

CHAPTER 2

THE PARTS OF SPEECH: A REVIEW

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this chapter, you will learn about:

- The eight parts of speech: A review
 - Nouns
 - Pronouns
 - Verbs
 - Adjectives
 - Adverbs
 - Prepositions
 - Conjunctions
 - Interjections
- Writing paragraphs: The topic sentence and unity in the paragraph

Texting, blog, podcast, googling, phishing—These are just a few of the many words from the world of computers that have entered the English language. Although our language has more than a half-million words, it is constantly adding thousands of new ones from every field of human activity. Despite their number, all of these words—long or short, familiar or strange—can be divided into only eight categories: the eight parts of speech. When you learn to recognize the parts of speech, you will be on your way to understanding how the English language works, and you can talk about it intelligently and precisely. Even more important, you will be able to identify the tools that will help you to write clear, interesting, and correct sentences and paragraphs and to become a more confident writer. Our study of grammar and usage continues, therefore, by examining the parts of speech.



Visit <http://www.mywritinglab.com> and click on “The Parts of Speech: A Review” to find animations that explain the noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, and preposition. For each part of speech, you will find sample paragraphs that contain errors for you to detect and correct, as well as short articles that need full revision.

The Noun

We will start with the noun because every English sentence either contains one or is about one. A **noun** is a word that names something—a person, a place, a thing, or an idea.

- electrician, gym, video game, anxiety

Some nouns refer to a general class of persons, places, or things. They are called **common nouns**, and they are not capitalized unless they are used to begin a sentence.

- athlete, state, sports car, building, holiday

Some nouns refer to specific persons, places, or things. They are called **proper nouns**, and they are always capitalized.

- Derek Jeter, Texas, Alfa Romeo, Eiffel Tower, Christmas Eve

As you will see in later chapters, nouns are important because they can work as several parts of the sentence.

The Pronoun

We could not get along without nouns. But occasionally, in order to avoid repetition, we use other words in place of nouns. The words that we substitute for nouns are called **pronouns**.

- As Paul began to take Paul’s biology exam, Paul tried to ignore the beeping sound coming from a cellular phone behind Paul.

This sentence is obviously monotonous because of its overuse of *Paul*. We can improve it by using pronouns.

- As Paul began to take *his* biology exam, *he* tried to ignore the beeping sound coming from a cellular phone behind *him*.

TIP for Spotting Nouns

If you can put a word in the slot in the following sentence, it is a noun.

“A (or An) _____ is remarkable.”

Examples: An *elephant* is remarkable.

A *rainbow* is remarkable.

The pronouns in this sentence are *his*, *he*, and *him*, and their **antecedent** (the word to which they refer) is *Paul*. Here is another sentence with pronouns and an antecedent.

- The runner waved to her fans as she ran the victory lap around the track, and the crowd cheered her.

What are the pronouns in this sentence? What is their antecedent?

Unlike a noun, a pronoun does not name a specific person, place, thing, or idea. You will learn more about pronouns and their uses in Chapters 6 and 7. Meanwhile, you should try to recognize the most common pronouns.

Commonly Used Pronouns

I, me, my, mine	we, us, our, ours
you, your, yours	they, them, their, theirs
he, him, his	anybody, everybody, somebody
she, her, hers	everyone, no one, someone
it, its	something, some, all, many, any
who, whose, whom	each, none, one, this, that, these, those, which, what

EXERCISE 2-1

Underline the nouns and circle the pronouns.

1. The Indianapolis Colts hit a lucky streak when (they) drafted quarterback Peyton Manning in 1998.
2. Since then, (he) has earned many records and awards.
3. Manning has earned five NFL Most Valuable Player awards, made five Pro-Bowl appearances, and won a Super Bowl ring.

4. (His) biggest football achievement was leading the Colts to (their) first Super Bowl victory, in 2007.
5. In 380 passing attempts as a sophomore at the University of Tennessee, Manning suffered just four interceptions—(that) is a national collegiate record.
6. In (his) junior year, (he) had a chance at the NFL but chose to remain in college.
7. “I just wanted to enjoy being a college senior,” Manning told people.
8. Manning’s jersey is the only (one) in Tennessee history to be retired.
9. However, (he) has said that (his) proudest achievements are (those) (that) occur off the field.
10. The PeyBack Foundation helps disadvantaged kids with (their) schoolwork and fitness.
11. Even Manning’s teammates have elected (him) for humanitarian awards.
12. For example, (he) has received the Top 40 Leaders Under 40 Award and Ten Most Outstanding Young Americans Award.
13. Known for (his) good humor and strong family ties, Manning hosted “Saturday Night Live” in (one) of (its) most hilarious episodes.
14. (He) shared the spotlight with (his) father and brothers, introducing (them) and praising (their) own football careers.
15. Then (he) pointed to (his) mother, Olivia, and joked (that) (her) lack of a football career was a bit embarrassing to (their) family; (she) laughed heartily from (her) seat in the audience.

The Verb

Every sentence that you speak or write contains a verb. Sometimes the verb is only implied; usually, however, it is stated. When you can recognize and use verbs correctly, you have taken a big step toward being a better speaker and writer.

A **verb** is a part of speech that expresses action or a state of being and thereby tells us what a noun or pronoun does or what it is. If the verb tells us what a noun or pronoun does, it is an **action verb**.

- Roberta *paints* beautiful landscapes, which she hides in her attic.
- Neil Armstrong *landed* on the moon in 1969.
- Jamal *practices* law at a firm in Staten Island.

If the verb expresses a state of being rather than action, it is a **linking verb**. Linking verbs do not express action; instead, they connect a noun or pronoun with a word or group of words that describe or rename the subject.

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- The subject of tonight’s debate *is* prayers in public school. (*Subject* is linked by the verb *is* to *prayers*, a word that renames it.)
- I.Q. tests *are* unreliable predictors of academic success, according to many educators. (*Tests* is linked to *predictors* by the verb *are*.)
- My new speakers *sound* much better than my old ones. (*Speakers* is linked to the word that describes it—*better*—by the verb *sound*.)
- Computers were very expensive for the average family to purchase in the 1970s. (What words are linked? What word links them?)
- Belize is a country in Central America. (What word renames Belize? How are the two words linked?)

The most common linking verbs are formed from the verb *to be*: *am*, *are*, *is*, *was*, and *were*. Other words often used as linking verbs are *appear*, *become*, *grow*, *remain*, *seem*, and the “sense” verbs: *feel*, *look*, *smell*, *sound*, and *taste*.

