

A New York Times Newspaper in Education Curriculum Guide

GRAMMAR RULES

Using The New York Times
to Teach Grammar, Punctuation
and Clarity in Writing

The New York Times
inEDUCATION

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Written by Ann West. Introduction and additional activities by Ellen S. Doukoullou. This educator's guide was developed by The New York Times Newspaper in Education program. It did not involve the reporting or editing staff of The New York Times, other than containing news articles previously published in The New York Times.

Article

Circuits

The New York Times

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2002

I Think, Therefore IM

Text Shortcuts Invade Schoolwork, and Teachers Are Not Amused

By JENNIFER 8. LEE

EACH September Jacqueline Harding prepares a classroom presentation on the common writing mistakes she sees in her students' work.

Ms. Harding, an eighth-grade English teacher at Viking Middle School in Guerne, Ill., scribbles the words that have plagued generations of schoolchildren across her whiteboard:

There. Their. They're.

Your. You're.

To. Too. Two.

Its. It's.

This September, she has added a new list: *u, r, ur, b4, wuz, cuz, 2.*

When she asked her students how many of them used shortcuts like these in their writing, Ms. Harding said, she was not surprised when most of them raised their hands. This, after all, is their online lingua franca: English adapted for the spitfire conversational style of Internet instant messaging.

Ms. Harding, who has seen such shortcuts creep into student papers over the last two years, said she gave her students a warning: "If I see this in your assignments, I will take points off."

"Kids should know the difference," said Ms. Harding, who decided to address this issue head-on this year. "They should know



Tom Stratman for The New York Times

DECODING

Deborah Bova turns students' instant-messaging abbreviations into standard English in her eighth-grade English class in Indianapolis.

where to draw the line between formal writing and conversational writing."

As more and more teenagers socialize online, middle school and high school teachers like Ms. Harding are increasingly seeing a breezy form of Internet English jump from e-mail into schoolwork. To their dismay, teachers say that papers are being written with shortened words, improper capitalization and punctuation, and characters like &, \$ and @.

Teachers have deducted points, drawn red circles and tsk-tsked at their classes. Yet the errant forms continue. "It stops being funny after you repeat yourself a couple of times," Ms. Harding said.

But teenagers, whose social life can rely as much these days on text communication as the spoken word, say that they use instant-messaging shorthand without thinking about it. They write to one another as much

(Continued on Page 3)



INTRODUCTION

Article (continued)

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2002

Students' Shortcuts

Continued From Page 2

as they write in school, or more. "You are so used to abbreviating things, you just start doing it unconsciously on schoolwork and reports and other things," said Eve Brecker, 15, a student at Montclair High School in New Jersey.

Ms. Brecker once handed in a mid-term exam riddled with instant-messaging shorthand. "I had an hour to write an essay on Romeo and Juliet," she said. "I just wanted to finish before my time was up. I was writing fast and carelessly. I spelled 'you' 'u.'" She got a C.

Even terms that cannot be expressed verbally are making their way into papers. Melanie Weaver was stunned by some of the term papers she received from a 10th-grade class she recently taught as part of an internship. "They would be trying to make a point in a paper, they would put a smiley face in the end," said Ms. Weaver, who teaches at Alvernia College in Reading, Pa. "If they were presenting an argument and they needed to present an opposite view, they would put a frown."

As Trisha Fogarty, a sixth-grade teacher at Houlton Southside School in Houlton, Maine, puts it, today's students are "Generation Text."

Almost 60 percent of the online population under age 17 uses instant messaging, according to Nielsen/NetRatings. In addition to cellphone text messaging, Weblogs and e-mail, it has become a popular means of flirting, setting up dates, asking for help with homework and keeping in contact with distant friends. The abbreviations are a natural outgrowth of this rapid-fire style of communication.

"They have a social life that centers around typed communication," said Judith S. Donath, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab who has studied electronic communication. "They have a writing style that has been nurtured in a teenage social milieu."

Some teachers see the creeping abbreviations as part of a continuing assault of technology on formal written English. Others take it more lightly, saying that it is just part of the larger arc of language evolution.

"To them it's not wrong," said Ms. Harding, who is 28. "It's acceptable because it's in their culture. It's hard enough to teach them the art of formal writing. Now we've got to overcome this new instant-messaging language."



James Estrin/The New York Times

INGRAINED Eve Brecker, 15, of Montclair, N.J., uses instant-messaging shorthand unconsciously in essays.

Ms. Harding noted that in some cases the shorthand isn't even shorter. "I understand 'cuz,' but what's with the 'wuz'? It's the same amount of letters as 'was,' so what's the point?" she said.

