

## Happy Fun Good-times Grammar Puzzlers!

Fix the subject-verb problem.

1. Many Canadians, including the prime minister, (is/are) fluent in neither of Canada's official languages.
2. Our city, along with many North American urban centres, (register/registers) a dangerous level of asinine drivers.
3. Darryl's parole officer, together with the police and his wife, (keep/keeps) a close eye on him.
4. Everything that could possibly go wrong with our plans (has/have) happened.
5. Unless we hear from the coach, neither of those team members (is/are) playing this evening.
6. The whole gang (plans/plan) to attend the bikers' rally.
7. After only two hours' discussion, the committee (was/were) able to reach consensus that there would be no consensus.
8. By noon on Friday, the whole dorm (has/have) left the building and headed for the bars.
9. In my opinion, neither of the lead singers (is/are) worth a darn.

Fused and comma spliced sentences: Fix by adding semicolons, linking words, ending the sentence.

1. The fog has lifted, we can go home now.
2. Hitting a golf ball looks easy, it's not.
3. The comma splice gets its name from the film splice, two pieces of film are taped, or spliced, together.
4. Two independent clauses cannot be fused together with no punctuation you need a linking word, a semicolon, or a period to join them.
5. In Canada, winter is more than a season it's a bad joke.
6. For college students in technology programs, then, the future looks bright, however, a diploma doesn't necessarily mean a job.
7. I didn't come to university to worry about grammar niceties I came to get some real knowledge, how to program a computer, for example.

Fix this true run-on by cutting out all unnecessary words and by applying the three solutions for comma spliced and fused sentence.

Further to your memo of last week, in which you requested a two-week extension on the deadline for your sales report, we have evaluated the consequences of this delay in light of our customers' expectations of speedy and efficient response to their needs for service and have determined that, though you will be unable to present a complete financial picture because not all sales results are in yet (as pointed out in your memo), nonetheless, it is in the firm's best interest to deny your request for an extension and expect you to present your report as scheduled on the 16th, when the entire board will be present, instead of delaying until the 30<sup>th</sup>, when only the financial committee will be in attendance.

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Fix these sentences using any of the four solutions above.

1. At long last, I will finally get a chance to see *Citizen Kane*, one of the truly great cinematic masterpieces of all time it's being shown at the next meeting of the university film club.
2. In response to your recent request for a raise that you made last week, I have carefully gone over and reviewed your work record and I find that, instead of giving you more money, we should be asking you to return 10 percent of your last year's salary.
3. The reason I called this meeting is that basically we are required to meet together once a month and even though today we really don't, in fact, have any items on our agenda, still we have to have an actual meeting, according to company policy.
4. In today's contemporary society, it is a true fact that the more one tries to succeed at each of the great many challenges that society places before us as individual humans the more you are likely to do poorly at most of them it is a simple fact that one cannot have everything in this life.

Fix these misplaced modifiers by placing them closer to the word they modify.

1. Dale left the can of Fancy Feast out for the cat he had just opened.
2. One supervisor instructed us on the first day no one takes coffee breaks.
3. I enthusiastically recommend this candidate with no qualifications whatsoever.
4. He caught sight of a duck and several geese using his new binoculars.
5. The Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination against anyone who is applying for a job on the basis of race, sex, or age.
6. There just are enough pieces to go around.

Fix these dangling modifiers.

1. After criticizing both my work and attitude, I was fired.
2. When handling hazardous wastes, the procedures to follow are clearly spelled out in the safety manual.
3. After failing at everything else, nobody was surprised when Jack went into politics.
4. Obviously having drunk way too much, I drove Jane to her apartment, made her coffee, and called her mother.
5. While they were in my pocket, my children managed to break my glasses by leaping on me from behind.
6. While driving, a tree jumped out of nowhere and forced me to hit it.
7. "This bus has a maximum seating capacity of 56 passengers with a maximum height of four metres." (Sign on a bus in Charlottetown.)

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Correct the faulty parallelism.

1. This program is easy to understand and using it is not difficult either.
2. Today's computers are fast, high-powered, and compact in design.
3. I support myself by waitering, shooting pool, and I also play piano.
4. When I want to relax, there are three things I do: taking walks, reading, and classical music.
5. In order to succeed in this economic climate, small businesses must be creative and show innovation and flexibility.

Choose the correct pronouns.

1. No one except you and (I/me) would go camping in this weather.
2. George and (he/him) fell asleep in class, as usual.
3. It is hard to believe that anyone else could be as foolish as (them/they).
4. Only two students passed the mid-term: Nadia and (I/ me).
5. Quentin and (he/him) agreed to split the price of a case with Stan and (I/me).

Make the pronoun agree with its antecedent.

1. For two weeks, the goalie that gave up the winning goal had to live in hiding.
2. This is the dog who bit little Jimmy.
3. The man which you've chosen to guide us is a well-know con artist.
4. Please put everything back in their places.
5. Despite the inconvenience, everybody climbed the stairs to the fourth floor to hand in (their/her) course evaluations.
6. Someone with lots of money left (their/his) purse in the washroom.

Clarify the pronoun references by rewriting the sentences.

1. If your hamster won't eat its food, feed it to the cat.
2. Madonna has transformed herself at least four times in her career, which few other performers can claim.
3. If Jerome and Larry argue, he'll tell him he's never had any use for him and that he ought to keep his crazy ideas to himself.
4. There's no precedent for such a decision, which would have the effect of making new law. If the judge can't see it, then he's a fool.
5. The deficit was forecast to be about \$2 billion, but it turned out to be well over \$3 billion. This had the effect of lowering confidence in the government's credibility.
6. One of our options is to balance the books for this quarter by factoring in the projected revenues we will receive next year as our expansion continues into the overseas market. This can't solve all our fiscal problems, but it will certainly help.