Verbs are the only words that change their spelling to show tense. **Tense** is the time when the action of the verb occurs. Notice in the following sentences how the tense or time of the action is changed by the spelling of the verb.

- Our mayor *delivers* an annual message to the citizens of our city. (present tense)
- Last week she *delivered* her message on local television. (past tense)

You will learn more about the use of tense in Chapter 5.

To show additional differences in meaning, verbs often use helping words that suggest the time at which the action of the verb takes place and other kinds of meaning. These words are called **helping/auxiliary verbs**, and they always come before the main verb. Verbs that consist of helping verbs and a main verb are called **verb phrases**. Look carefully at the following sentences.

- I *will* attend Wilmington University next term.
- He *had* studied algebra before learning calculus.
- Zhang *did* not want lunch before completing his chores.
- The sisters *were* saddened by their mother’s decision.
- The child *was* photographed with his new skateboard.
- They *might have been* selected for the job openings already.

Each of the verbs in the preceding sentences consists of a helping/auxiliary verb and a main verb. Here are the common helping/auxiliary verbs. You should memorize them.

Common Helping/Auxiliary Verbs

can, could	have, has, had
may, might, must, ought	do, does, did
shall, should, will, would	am, is, are, was, were, been, be, being

Some verbs can be either helping/auxiliary verbs or main verbs. In other words, if they appear alone without a helping/auxiliary verb, they are main verbs. But if they precede a main verb, they are helping/auxiliary verbs. The following verbs can be either helping/auxiliary verbs or main verbs. You should memorize them.

Forms of <i>to be</i> :	am, is, are, was, were
Forms of <i>to do</i> :	do, does, did
Forms of <i>to have</i> :	has, have, had

Look at the following sentences carefully.

- Victims of the earthquake *were* unable to drink the water. (*Were* is the main verb in this sentence.)
- Victims of the earthquake *were given* food and clothing by the Red Cross. (*Were given* is a verb phrase. The main verb is *given*, and the helping/auxiliary verb is *were*.)
- Hannah *has* a new car. (*Has* is the main verb in this sentence.)
- She *has* already *driven* it two thousand miles. (*Has driven* is a verb phrase. The main verb is *driven*, and the helping/auxiliary verb is *has*.)

TIPS for Recognizing Verbs

An *action verb* is a word that fits in the slot in the following sentence.

"I (or He or She or They) usually _____."

Examples: I usually jog.
She usually snores.
They usually help.

A *linking verb* is a word that fits in the slot in the following sentence.

"I (or He or She or They) _____ happy."

Examples: I am happy.
He is happy.
They were happy.

EXERCISE 2-2

If the italicized word in each sentence is an action verb, write “1”; if the italicized word is a linking verb, write “2”; if the italicized word is a helping/auxiliary verb, write “3.” Use the space provided on the left.

- 2 1. Horses *have been* pets and helpers to humans for thousands of years.
- 1 2. Although a variety of breeds *exists*, there are some general traits that most horses share.
- 2 3. Most horses *are* social animals that enjoy living and moving with other horses.
- 1 4. They *observe* a hierarchy within their groups.
- 3 5. For example, young horses *will* rarely drink water from a trough until older group members have finished drinking.
- 3 6. Until a new horse’s place is determined within the group, many conflicts *may* occur.
- 2 7. Horses *are* natural runners, and they race each other just for fun.
- 3 8. They are also swift learners and *can* master a number of skills to help or amuse their owners.
- 2 9. Like dogs, horses possess acute hearing and can *become* easily frightened by sudden loud noises.
- 2 10. Thanks to equally sharp eyesight, horses *are* able to see far in the distance where another animal is scampering.

The Adjective

In your writing you will often want to modify (or describe) a noun or pronoun. The word you will use is an **adjective**, a word that modifies nouns and pronouns. Adjectives usually answer one of the following questions: *How many? What kind? Which one? What color?*

- **How many?** *Many* students believe that the Social Security system will be bankrupt before they are old enough to retire. (*Many* modifies *students*.)
- **What kind?** *Egg* bagels gave us energy for our hike. (*Egg* modifies *bagels*.)
- **Which one?** *This* backpack was found in the cafeteria. (*This* modifies *backpack*.)
- **What color?** His *purple* socks did not complement his red suit. (*Purple* modifies *socks*.)

The adjectives in the preceding sentences came immediately before the nouns they modified. Some adjectives, however, come after linking verbs and describe the subject of the verb. Adjectives in this position are called **predicate adjectives**. Study the following sentences carefully.

- We were surprised to learn that old pairs of American jeans in Russia are very *expensive*. (*Expensive* is a predicate adjective because it comes after a linking verb—*are*—and modifies the noun *pairs*.)
- After waiting in the hot sun for three days, the refugees became *angry*. (*Angry* is a predicate adjective because it comes after a linking verb—*became*—and modifies the noun *refugees*.)

Possessive pronouns (pronouns that show ownership such as *my*, *your*, *her*, *his*, *our*, and *their*) are adjectives when they come before nouns. Notice the examples.

- *our* apartment
- *their* lunch break
- *my* employer

Demonstrative pronouns (pronouns that point out or indicate) are adjectives when they come before nouns. Notice the following examples.

- *this* building
- *that* statement
- *these* flowers
- *those* books

TIPS for Spotting Adjectives

1. You can add *-er* and *-est* or *more* and *most* to adjectives.

Examples: strong, stronger, strongest
eager, more eager, most eager

2. An adjective will fill the blank in this sentence.

"The (noun) is _____."

Examples: The cupboard is *empty*.

3. Adjectives describe nouns and pronouns.

Examples: The *tired* surfers paddled back to shore.
She is *proud* of her degree in math.

4. Adjectives tell *how many*, *what kind*, *which one*, and *what color*.

Examples: Ryan has *four* dogs, *three* cats, and a *dozen* goldfish.
I have a *German* pen pal and an *Ecuadoran* pen pal.
Did you eat the *last* bagel?
White roses and *yellow* daisies dot her garden.

A special type of adjective is called the **article**. The English language contains three articles: *a*, *an* (used before words that begin with a vowel sound), and *the*.

- After *an* absence of sixteen years, Maricela returned to *the* city of her birth and *a* parade in her honor.

