

# Essay

## Corrections

### for Argumentative Writing

In order to improve your writing, you must learn to fix the mistakes you are making so that you will not continue to commit the same errors. The numbers/letters I wrote on your essay correspond to the explanation of the errors below.

## Directions:

Number all of the marked errors on your paper for both grammar and content issues. Then, on a sheet of binder paper, work through each of your errors by writing the rule you violated and show me what you would need to do to correct the error. You do NOT need to rewrite the entire essay. Instead, write the rule and isolate/fix the error. These handwritten corrections are due tomorrow, along with your original graded essay.

# Grammar Codes

1. Misspelled word or wrong form of the word. Write the correct spelling of the word 10 times on your paper.
  - 1a. When writing numbers 1-10, write out the word instead of writing the number.
2. Comma error – You have either left out a needed comma or added one where it doesn't belong.
  - 2a. Use a comma between two independent clauses joined by for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so. (FANBOYS)
  - 2b. Use commas to separate items in a series (Ex: I like pears, apples, and oranges.)
  - 2c. Use a comma between two adjectives of a similar meaning or tone used to describe the same noun.  
Ex: The yard was full of romping, running children.
  - 2d. Use a comma to set off introductory elements.  
Ex: Screaming for help, the girl wrestled the raging bear.
  - 2e. Use commas to set off the explainers of the direct quotation.  
Ex: The girl sighed, "Just go without me."
  - 2f. Use a comma to prevent misreading.  
Ex: Ever since, Frank has been a better boy. vs. Ever since Frank has been a little boy (fragment)
  - 2g. Do not use unnecessary commas.
  - 2h. Semicolons are fancy periods, not fancy commas. Do not use them in place of a comma.
3. Sentence fragment. A sentence must have a subject and a predicate. Your sentence is incomplete.
  - 3a. Do not start a sentence with FANBOYS. This makes it a sentence fragment.
4. Comma-splice and/or Run-on. You've joined two or more independent clauses without proper punctuation.  
Incorrect: I got up late this morning, I didn't have time for breakfast.  
Correct: I got up late this morning. I didn't have time for breakfast  
Also correct: I got up late this morning, so I didn't have time for breakfast.  
Also correct: I got up late this morning; I didn't have time for breakfast.  
Also correct: Since I got up late this morning, I didn't have time for breakfast.
5. An apostrophe is in the wrong place and/or missing.
  - 5a. Use an apostrophe to form the possessive of nouns and indefinite pronouns.
  - 5b. "It's" only ever means "it is." The possessive form of "it" is "its."  
Incorrect: It's feet are bruised, so it cannot walk.  
Correct: Its feet are bruised, so it cannot walk.  
Incorrect: Its going to rain today.  
Correct: It's going to rain today.
  - 5c. Use an apostrophe to form the possessive of plural noun ending in "s."  
Ex: It was my parents' decision.
  - 5d. An apostrophe is not needed here.
6. Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks.
7. Avoid needless shifts in verb tense. Verb tense shifting confuses your reader.
8. Pronoun-antecedent agreement error. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in gender, person, and number. Most of these errors are fixed by turning the antecedent into a plural form to match a plural pronoun.
9. Use parallel construction to create a smooth flow.  
Incorrect: He liked to play basketball and riding horses.  
Correct: He liked playing basketball and riding horses.
10. Title was mishandled. Titles of major works (novels, plays, long poems, etc.) are underlined in handwritten essays and italicized on typed essays. Titles of minor works (short stories, poems, songs, etc.) are placed within quotation marks on both handwritten and typed essays. The title of your own original essay is only capitalized. Since your essay hasn't been published, it doesn't receive quotes, underlining, or italics.

# Content Codes

- A. Avoid choppiness in your writing. You likely have stacked several short sentences together, repeatedly used the same sentence starter, or left out crucial transitions.
- B. Omit unnecessary words. This section is fluff, filler, or material that just takes up space without saying anything new. Move your argument forward more quickly.
- C. Do not EVER talk to your reader. Stick to third-person pronouns. You've slipped unnecessary first- or second-person pronouns into your writing and have, therefore, undermined the power of your essay. Whenever possible avoid these words: I, me, my, we, us, our, you, your.
- D. A question is not appropriate here. Instead, make bold, powerful statements.
- E. Avoid clichés, tired phrases, and/or slang. This is formal writing, so use formal language while keeping it fresh.
- F. Find a stronger, more powerful word to use here. Make sure your wording here makes sense, and it's effective.
- G. Confused or contradictory language. I've read this passage three times and I still don't understand what you're trying to say. Clarify your thinking before you begin to write.
- H. Avoid unsure language ("may," "might," etc.) in formal writing; it makes you sound as though you are not sure of what you are writing about and robs your essay of its power. Such words lead to wimpy writing.
- I. Your example is a generalization. Instead, you need to think of a specific, real-world example that illustrates the point you are trying to make. Did this scenario happen to a real-life person? If so, use those details. If not, think of a better example. Specific, concrete examples lead to powerful, effective essays.
- J. Weak analysis. You aren't thinking deeply enough here. You're either just repeating an earlier point you made, you've given strange/off-topic analysis that doesn't really connect to your thesis, or you've played it safe and provided analysis that anyone who has done this research could provide. Instead, you must dig deeper in your thinking and provide unique, compelling analysis.
- K. Frame the quote. Do not slap a quote into a body paragraph without providing the proper framing structure, including a transition and lead-in.
- L. All material from your research must be cited in proper M.L.A. format. You have may have neglected to include your citation or you have improperly formatted the citation.
- M. Issue with your claim or counterclaim.