammar mistakes, punctuation mistakes, and incorrect word choices. Ask them to identify and correct the problematic language.
2. Provide copies of newspaper articles. Ask them to look for an examples of well-written sentences. Or ask them to circle and explain correct and incorrect examples of punctuation and grammar that they've seen in their own or others' writing.
3. Suggest that they complete any exercises in the book that you have skipped.

## Follow-up for the Training

Continuing the focus after the program increases the likelihood that participants will write and proofread more carefully, and that these changes will become permanent. When possible, extend the benefits of training by building in follow-up assignments and activities. Here are some ways to reinforce what people learn:

- Give participants an assignment to complete within a week of the last session. The assignment should include examples of the kinds of correct grammar, punctuation, and word choices you cover in the training. Ask them to send you the final product, and return it with your comments.
- At the end of the last session, ask participants to send you something they write 4 weeks and/or 8 weeks later. Return the document with your comments.
- Three months after the workshop, meet with participants to review key learning points and give them a chance to ask questions.
- Periodically check in with participants by e-mail or in person to see how things are going and answer any questions they might have.
- Give participants an assignment to complete within 2 weeks of the last scheduled program activity.
- Two or three weeks later, send out a list of the “top 5 challenges when writing an important document in correct English” or some other list of tips or tools that will jog participants’ memory about how to write correctly.
- Ask people to send you a sample of a review they wrote and return the document with your comments.
- Consider holding office hours with participants to review key learning points, discuss issues, and let them ask questions.

## Agenda for a Two-Day Training

### Day One

Opening: Introductions, Objectives, and Agenda

- Parts of Speech: Part 1
- Parts of Speech: Part 2
- The Sentence

#### Lunch

- Pronouns
- Verbs

Recap

### Day Two

- Articles
- Commas
- Apostrophes, Semicolons, Colons, Dashes, and Parentheses

#### Lunch

- Commonly Confused Words
- Proofreading Strategies

Recap

# Lesson-by-Lesson Guide

## Lesson Outlines

This introduction includes tips for how participants can use *Essential Grammar* for independent study and also practice and remember the guidelines they learn.

---

### Introduction and Overview

The Introduction includes tips for getting the most out of *Essential Grammar*, and the sidebar on p. 4 suggests a highly effective way they can help themselves remember what they learn.

---

### Lesson 1: Terms

In this lesson, participants review the terms for parts of speech and the parts of a sentence. When you understand these terms, you'll be ready to master the rest of the workbook's grammar and punctuation content.

---

### Lesson 2: The Sentence

Participants learn to write complete, correct sentences by identifying and solving common sentence problems.

---

### Lesson 3: Pronouns

Participants learn how to use pronouns so readers can easily recognize what person or thing you're referring to.

---

### Lesson 4: Verbs

Participants review the different forms and tenses of regular and irregular verbs.

---

**Lesson 5: Articles**

Participants review the three articles used in English: *a*, *an*, and *the*.

---

**Lesson 6: Commas**

Participants learn five rules for using commas correctly. Commas are the most frequently used and most frequently misused punctuation marks.

---

**Lesson 7: Other Punctuation Marks**

Participants review the uses and misuses of semicolons, colons, apostrophes, hyphens, dashes, and parentheses.

---

**Lesson 8: Commonly Confused Words**

In this lesson, participants learn to recognize differences between words that writers often confuse.

# Text Colors and Icons

In the following lesson scripts, the **green text** indicates what you should say. The **black text** indicates what you should do. Most **green text** is taken verbatim from *Essential Grammar*, and some **green text** includes additional language you can use to further explain grammar and punctuation details.

Text you should **READ ALOUD** is indicated in bold capital letters. **Purple text** indicates that a participant should read from the book or a slide.



pp. 21–22

Turn to the indicated pages of *Essential Grammar: A Write It Well Guide*.



Record items on a flip chart page or whiteboard, or refer to a flip chart page that you have already posted.



Ask participants to do a practice exercise.



Read a note or caution.



SLIDE 1

Show a specific slide.

# Essential Grammar Training

## PART ONE:

### TERMS, THE SENTENCE, PRONOUNS, AND VERBS

## Introduction and Overview

**TIME: 30 minutes**

**PURPOSE:** to make introductions, help participants feel comfortable, explain what you will cover in the workshop, and tell people when to expect breaks.

SLIDE 1

When participants enter, Slide 1 should be on the screen. Tell people that the *Essential Grammar* books on the tables are theirs to write in and to take with them after class. They can start to look through them and can spend the next few minutes—while you're waiting for the rest of the participants to arrive and get settled—to read through the Introduction (pages 1–4). You can repeat this message as other people enter the room.