EXERCISE 2-3

A. In the space before each sentence, write the noun or pronoun that is modified by the italicized adjective.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| animal | 1. A 420-million-year-old millipede is the <i>oldest</i> animal known to have lived on land. |
| fossil | 2. The <i>half-inch-long</i> fossil has air holes, which means that it was able to breathe oxygen and live on land. |
| spider | 3. Before this discovery, the earliest known land dweller was a <i>long-legged</i> spider who lived twenty million years later. |
| plant life | 4. If this millipede lived on land at that time, there must have also been moss or <i>small</i> plant life for it to eat. |
| specimen | 5. The <i>tiny</i> specimen was found on a beach near Aberdeen, Scotland, by Mike Newman, a bus driver who holds a degree in geology. |
| discoverer | 6. To honor the <i>studious</i> discoverer, the specimen was named for him: <i>Pneumodesmus newmani</i> . |
| fossils | 7. Millipedes are often called <i>living</i> fossils because they have not changed significantly over millions of years. |
| creatures | 8. Ten thousand species of millipedes have evolved from <i>ancient</i> creatures that once lived in the sea. |
| name | 9. Despite their <i>interesting</i> name, millipedes do not have a thousand legs, and they are not related to centipedes (which do not have a hundred legs). |
| animal category | 10. Millipedes belong to the <i>same</i> animal category as insects, spiders, and crustaceans. |

B. In the space before each sentence, write the predicate adjective that modifies the italicized nouns or pronouns.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| depressed | 1. About 20 percent of veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars become depressed or suffer other stress symptoms. |
| common | 2. <i>Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)</i> is common. |

symptomatic	3. Nightmares, anxiety, <i>panic attacks</i> , flashbacks to traumatic events, and irritability are symptomatic of PTSD.
confrontational or suicidal	4. <i>Veterans</i> who suffer PTSD often become confrontational or suicidal.
able	5. Unfortunately, only about <i>half</i> of the veterans who need help are able to get it.
weak/unfit	6. One reason is that many veterans think <i>they</i> seem weak or unfit for further service if they are diagnosed with PTSD.
alarming	7. The <i>scarcity</i> of health care professionals who have relevant training is alarming.
unnoticeable	8. The Army now screens soldiers at the end of their deployments, but <i>symptoms</i> are often unnoticeable for months afterward.
troubled	9. The military also seeks to provide more anonymity for soldiers <i>who</i> seem troubled.
crucial	10. Given what soldiers sacrifice, <i>it</i> is crucial that they receive help without shame.

The Adverb

Adverbs are words that describe or modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. Study these sentences carefully.

- The huge chopper transported the soldiers *quickly*. (*Quickly* modifies the verb *transported*.)
- The *extremely* tall guard dribbled the basketball *slowly*. (*Extremely* modifies the adjective *tall*, and *slowly* modifies the verb *dribbled*.)
- The tall guard dribbled the basketball *very* slowly. (*Very* modifies the adverb *slowly*.)

Adverbs usually answer the following questions: *When? Where? How? To what extent?*

- **When?** Joe *immediately* realized that he had confused Megan with her sister. (The adverb *immediately* modifies the verb *realized*.)
- **Where?** Please wait *here*. (The adverb *here* modifies the verb *wait*.)
- **How?** The deer struggled *unsuccessfully* to escape. (The adverb *unsuccessfully* modifies the verb *struggled*.)
- **To what extent?** The state capitol building was *completely* remodeled after the election. (The adverb *completely* modifies the verb *was remodeled*.)

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Adjectives and adverbs are often confused. Remember that *adjectives* describe nouns and pronouns, and that *adverbs* modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. Notice the differences in the following sentences.

- Her *loud* hiccups distracted the speaker. (*Loud* is an adjective because it modifies the noun *hiccups*.)
- If you sneeze *loudly*, you will distract the speaker. (*Loudly* is an adverb because it modifies the verb *sneeze*.)

Many adverbs are formed by adding *-ly* to the adjective (as in *loudly*, in the previous sentence). But keep in mind that some adverbs do not end in *-ly* (*above*, *never*, *there*, *very*, and so on). And some words that end in *-ly* are not adverbs (words such as *silly*, *friendly*, and *lovely*).

TIPS for Recognizing Adverbs

1. Adverbs are words that will fit in the following slot.

“He will meet us _____.”

2. Adverbs tell *when*, *where*, *how*, and *to what extent*.

Examples: He will meet us *later*. (*when*)
He will meet us *here*. (*where*)
He will meet us *punctually*. (*how*)
He will meet us *briefly*. (*to what extent*)

EXERCISE 2-4

A. In the space before each sentence, write the adjective, verb, or adverb modified by the italicized adverb.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| <u>Twenty million</u> | 1. <i>Approximately</i> twenty million Americans attend monster truck spectacles every year. |
| <u>crash</u> | 2. Monster trucks have huge tires that enable them to scoot up a ramp, take off, and travel through the air 100 feet, 30 off the ground, then crash <i>dramatically</i> back to earth without being smashed to pieces. |
| <u>Japanese</u> | 3. A common feat is to land on a car, <i>preferably</i> a Japanese import, and crush it. |
| <u>popular</u> | 4. Other <i>very</i> popular events at truck shows include mud racing and dropping drivers strapped in their cars 170 feet in the air onto several vans. |

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| derives | 5. The appeal of monster trucks <i>probably</i> derives from the roar and the mud. |
| stems | 6. It also stems <i>partly</i> from the fantasy most of us have experienced as we have been trapped in traffic, wishing we could push aside the cars around us. |
| have | 7. The trucks <i>inevitably</i> have colorful names such as Carolina Crusher, Bearfoot, and Grave Digger, among others. |
| famous | 8. But the <i>most</i> famous is Bigfoot, the product of Bob Chandler, the originator of the monster truck. |
| gross | 9. Bigfoot-licensed products and souvenirs sold at truck shows gross over \$300 million <i>annually</i> . |
| popular | 10. Over seven hundred monster truck shows a year are held throughout the world, and the <i>most</i> popular drivers enjoy the kind of fame reserved for movie stars. |