Deborah Bova, who teaches eighth-grade English at Raymond Park Middle School in Indianapolis, thought her eyesight was failing several years ago when she saw the sentence "B4 we perform, ppl have 2 practice" on a student assignment.

"I thought, 'My God, what is this?'" Ms. Bova said. "Have they lost their minds?"

The student was summoned to the board to translate the sentence into standard English: "Before we perform, people have to practice." She realized that the students thought she was out of touch. "It was like 'Get with it, Bova,'" she said.

Ms. Bova had a student type up a reference list of translations for common instant-messaging expressions. She posted a copy on the bulletin board by her desk and took another one home to use while grading. Students are sometimes unrepentant.

"They were astonished when I began to point these things out to them," said Henry Assetto, a social studies teacher at Twin Valley High School in Elverson, Pa. "Because I am a history teacher, they did not think a history teacher would be checking up on their grammar or their spelling," said Mr. Assetto, who has been teaching for 34 years.

But Montana Hodgen, 16, another Montclair student, said she was so accustomed to instant-messaging abbreviations that she often read right past them. She proofread a paper last year only to get it returned with the messaging abbreviations circled in red.

"I was so used to reading what my friends wrote to me on Instant Messenger that I didn't even realize that there was something wrong," she said. She said her ability to separate formal and informal English declined the more she used instant messages. "Three years ago, if I had seen that, I would have been 'What is that?'"

The spelling checker doesn't always help either, students say. For one, Microsoft Word's squiggly red spell-check lines don't appear below single letters and numbers such as u, r, c, 2 and 4. Nor do they catch words which have numbers in them such as "l8r" and "b4" by default.

Teenagers have essentially developed an unconscious "accent" in their typing, Professor Donath said. "They have gotten facile at typing and they are not paying attention."

Teenagers have long pushed the boundaries of spoken language, introducing words that then become passé with adult adoption. Now teenagers are taking charge and pushing the boundaries of written language. For them, expressions like "oic" (oh I see), "nm" (not much), "jk" (just kidding) and "lol" (laughing out loud), "brb" (be right back), "ttyl" (talk to you later) are as standard as conventional English.

"There is no official English language," said Jesse Sheidlower, the North American editor of the Oxford English Dictionary. "Language is spread not because not anyone dictates any one thing to happen. The decisions are made by the language and the people who use the language."

Some teachers find the new writing style alarming. "First of all, it's very rude, and it's very careless,"

said Lois Moran, a middle school English teacher at St. Nicholas School in Jersey City.

"They should be careful to write properly and not to put these little codes in that they are in such a habit of writing to each other," said Ms. Moran, who has lectured her eighth-grade class on such mistakes.

Others say that the instant-messaging style might simply be a fad, something that students will grow out of. Or they see it as an opportunity to teach students about the evolution of language.

"I turn it into a very positive teachable moment for kids in the class," said Erika V. Karres, an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who trains student teachers. She shows students how English has evolved since Shakespeare's time. "Imagine Langston Hughes's writing in quick texting instead of 'Langston writing,'" she said. "It makes teaching and learning so exciting."

Other teachers encourage students to use messaging shorthand to spark their thinking processes. "When my children are writing first drafts, I don't care how they spell anything, as long as they are writing," said Ms. Fogarty, the sixth-grade teacher from Houlton, Maine. "If this lingo gets their thoughts and ideas onto paper quicker, the more power to them." But during editing and revising, she expects her students to switch to standard English.

Ms. Bova shares the view that instant-messaging language can help free up their creativity. With the help of students, she does not even need the cheat sheet to read the shorthand anymore.

"I think it's a plus," she said. "And I would say that with a + sign."

INTRODUCTION

Article

THE NEW YORK TIMES NATIONAL TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2004

What Corporate America Cannot Build: A Sentence

By SAM DILLON

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — R. Craig Hogan, a former university professor who heads an online school for business writing here, received an anguished e-mail message recently from a prospective student.

“i need help,” said the message, which was devoid of punctuation. “i am writing a essay on writing i work for this company and my boss want me to help improve the workers writing skills can yall help me with some information thank you”.

Hundreds of inquiries from managers and executives seeking to improve their own or their workers’ writing pop into Dr. Hogan’s computer in-basket each month, he says, describing a number that has surged as e-mail has replaced the phone for much workplace communication. Millions of employees must write more frequently on the job than previously. And many are making a hash of it.

“E-mail is a party to which English teachers have not been invited,” Dr. Hogan said. “It has companies tearing their hair out.”

A recent survey of 120 American corporations reached a similar conclusion. The study, by the National Commission on Writing, a panel established by the College Board, concluded that a third of employees in the nation’s blue-chip companies wrote poorly and that businesses were spending as much as \$3.1 billion annually on remedial training.