Greet the participants as they enter and ask them to write their names on the name tents you've provided at each seat.

Introduce yourself and tell the group a little about your relevant experience. If participants do not know one another, ask them to introduce themselves.



SLIDE 1

## SLIDE 2

Explain the purpose of the workshop.

Many people think they only needed to know correct grammar and punctuation to make good grades in school.

But correct grammar is also an essential part of your professional toolkit. This workshop is an opportunity to learn—or relearn—guidelines for writing professionally and correctly in the workplace.



## SLIDE 2

### **Describe the Environment and Ground Rules**

Tell participants when to expect breaks and lunch and provide any other logistical information they need, such as the location of rest rooms.

### **Introduce the *Essential Grammar* Workbook**

The *Essential Grammar* workbook is the text for the workshop. This is your book, and I encourage you to write in it. We won't be using every page or section in the book, but I encourage you to read the remaining pages and do the remaining exercises after the workshop.

## Review Objectives

Now let's take a few minutes to think about what you would like to accomplish during this workshop.

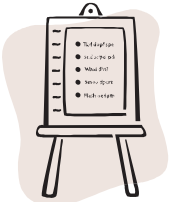


pp. 1–2

Ask participants to read the list of lesson titles on pp. 1–2 of the *Essential Grammar* book and underline the lessons that refer to aspects of writing that they find particularly challenging. Ask them to write any other objectives they have for this workshop on p. 2.



Would anyone like to read one of the aspects of grammar or punctuation that you underlined, or mention another aspect of correct writing that you added to the list?



Elicit a few additional objectives and record them on a flip chart page.

Be sure to point out any additional objectives participants mention that you are not going to cover in the workshop.

## SLIDE 3

## Review the Agenda

Cover the agenda. Explain how much ground you will cover in the class, what topics are too big for a one-day training, and how their books are a resource for further learning.

Here are the topics we'll cover to help you achieve those objectives:

- The parts of speech
- The sentence
- Pronouns
- Verbs

## SLIDE 4

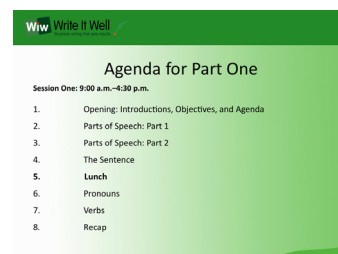
The overall goal is to give you tools and techniques for using correct grammar and punctuation in the writing you do for work. Later in the workshop, we'll focus on punctuation marks and word choices.

In Part One of the workshop, we'll focus on grammar terms and parts of speech. Some terms and information may be new to you while other terms and other information will be familiar.

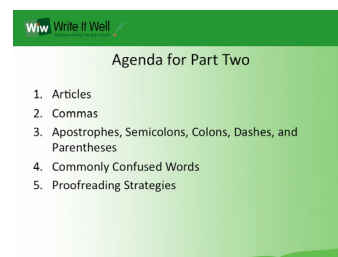
English grammar and punctuation are large and intricate topics. It's impossible to cover them in a day, so we'll be sticking to essentials. Your book has much more information than we'll cover today, and it includes a list of resources at the end to help you learn more about correct English.

## SLIDE 5

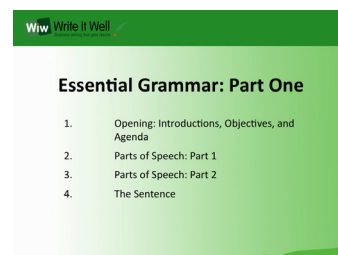
Today, you'll do various exercises that are designed to help you learn, and you'll apply what you learn to your own writing. You'll do some work on your own, some in small groups, and some as an entire group.



## SLIDE 3



## SLIDE 4



## SLIDE 5

## SLIDE 6



## Introductions and Objectives

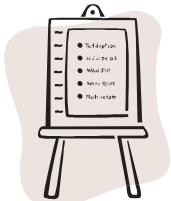
Tell participants when to expect breaks and lunch and provide any other logistical information they need, such as the location of rest rooms. Then ask participants to jot down two or three questions they have about grammar and punctuation.

Does anyone have questions before we begin?

Let's start with an overview of why correct grammar and punctuation are important. Write down at least three questions you have about grammar and punctuation.

When you're done, each of you will share your name, position, and one of your questions.

Please also share some of your learning objectives with us—for instance, some aspects of grammar, punctuation, and word usage that you find difficult, and that you'd like to use correctly every time you write.



Elicit responses and record them on a flip chart page.

Be sure to note any learning objectives that participants mention but that you won't have time to cover in the workshop. You might check quickly to see if a mentioned topic is covered in *Essential Grammar*; if it isn't, point everyone to the Resources section on p. 231 for further learning.