B. In the space before each sentence, write the adverb that modifies the italicized word or words.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| often | 1. Polygraphs are often <i>called</i> lie detectors, though they can detect only physiological changes. |
| generally | 2. A polygraph generally <i>uses</i> several medical devices to observe changes in a person's body functions. |
| sometimes | 3. These changes sometimes <i>indicate</i> deceptive behavior by the person taking the test. |
| digitally | 4. Gone are the days of a needle bouncing along chart paper; most polygraphs <i>monitor and record</i> physical data digitally. |
| carefully | 5. During the test, sensors are carefully <i>placed</i> in several locations on the person's body. |
| slightly | 6. Two rubber tubes, placed on the chest and stomach, <i>expand</i> slightly with each breath and note its depth. |
| electrically | 7. To monitor heart rate and blood pressure, signals are <i>transmitted</i> electrically from a plastic cuff around the person's upper arm. |
| heavily | 8. Humans <i>sweat</i> more heavily when under stress, so sensors placed on two fingertips measure the flow. |
| completely | 9. Polygraph results are not completely <i>reliable</i> because someone may show physical changes for reasons besides lying—including exhaustion, effects of medication, and even fear of the test itself. |
| legally | 10. Because of the polygraph's unreliability, private sector employers <i>cannot</i> legally <i>require</i> workers to take polygraph tests, but government agencies, including the FBI and CIA, can administer the tests to their workers and applicants. |

The Preposition

Prepositions are connecting words—they do not have any meaning or content in or of themselves. They exist only to show relationships between other words. For this reason they must simply be learned or remembered. Prepositions are words like *at*, *by*, *from*, and *with* that are usually followed by a noun or pronoun (*at home*, *by herself*, *from Toledo*, and *with you*). The word following the preposition is called its **object**; the preposition and its object are called a **prepositional phrase**.

Here are some prepositional phrases. The object in each prepositional phrase is italicized. Notice that a preposition can have more than one object and that some prepositions are made up of more than one word.

- according to *authorities*
- after *the meeting*
- below *the deck*
- between *you and me*
- from *one coast to another*
- in addition to *requirements in science*
- through *the final week*
- together with *the director and producer*
- within *the hour*
- without *a clue*

Here are some of the most common prepositions. As noted, some prepositions consist of more than one word.

TIPS for Recognizing Prepositions

1. A preposition is a word that will fill the slot in the following sentence.

"The airplane flew _____ the clouds."

Examples: The airplane flew *above*, *below*, *beyond*, *under*, *around*, or *through* the clouds.

2. A preposition is a word that will fill the slot in the following sentence.

"A purse was lying _____ street."

Examples: A purse was lying *in*, *next to*, *alongside*, or *beside* the street. Some prepositions, of course, will not fit either sentence, and they must be learned.

Common Prepositions		
about	concerning	out
above	despite	out of
according to	down	outside
across	due to	over
after	during	past
against	except	regarding
ahead of	for	round
along	from	since
among	in	through
around	in addition to	to
away from	in front of	together with
because of	inside	toward
before	instead of	under
behind	into	underneath
below	like	unlike
beneath	near	until
besides	next to	up
between	of	upon
beyond	off	with
but (when it means <i>except</i>)	on	within
by	onto	without
	on account of	

Prepositional phrases may serve the same function as either adjectives or adverbs in a sentence.

- **Adjective:** News *of an impending rebellion* panicked the government. (The italicized phrase modifies the noun *news*.)
- **Adjective:** The ushers *in blue suits* quieted the crowd. (The italicized phrase modifies the noun *ushers*.)
- **Adverb:** Juan and Ashley left *during the intermission*. (The italicized phrase modifies the verb *left*.)
- **Adverb:** The president spoke *with emotion*. (The italicized phrase modifies the verb *spoke*.)

EXERCISE 2-5

Underline the prepositional phrases in each sentence; write “adv” above the phrase if it is used as an adverbial modifier, or “adj” if it is used as an adjectival modifier.

1. The first symptom ^{adj.} of Alzheimer’s disease ^{adv.} in most older people is loss ^{adj.} of memory.
2. Most patients are not aware ^{adv.} of the problem and don’t realize the need ^{adj.} for an appointment ^{adj.} with a doctor.
3. Alzheimer’s disease affects the hippocampus, one ^{adj.} of the areas ^{adj.} of the brain.
4. The hippocampus is involved ^{adv.} in learning something initially, and then that information is stored or processed ^{adv.} in other areas ^{adj.} of the brain.
5. For that ^{adv.} reason, most Alzheimer’s patients have problems ^{adj.} with learning and remembering new things but are better ^{adv.} at remembering old things.
6. Billions ^{adj.} of cells build the brain ^{adv.} like bricks that build a house.
7. The dendrite is the part ^{adj.} of the cell that receives information, and the axon is the part that sends information out.
8. The axons and dendrites are important ^{adv.} to memory because they connect one brain cell ^{adv.} to another.
9. One ^{adj.} of the theories held ^{adv.} by scientists is that the axons and dendrites shrink ^{adv.} in Alzheimer’s patients.
10. ^{adv.} As a result, loss ^{adj.} of memory is one ^{adv.} of the first effects ^{adj.} when these connections are disrupted.

The Conjunction

A **conjunction** is a word that joins words or groups of words. In a sense, conjunctions are like prepositions: they do not represent things or qualities. Instead, they merely show different kinds of relationships between other words or groups of words. There are two kinds of conjunctions you will need to recognize: coordinating and subordinating.

Coordinating conjunctions join words and word groups of equal importance or rank. You should memorize these coordinating conjunctions.

Coordinating Conjunctions						
and	so	nor	yet	but	for	or

The following sentences show how coordinating conjunctions join single words and groups of words.

- Alexi speaks English *and* Russian fluently. (*And* links two words.)
- Joao was born in Brazil, *but* he moved to the United States at the age of four. (*But* links two independent clauses.)
- Do you prefer fish *or* chicken? (*Or* links two words.)
- You should talk to a counselor, *or* you might take the wrong courses. (*Or* links two independent clauses.)

In Chapter 8 you will see how coordinating conjunctions are used in compound sentences. Incidentally, it used to be considered ungrammatical to begin a sentence with one of these words, but this “rule” is no longer observed, even by the best writers.

Some coordinating conjunctions combine with other words to form **correlative conjunctions**. The most common correlative conjunctions are *both . . . and*; *either . . . or*; *neither . . . nor*; and *not only . . . but also*. Notice the following examples.

- *Both* Donovan McNabb *and* Reggie Brown play for the Eagles.
- Ray will *either* go to summer school *or* work in his father’s store.
- John Kennedy was *not only* the first Roman Catholic president *but also* the first president born in the twentieth century.

