

Las Vegas High School 2010-11 Writing Workshop

Four Tips to Improve Your Writing Skills And How to Avoid Common Mistakes

Below are some basic writing rules, along with an example of the rule being broken. Learn how to avoid these common mistakes.

1. Be Consistent	
Sequence of Tenses	After he broke his arm, he is home for two weeks.
Shift of Pronoun	If one is tense, they should try to relax.
Parallelism	She skis, plays tennis, and flying hang gliders.
Noun Agreement	Eric and James want to be a pilot.
Pronoun Reference	Several people wanted the job, and he or she filled out the required applications.
Subject-Verb Agreement	There is eight people on the shore.
2. Express Ideas Logically	
Coordination and Subordination	Jen has a rash, and she is probably allergic to something.
Logical Comparison	Joey grew more vegetables than his neighbor's garden.
Modification and Word Order	Barking loudly, the tree had the dog's leash wrapped around it.
3. Be Clear and Precise	
Ambiguous and Vague Pronouns	In the newspaper they say that few people voted.
Diction	He circumvented the globe on his trip.
Wordiness	There are many problems in the contemporary world in which we live.
Improper Modification	If your car is parked here while not eating in the restaurant, it will be towed away.
4. Follow Conventions	
Pronoun Case	He sat between you and I at the stadium.
Idiom	Jack had a different opinion towards him.
Comparison of Modifiers	Of the sixteen executives, Gretchen makes more money.
Sentence Fragment	Abby having to go home early.
Double Negative	Andy has scarcely no free time.