### Introductions & Objectives for the Course

- Write down at least three questions you have about grammar and punctuation.
- Share your name, position, and one of your questions.
- Finally, tell us your learning objectives for the course

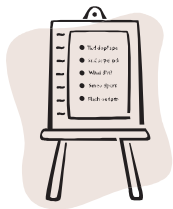
## SLIDE 6

## SLIDE 7

## Writing Assignment

This assignment helps participants think about how correct grammar and punctuation boost their own and their organization's credibility. It also helps them think about how incorrect language can diminish their own and their employers' credibility.

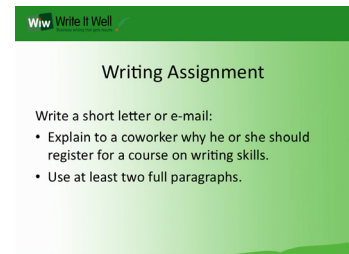
**Write a short letter or e-mail. Explain to a coworker why he or she should register for a course on writing skills. Use at least two full paragraphs.**



When the participants have written their sample e-mails, ask for volunteer or two to read their e-mails out loud.

Use a flip chart to record ideas that explain how good grammar and punctuation help individuals in business and reflect well on the organizations they represent through their writing.

When you're done, you're ready to move on to Lesson 1.



**Wiw Write It Well**

**Writing Assignment**

Write a short letter or e-mail:

- Explain to a coworker why he or she should register for a course on writing skills.
- Use at least two full paragraphs.

## SLIDE 7

## Lesson 1: Terms

**TIME: 90 minutes with a 15-minute break**

This lesson helps participants grasp the parts of speech and parts of a sentence. They'll build on these terms to understand more about grammar and punctuation through the rest of the training.



p. 7

Ask someone to read aloud from p. 7—the first page of Lesson 1—under **INTRODUCTION**.

If you needed to repair a leaky faucet by yourself, you might have to understand the names of its parts and how they fit together properly. That way, when the instructions mentioned a Phillips-head screwdriver or a neoprene washer, you'd know which tool or component to pick up.

Correct grammar and punctuation are similar. To grasp the mechanics of correct writing, it's very helpful when you can recognize a few specialty terms for the parts of speech and the parts of a sentence. This lesson covers both kinds of terminology. The parts of speech are up first.

Tell the participants to look quickly at the list on p. 7 of the parts of speech. Explain again that you won't have time in one day to review all these parts of speech or all the parts of a sentence.

Instead you'll cover essential aspects of grammar—starting with nouns.

## SLIDE 8

## Types of Nouns



pp. 8–10

**READ ALOUD** the description of nouns on p. 8:

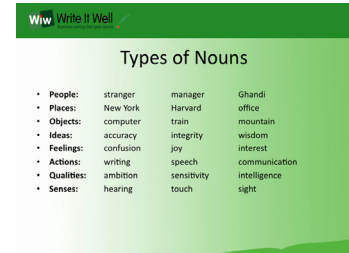
A noun names a person, place, thing, or idea. You sit on, write with, look at, wear, and hear nouns; you also think and learn with one.

Here are some different kinds of nouns. Notice that they're not only things you can experience with your senses: nouns can also be abstract words that refer to activities, sensations, emotions, or concepts.

The list on p. 8 is reproduced on the slide. Read through the different categories of nouns.



Ask readers to do Practice 1.1 on p. 9 and check the answers on p. 10.



**Wiw Write It Well**

### Types of Nouns

- **People:** stranger      manager      Ghandi
- **Places:** New York      Harvard      office
- **Objects:** computer      train      mountain
- **Ideas:** accuracy      integrity      wisdom
- **Feelings:** confusion      joy      interest
- **Actions:** writing      speech      communication
- **Qualities:** ambition      sensitivity      intelligence
- **Senses:** hearing      touch      sight

## SLIDE 8

## Lesson 2: The Sentence

TIME: 3 hours followed by a 1-hour lunch

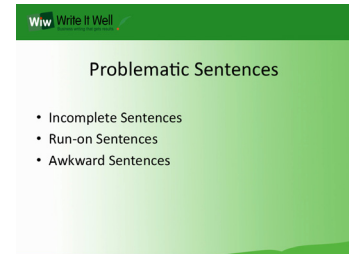
SLIDE 20

### Problematic Sentences

READ ALOUD the start of the Lesson 2 introduction on p. 46:



p. 46



SLIDE 20

#### INTRODUCTION

This lesson covers three of the most common types of problematic sentences in business writing.

First, **incomplete sentences**, also called **fragments**, express only part of a thought:

During the reorganization last March.

Because we reorganized, renamed, and relocated the company last March.