Subordinating conjunctions, like coordinating conjunctions, join groups of words. Unlike coordinating conjunctions, however, they join unequal word groups or grammatical units that are “subordinate.” You will study subordinating conjunctions in greater detail in Chapters 8 and 9, especially with respect to complex sentences and fragments.

Some conjunctions like *after*, *before*, *for*, *since*, *but*, and *until* can also function as prepositions.

- The popularity of leisure suits declined *after* the presidency of Richard Nixon. (preposition)
- Aisha sold her truck *after* she bought a minivan. (conjunction)
- Carlos bought flowers *for* his girlfriend. (preposition)
- Carlos bought flowers, *for* he knew his girlfriend was angry. (conjunction)
- Every member of the General Assembly *but* Denmark voted for the motion. (preposition)
- Every member voted, *but* Denmark demanded a recount. (conjunction)

EXERCISE 2-6

Underline the coordinating or correlative conjunctions in the sentences below.

1. Lighthouses still dot the coasts of many countries, but most mariners now rely on global positioning satellite (GPS) systems.
2. The United States has less than 5 percent of the world's population, yet it holds nearly a quarter of the world's prisoners.
3. The Grateful Dead, a popular rock band, has donated many of its posters, stage props, and photos to the University of California, Santa Cruz.
4. Smoking is being banned from more and more charity bingo events nationwide, so attendance has dropped.
5. Neither a bowl of pudding nor a warm hug could soothe the worried child.
6. Both Yahoo and Google want to be the world's favorite search engine.
7. Our two favorite fast-food joints, Arby's and Wendy's, are owned by the same billionaire investor.
8. Cooper's new car features satellite radio, so he can now hear foreign newscasts.
9. This summer, we will sample either the jazz clubs of New Orleans or the underground raves of Los Angeles.
10. Europe's return to coal use has some citizens worried, for it creates more pollution than oil refineries; yet other residents welcome the lower-priced fuel.

The Interjection

The **interjection** (or *exclamation*, as it is sometimes called) is a word that expresses emotion and has no grammatical relationship with the rest of the sentence.

Mild interjections are followed by a comma.

- *No*, I don't think Purdue can beat Bethune-Cookman in tonight's game.
- *Oh*, I suppose the children may have some cookies.
- *Yes*, I have ice-skated at Plymouth Mill Pond.

Strong interjections require an exclamation mark.

- *Wow!* My phone bill is huge!
- *Ouch!* That hurts!
- *Fire!*
- *Yo!* I'm over here!
- *Hey!* I think I finally understand physics!

A Word of Caution

Many words do double or triple duty; that is, they can be (for instance) a noun in one sentence and a verb in another sentence. The situation is much like a football player who lines up as a tight end on one play and a halfback on another. His or her function in each play is different; and so it is with words and parts of speech. A word like *light*, for example, can be used as a verb.

- We always *light* our Christmas tree after the children are asleep.

It can also be used as an adjective.

- Many beer drinkers spurn *light* beer.

Light can also be used as a noun.

- All colors depend on *light*.

What part of speech is *light*, then? It depends on the sentence; no word exists in a vacuum. To determine the part of speech of a particular word, you must determine its function or use in the sentence.

EDITING EXERCISES

Identify the part of speech of each italicized word in the following paragraphs.

^{exclamation} *You've been phished!* For computer owners, there are ^{adj.} *few* experiences ^{prep.} *more* alarming than being victims of ^{noun} *phishing*—the attainment of private information over the Internet. Phishing is done ^{prep.} *with* fraudulent emails ^{conj.} *or* text messages that ^{verb} *pretend* to come from real banks or businesses. Some common phish emails ^{verb} *use* the text and graphics styles of eBay, PayPal, AOL, and online banks. ^{noun} *Recipients* are fooled by the realistic-looking emails, which ^{adv.} *often* ask for credit card details, bank account numbers and passwords, or Social ^{noun} *Security* numbers. The term “phishing” originated in 1996, ^{conj.} *yet* the first such scam ^{verb} *occurred* nine years earlier. ^{adj.} *Each* year, more than a million Americans ^{verb} *lose* hundreds of millions of dollars from ^{pronoun} *their* bank accounts ^{conj.} *and* credit sources this way. How can you avoid

(continued)

phishing scams? Contact ^{adj.} *any* company from ^{pronoun} *whom* you get emails that ask ^{pronoun} *you* to verify information ^{prep.} *about* yourself or your finances. You can also find anti-phishing software on the Internet, and often free of charge, with a simple Internet search.

A quinceañera is a ^{adj.} *young* woman's fifteenth-birthday religious ^{noun} *celebration* in both Mexico and the United States, and ^{pronoun} *it* symbolizes her transition ^{prep.} *from* childhood to adulthood. In the small villages of Mexico the emphasis ^{linking verb} *is* on the ^{adj.} *religious* nature of the ceremony. In Chicano communities in the United States, it is ^{adv.} *often* followed by a dinner and dance in the gym of the local church ^{conj.} *or* community center. Not ^{adj.} *all* fifteen-year-olds ^{verb} *have* quinceañeras. Many ^{noun} *families* cannot afford ^{pronoun} *them*. Food for several hundred guests, ^{adj.} *printed* invitations, flowers, paying ^{prep.} *for* a band for dancing, ^{noun} *rental* of a hall, ^{conj.} *and* hiring a professional photographer are ^{prep.} *among* the expenses that the parents of the ^{adj.} *young* honoree must ^{adv.} *necessarily* assume for this occasion.

WRITING SENTENCES The Parts of Speech

This review exercise gives you a chance to show that you can recognize the parts of speech. It also lets you show your originality by writing sentences of your own. When writing your sentences, do not hesitate to review the appropriate pages in this chapter as needed.

1. Write two original sentences; in each sentence use a common noun and a proper noun. Circle the nouns.
2. Write two original sentences; in each sentence use at least one pronoun from the list on page 14. Circle the pronouns.
3. Write a sentence containing an action verb. Circle the action verb.
4. Write a sentence containing a linking verb. Circle the linking verb.
5. Write a sentence containing a helping/auxiliary verb and a main verb. Circle the helping verb.
6. Write a sentence containing a predicate adjective. Circle the predicate adjective.
7. Write a sentence containing at least one adverb. Circle the adverb.
8. Write a sentence containing at least two prepositional phrases. Circle each prepositional phrase.

LANGUAGE TIPS

When using nouns, verbs, and adjectives, be careful to use the following endings so that your meaning is clear.

The plural form of most nouns is formed by adding an *-s* or *-es* to the singular form.

book/books idea/ideas match/matches

The singular form of a verb when used with *he/she/it* is also formed by adding an *-s* or *-es*.

works enjoys washes

For more information about the plural form of nouns, see pages 78–81. For more information about other forms of the verb, see pages 288–298 in the appendix, “A Checklist for the ESL Writer.”

REVIEW TEST 2 - A

Parts of Speech

A. Identify the parts of speech of the italicized words by using the appropriate letter in the space provided.

a. noun b. pronoun c. adjective d. adverb

- a 1. Tiger Stadium in *Detroit* has sat empty since 1999.
- c 2. Some patients with *artificial* hips hear a squeak when they walk, a problem with the ceramic parts.
- c 3. Some U.S. colleges pay recruiting companies to find *eligible* international students to enroll.
- b 4. France's Legion of Honor award has been given to 140,000 people; 40,000 of *them* are not from France.
- d 5. If you don't pay the bill on your storage facility, the company will *probably* sell your belongings.
- a 6. Revenues continue to rise for television shows that feature professional *wrestling*.
- c 7. The mangosteen, which many people consider the sweetest of *tropical* fruits, is illegal to bring into the United States.
- b 8. Female athletes suffer more injuries to *their* knees than to any other body part.
- d 9. A jinjilbang is a traditional Korean kind of water park that is becoming *increasingly* popular in the West.
- a 10. When salmon are hard to find, commercial fisherpeople must look for less profitable *cod*, or tuna.

B. Identify the parts of speech of the italicized words by using the appropriate letter in the space provided.

a. preposition b. conjunction c. interjection

- a 11. Some farmers now use aerial seeding, in which seeds are dropped *from* a single-engine airplane.
- a 12. The Columbus Washboard Company, in Ohio, donates washboards to soldiers *in* the Middle East, where washing machines are few.
- c 13. *Wow!* I had no idea that you could play the trombone!

- b 14. “Neurosoftware” is the name given to programs that older people use so they can keep their memory function strong.
- b 15. Don’t let the child step too close to the plants *or* he may get mud on his shoes.

C. Identify the *italicized words* by using the appropriate letter in the space provided.

a. action verb b. linking verb c. helping/auxiliary verb

- a 16. During the annual Iditarod dog-sledding race in Alaska, the dogs *run* about one hundred miles per day.
- b 17. Parents *become* frustrated when kids leave their chores undone.
- c 18. Josh *will* receive his black belt in karate next week.
- a 19. Emilio *has* two finches that sing when the sun rises each morning.
- c 20. There are people who *can* run a marathon in under three hours.
- b 21. Luke and Abby *seem* determined to win tonight’s tango contest.
- b 22. The most recent White House wedding *was* that of President Nixon’s daughter, Patricia, in 1971.
- c 23. The small nation once known as Burma *is* called Myanmar.
- c 24. Art collectors *have* paid as much as thirty-four million dollars for a Monet painting.
- a 25. Chantrelle and Madison *arrive* punctually to Ms. Ojeda’s Spanish class every day.

REVIEW TEST 2 - B

Parts of Speech

A. Identify the parts of speech of the italicized words by using the appropriate letter in the space provided.

a. noun b. pronoun c. adjective d. adverb

- c 1. West Virginia has more than *one million* acres reserved for park land.
- a 2. The first female *pilot* of a major U.S. airline was Emily Warner, hired in 1973.
- a 3. Fruit juice often has more *calories* and less fiber than a piece of fruit.
- d 4. Americans buy more personal computers *online* than any other product.
- d 5. Honda and Toyota *routinely* produce the most fuel-efficient vehicles.
- b 6. In the same year that the American Revolution ended, *some* heard Beethoven's first compositions and read William Blake's first poems.
- c 7. Djibouti, a nation in Northeastern Africa, is almost entirely a *stony* desert.
- b 8. The first known Olympic Games took place in 776 B.C.; *they* consisted of only a 200-yard foot race.
- b 9. Stags, Hawks, Capitals, and Nationals—they are National Basketball Association champion teams *that* no longer exist.
- a 10. Since 1928, *Time* magazine has chosen an influential man or woman as Person of the Year.

B. Identify the parts of speech of the italicized words by using the appropriate letter in the space provided.

a. preposition b. conjunction c. interjection

- c 11. *Wow!* In the 1930s, the longest drought in U.S. history left more than fifty million acres of land barren.
- b 12. We hadn't heard of the first recipients of the Academy Award for acting, Janet Gaynor *and* Emil Jannings.
- c 13. *Watch out!* Your favorite song may be on this magazine's annual list of America's fifty most hated songs.
- b 14. The seven-day week originated in ancient Mesopotamia, *but* it wasn't added to the Roman calendar until much later.
- a 15. There is concern that hate crimes are increasing *around* the world.

C. Identify the italicized words by using the appropriate letter in the space provided.

a. action verb b. linking verb c. helping/auxiliary verb

- b** 16. Smith *is* still the most common last name in the United States.
- c** 17. Harvard University *has* received more monetary donations than any other college in recent years.
- c** 18. Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager *are* known for making the fastest nonstop flight around Earth.
- c** 19. About eighty people *have* reached the highest peak on all seven continents, known collectively as the Seven Summits.
- a** 20. Ireland's flag *has* three simple stripes: green, white, and orange.
- c** 21. The oldest known human ancestors *were* found in Africa.
- a** 22. Americans *spend* about forty dollars per person for food each week.
- b** 23. Delaware *was* the first state to join the union.
- a** 24. The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the nation's highest civilian award; it *recognizes* exceptional service in a number of sports, arts, and academic fields.
- b** 25. Comets *are* giant snowballs of frozen gases.

WRITING PARAGRAPHS

THE TOPIC SENTENCE AND UNITY IN THE PARAGRAPH

Every good paragraph deals with a single topic or aspect of a topic. The sentence that states the paragraph's topic is the **topic sentence**. It is the sentence that alerts the reader to the central idea. It also reminds the writer of that central idea so that he or she does not include sentences that wander off the topic. For this reason, the topic sentence is frequently placed at the beginning of the paragraph, although it can appear in other parts of the paragraph. Regardless of its location, the topic sentence is usually the most general sentence in the paragraph, and it is developed and supported by the specifics in the sentences that follow or precede it.