Second, **run-on sentences** join two independent clauses incorrectly:

We will be glad to refund your deposit, send us your request in writing.

And third, **clumsy or awkward sentences** are difficult for readers to follow for a variety of reasons that we'll cover in a bit.

## Lesson 4: Verbs

TIME: 1 hour

SLIDE 35

### Some Verb-Related Errors

Read Slide 35 and elicit responses for how the sentences should have the following correct verb tenses:

The CEO is expected to make an announcement about the merger.

Several employees are going to be promoted.

Yesterday, Amelia signed up

Wiw Write It Well

Find the error in each sentence:

1. The CEO are expected to make an announcement about the merger.
2. Several employees is going to be promoted.
3. Yesterday, Amelia sign up three clients before lunch.

SLIDE 35

SLIDE 36

### Common Problems with Verbs

**Subject-verb agreement** and **inappropriate verb tenses** are two of the most common verb-related grammar problems. We'll start with subject-verb agreement.

Wiw Write It Well

Common Problems with Verbs

- Subject-Verb Agreement
- Inappropriate Tense

SLIDE 36

## Lesson 7: Other Punctuation Marks


TIME: 90 minutes followed by a 1-hour lunch break

SLIDE 50

### List of Punctuation Marks

Now that we've looked at commas, we'll cover five other key punctuation marks:

- Apostrophes '
- Semicolons ;
- Colons :
- Dashes —
- Parentheses ( )



Wiw Write It Well	
Apostrophe	'
Semicolon	;
Colon	:
Dash	—
Parentheses	( )

SLIDE 50

## Closing Exercises

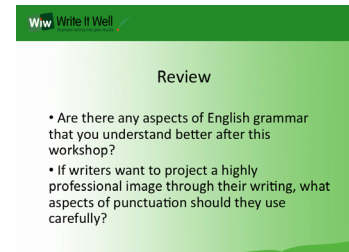
TIME: 30 minutes

SLIDE 57

### Training Review

Read Slide 57:

- Are there any aspects of English grammar and punctuation that you understand better after this workshop?
- If writers want to project a highly professional image through their writing, what aspects of punctuation should they use especially carefully?



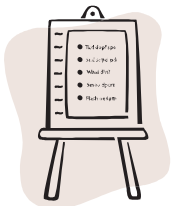
SLIDE 57

Ask participants if they have any remaining questions.

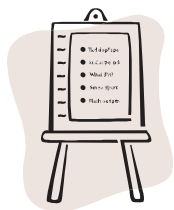
There are two closing exercises.

First, ask participants to do the following:

- Look back at the objectives that they identified at the beginning of the workshop
- Think about what they have learned that is most useful to them
- Write down three actions they will take every time they write for the next six weeks.
- Share their actions with a partner—not discuss them, but just tell their partner what they wrote down.



Go around the room and ask for volunteers to share one of the actions they wrote. Write the actions on a flip chart page.



Second, ask people to make a list of the top ten things people should do when they write for work. Write the responses on a new flip chart page. Collect ideas until there is a long list. Ask people to vote for their top five. Type up this list and send it to people after the training is over.

Thanks very much for your attention during this workshop. Now it's up to you to use what you've learned about writing for work. If you do, I have no doubt that you will write more correctly, more easily, and with more confidence.

If you are using a workshop evaluation form, hand it out now.

The second day may run shorter than the first. You may want to use this time for individual coaching.

## OTHER WRITE IT WELL RESOURCES

### *Professional Writing Skills*

This self-instructional workbook provides a step-by-step process for planning business letters, memos, e-mail, and other business documents that persuade and inform clearly, concisely, and professionally.

### *Just Commas: A Write It Well Guide*

Commas are misused more often than any other punctuation mark. Our user-friendly, self-paced e-learning module covers nine essential comma rules. You'll find it at [www.writeitwell.com](http://www.writeitwell.com) under the Books tab.

### *E-Mail: A Write It Well Guide*

This user-friendly book is packed with information, guidelines, tips, and tools for writing e-mail that communicates clearly and professionally; for making the best use of e-mail time; and for recognizing e-mail risks.

### *Reports, Proposals, and Presentations (forthcoming)*

This book's techniques and information will help you plan and write reports, proposals, and other long documents. It will help you communicate complex information clearly.

### *Writing Performance Reviews*

This user-friendly book is filled with guidelines, tips, and tools that will help you write performance objectives, reviews, appraisals, and other performance documentation that is clear, descriptive, objective, and acceptable in today's workplace.

### *Writing Performance Documentation*

This easy-to-use book includes examples and exercises for ensuring that performance-related writing achieves the organization's highest standards.



We'd be happy to provide you with more information about this leader's guide or any of our other publications and services.

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