In your reading you will occasionally notice paragraphs by experienced writers that do not include a topic sentence. In such instances the topic sentence is implicit—that is, the controlling or central idea is implied because the details in the paragraph are clear and well organized. But until you become an adept writer and are certain that your paragraphs stick to one idea, you should provide each paragraph with a topic sentence.

Topic Sentence First

The following paragraph was written by two well-known social psychologists. The first sentence in the paragraph is the topic sentence, and it announces the main idea in a general way: “There are plenty of good reasons for admitting mistakes.” The sentences that follow give examples of good outcomes from admitting mistakes. Like most well-written paragraphs, this one begins with a general point and then supports it with specific details.

- There are plenty of good reasons for admitting mistakes, starting with the simple likelihood that you will probably be found out anyway. Other people will like you more. Someone else may be able to pick up your fumble and run with it; your error might inspire someone else's solution. Children will realize that everyone screws up on occasion and that even adults have to say “I'm sorry.” And if you can admit a mistake when it is the size of an acorn, it is easier to repair than when it has become the size of a tree, with deep, wide-ranging roots.

—Tavris and Aronson, *Mistakes Were Made (But Not By Me)*, p. 221

The topic sentence in the preceding paragraph is clear. It tells the reader what to expect in the sentences that follow, and it reminds the writer of the central idea of the paragraph so that he or she is unlikely to stray from the topic.

Topic Sentence in the Middle

Sometimes the topic sentence is placed in the middle of the paragraph. In such cases the sentences that precede the topic sentence lead up to the main idea, and the sentences that follow the main idea explain or describe it.

- What does the camera capture when it looks at me? I'll leave that for others to assess. But staring back at that lens from within myself, I feel that so much of what I've otherwise kept hidden is captured and filtered. What emerges on the screen reminds people of something in themselves. I'm so many different things . . . courage and cowardice, strength and weakness, fear and joy, love and hate.

—Poitier, *The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography*, p. 140

Notice that the writer, actor Sydney Poitier, begins his paragraph with a question about what others may see in his performances. Then Poitier announces his main idea: what he thinks he conveys in his performances. The rest of the paragraph gives examples of emotions and character traits that he portrays on the movie screen, which support his topic sentence.

Topic Sentence Last

Many writers lead up to the main point of a paragraph and then conclude with it at the end.

- Three of every five Americans are overweight; one of every five is obese. The disease formerly known as adult-onset diabetes has had to be renamed Type II diabetes since it now occurs so frequently in children. A recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* predicts that a child born in 2000 has a one-in-three chance of developing diabetes. Because of diabetes and all the other health problems that accompany obesity, today's children may turn out to be the first generation of Americans whose life expectancy will actually be shorter than that of their parents.

—Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, p. 102

In this paragraph the *New York Times* food columnist gives examples of increasingly common, food-related health problems. Then he concludes that they may contribute to a sad fate for today's young people.



Log onto <http://www.mywritinglab.com> and click "The Parts of Speech: A Review," then "The Topic Sentence." You'll see an animation about creating topic sentences, as well as questions that ask you to analyze and evaluate elements of a paragraph. You'll also find a variety of topics to inspire your own topic sentences and paragraphs.

EXERCISE A Locating Topic Sentences

Underline the topic sentence in each of the following paragraphs. Be ready to explain your choice.

- a. Before humans learned to farm, they were nomads, moving from place to place in search of game and vegetation. Each group consisted of about thirty to fifty people. Once farming was developed, the beginnings of cities appeared. Farming provided steady sustenance, which allowed people to live in larger groups and in permanent settlements. Each group had to make rules for civil coexistence, for divisions of labor, and for trade. People began to base their identities less on family ties than on geographical or cultural ties, and they placed growing value on the interests of the larger community.
- b. Reasons for the popularity of fast-food chains appear obvious enough. For one thing, the food is generally cheap as restaurant food goes. A hamburger, French fries, and a shake at McDonald's, for example, cost about one-half as much as a similar meal at a regular "sit-down" restaurant. Another advantage of the chains is their convenience. For busy working couples who don't want to spend the time or effort cooking, the fast-food restaurants offer an attractive alternative. And, judging by the fact that customers return in increasing numbers, many Americans like the taste of the food.
- c. The dolphin's brain generally exceeds the human brain in weight and has a convoluted cortex that weighs about 1,100 grams. Research indicates that, in humans, 600 to 700 grams of cortex is necessary for a vocabulary. Absolute weight of the cortex, rather than the ratio of brain weight to total body weight, is thought to be indicative of intelligence potential. The dolphin's forehead is oil-filled and contains complex sound-generating devices. Tests indicate that the dolphin is sensitive to sound at frequencies up to 120 kilocycles, whereas human vocal cords pulsate at 60 to 120 cycles per second with a choice of many more harmonics. These facts provide convincing argument for possible dolphin intelligence.

Focusing the Topic Sentence

Keep in mind that a topic sentence must be focused and limited enough to be discussed fully within a single paragraph. Notice the differences between the following pairs of topic sentences.

- **Too broad:** The United States has many museums with excellent collections of art.
- **Focused:** The St. Louis Art Museum has an outstanding collection of Expressionist paintings and prints.
- **Too broad:** Cultures vary throughout the world with respect to body language.
- **Focused:** Hand gestures that are seemingly innocent in the United States are frequently obscene or insulting in certain Latin countries.

- **Too broad:** Shakespeare's plays indicate that he was familiar with many areas of knowledge.
- **Focused:** Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* suggests that he was familiar with the law.

Another requirement of the topic sentence is that it must be capable of being developed. If the main idea is merely factual, it does not permit development. Notice the differences between the following sentences.

- **Factual:** St. Petersburg is a major city in Russia.
- **Revised:** St. Petersburg reminds its visitors of the Italian city of Venice.
- **Factual:** California has more than one hundred community colleges.
- **Revised:** Many California college freshmen prefer the community college for its many unique features.
- **Factual:** Some school systems in our country do not have music appreciation courses in their grade schools.
- **Revised:** Students should be introduced to the pleasures of music while still in the lower grades.

EXERCISE B Revising Topic Sentences

The topic sentences below are either too broad or too factual. Revise each so that it will make an effective topic sentence.

1. The All-Star baseball game is held every July.
2. The Great Depression of the 1930s had a series of traumatic consequences for our nation.
3. The debate over the Vietnam War has raged for many years.
4. High blood pressure increases the risk of serious illness.
5. John Lennon was born in 1940.
6. The annual Cotton Bowl is held in Dallas.
7. Many reforms have been proposed for America's public schools.
8. The real name of "Dr. Seuss," the writer, is Theodor Geisel.
9. Admission of women to the service academies began in the fall of 1976.
10. Astronomy is a fascinating subject.

The best way to be certain that your paragraphs have unity is to construct a specific, focused topic sentence and then develop it through the entire paragraph. If the paragraph sticks to what is promised in the topic sentence, it has unity. Any sentence that does not develop the topic violates the unity of the paragraph and should be omitted.

In the following paragraph, notice how the sentence in bold type introduces another idea and violates the unity of the paragraph.

- There are many styles of martial arts, and you must do some research in order to choose the right one for your needs. First, you should decide your reasons for learning a martial art: fitness, self-defense, or tournament competition, for example. You should consider how much you are willing to spend on lessons and equipment. Before selecting a teacher, observe how he or she interacts with students. Ask about the teacher's own training and skill level. **The actor Bruce Lee held black belts in a number of martial arts.** Find out what professional associations the instructor belongs to, and verify his or her status in the martial arts community. By inquiring and asking questions, you can find a martial arts program that will bring you pleasure and physical benefits.

The topic sentence in the preceding paragraph announced the main idea: to choose the right style of martial arts for your needs, you must do some research. The fact that Bruce Lee held black belts in a number of martial arts is irrelevant and does not support the topic sentence. Therefore, the boldface sentence should be deleted from the paragraph.

EXERCISE C Focusing Topics

A. *The following topics are too general to be the subjects of single paragraphs. Select five from the list and, for each, write a tightly focused topic sentence that could be adequately developed in one paragraph.*

- heavy metal music
- professional athletes
- teenage marriages
- online socializing
- daily exercise
- the warming of the planet
- Social Security
- Wal-Mart stores
- late-night television
- being an only child

B. *Read each of the following professionally written paragraphs carefully. Then follow the directions after each paragraph.*

- Although each tribe or peoples has its own unique system of spiritual beliefs and practices, there are some commonly held philosophical ideas that are generally shared by Native American people throughout the hemisphere. The natural world is the focal point of American Indian spirituality. From this foundation springs a number of understandings regarding the nature of the world and the cosmos generally, as well as the appropriate role of human beings in it. Humans are viewed as intimately linked, and morally bound, to the natural world in such a way that one's individual, family, and community past are intertwined with the Old Stories that teach

how things came to be as they are today, as well as right behavior for ensuring that future generations will continue to rely on a balanced relationship with the natural world. All creatures—the two-legged (humans), the four-legged, the winged ones, the green things, creatures that swim in the rivers and seas, even rocks and things that from a non-Indian philosophical perspective are considered inanimate—are part of this spirituality or sacred life force. For many Indians living today, this circle of the sacred to which we human beings are connected, ideally in balance and harmony with nature, also includes the life-giving sun, the many stars of the night sky, and Mother Earth herself. Because this perspective encompasses all time, all places, and all beings, Native Americans generally prefer the word spirituality of the sacred rather than religion.

—Lobo and Talbot, eds., *Native American Voices*, pp. 266–67

Notice that this paragraph begins with a topic sentence that signals to the reader what he or she can expect to find in the sentences that follow: “there are some commonly held philosophical ideas that are generally shared by Native American people throughout the hemisphere.” The rest of the paragraph gives examples of those “commonly held philosophical ideas.” Develop one of the following subjects into a topic sentence that can be adequately developed in at least six supporting sentences. Remember that a good topic sentence is narrow enough to be developed in one paragraph.

- ocean pollution
- honesty
- careers
- credit cards
- shopping malls
- women’s sports
- censorship
- violent video games

- Oprah Winfrey—actress, talk-show host, and businesswoman—epitomizes the opportunities for America’s entrepreneurs. From welfare child to multimillionaire, Ms. Winfrey—resourceful, assertive, always self-assured, and yet unpretentious—has climbed the socioeconomic ladder by turning apparent failure into opportunities and then capitalizing on them.
- With no playmates, Oprah entertained herself by “playacting” with objects such as corn-cob dolls, chickens, and cows. Her grandmother, a harsh disciplinarian, taught Oprah to read by age 2 1/2, and as a result of speaking at a rural church, her oratory talents began to emerge.
- At age 6, Winfrey was sent to live with her mother and two half-brothers in a Milwaukee ghetto. While in Milwaukee, Winfrey, known as “the Little Speaker,” was often invited to recite poetry at social gatherings, and her speaking skills continued to develop. At age 12, during a visit to her father in Nashville, she was paid \$500 for a speech she gave to a church. It was then that she prophetically announced what she wanted to do for a living: “get paid to talk.”
- Her mother, working as a maid and drawing available welfare to make ends meet, left Oprah with little or no parental supervision and eventually sent her to live with

her father in Nashville. There Oprah found the stability and discipline she so desperately needed. “My father saved my life,” Winfrey reminisces. Her father—like her grandmother—a strict disciplinarian, obsessed with properly educating his daughter, forced her to memorize 20 new vocabulary words a week and turn in a weekly book report. His guidance and her hard work soon paid off, as she began to excel in school and other areas.

—Mosley, Pietri, and Megginson, *Management: Leadership in Action*, p. 555

C. Select one of the following topics and write a paragraph of at least six sentences. Underline your topic sentence and be certain that your paragraph does not contain any sentences that do not support or develop the topic sentence.

1. What is Oprah Winfrey’s success based on? How did she turn disadvantages into opportunities and then capitalize on them?
2. Do you know of someone else—perhaps a person not as famous as Oprah Winfrey and known to only a small group—who has overcome similar handicaps and has also climbed the socioeconomic ladder? You might consider a relative or a person in your community.

WRITING TIPS First Impressions

Make sure the appearance of your assignments matches the quality of their content. Most instructors expect papers that employ the following:

- a standard typeface if prepared on a computer
- use of one side of the paper only
- 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides
- black or dark blue ink if handwritten
- indentation of the first word of each paragraph (one-half inch, or five spaces if typed)
- double-spacing of the text when typing or using a computer

WRITING TIPS Topic Sentences

Be sure that your paragraph contains a topic sentence that tells the reader what he or she can expect to find in the paragraph.

- Is your topic sentence too broad and general to be covered in just one paragraph? If so, narrow your topic.
- Do all of the facts and details in your paragraph follow logically to the end?
- Does any sentence wander off the topic? If so, get rid of it!