The problem shows up not only in e-mail but also in reports and other texts, the commission said.

“It’s not that companies want to hire Tolstoy,” said Susan Traiman, a director at the Business Roundtable, an association of leading chief executives whose corporations were surveyed in the study. “But they need people who can write clearly, and many employees and applicants fall short of that standard.”

Millions of inscrutable e-mail messages are clogging corporate com-



Peter DaSilva for The New York Times



Kristen Schmid for The New York Times

Kathy Keenan, above, teaches business writing in Santa Cruz, Calif. Craig Hogan, left, who directs an online school on the subject, says, “E-mail is a party to which English teachers have not been invited.”

file).. to make sure my logic was correct It seems we provide Murray with incorrect information ... However after verifying controls on JBL - JBL has the indicator as B ???? - I wanted to make sure with the recent changes — I processed today — before Murray make the changes again on the mainframe to ‘C.’”

The incoherence of that message persuaded the analyst’s employers that she needed remedial training.

“The more electronic and global we get, the less important the spoken word has become, and in e-mail clarity is critical,” said Sean Phillips, recruitment director at another Silicon Valley corporation, Applera, a supplier of equipment for life science research, where most employees have advanced degrees. “Considering how highly educated our people are, many can’t write clearly in their day-to-day work.”

puters by setting off requests for clarification, and many of the requests, in turn, are also chaotically written, resulting in whole cycles of confusion.

Here is one from a systems analyst to her supervisor at a high-tech corporation based in Palo Alto, Calif.: “I updated the Status report for the four discrepancies Lennie forward us via e-mail (they in Barry



INTRODUCTION

Article (continued)

THE NEW YORK TIMES NATIONAL TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2004

What Corporate America Cannot Build: A Sentence

Some \$2.9 billion of the \$3.1 billion the National Commission on Writing estimates that corporations spend each year on remedial training goes to help current employees, with the rest spent on new hires. The corporations surveyed were in the mining, construction, manufacturing, transportation, finance, insurance, real estate and service industries, but not in wholesale, retail, agriculture, forestry or fishing, the commission said. Nor did the estimate include spending by government agencies to improve the writing of public servants.

An entire educational industry has developed to offer remedial writing instruction to adults, with hundreds of public and private universities, for-profit schools and freelance teachers offering evening classes as well as workshops, video and online courses in business and technical writing.

Kathy Keenan, a onetime legal proofreader who teaches business writing at the University of California Extension, Santa Cruz, said she sought to dissuade students from sending business messages in the crude shorthand they learned to tap out on their pagers as teenagers.

"hI KATHY i am sending u the assignmnet again," one student wrote to her recently. "i had sent you the assignment earlier but i didnt get a respond. If u get this assgnment could u please respond . thanking u for ur cooperation."

Most of her students are midcareer professionals in high-tech industries, Ms. Keenan said.

The Sharonview Federal Credit Union in Charlotte, N.C., asked about 15 employees to take a remedial writing course. Angela Tate, a mortgage processor, said the course eventually bolstered her confidence in composing e-mail, which has replaced much work she previously did by phone, but it was a daunting experience, since she had been out of school for years. "It was a challenge all the way through," Ms. Tate said.

Even C.E.O.'s need writing help, said Roger S. Peterson, a freelance writer in Rocklin, Calif., who frequently coaches executives. "Many

of these guys write in inflated language that desperately needs a laxative," Mr. Peterson said, and not a few are defensive. "They're in denial, and who's going to argue with the boss?"

But some realize their shortcomings and pay Mr. Peterson to help them improve. Don Morrison, a one-time auditor at Deloitte & Touche who has built a successful consulting business, is among them.

"I was too wordy," Mr. Morrison said. "I liked long, convoluted passages rather than simple four-word sentences. And I had a predilection for underlining words and throwing in multiple exclamation points. Finally Roger threatened to rip the exclamation key off my keyboard."

Exclamation points were an issue when Linda Landis Andrews, who teaches at the University of Illinois at Chicago, led a workshop in May for midcareer executives at an automotive corporation based in the Midwest. Their exasperated supervisor had insisted that the men improve their writing.

"I get a memo from them and cannot figure out what they're trying to say," the supervisor wrote Ms. Andrews.

When at her request the executives produced letters they had written to a supplier who had failed to deliver parts on time, she was horrified to see that tone-deaf writing had turned a minor business snarl into a corporate confrontation moving toward litigation.

"They had allowed a hostile tone to creep into the letters," she said. "They didn't seem to understand that those letters were just toxic."

"People think that throwing multiple exclamation points into a business letter will make their point forcefully," Ms. Andrews said. "I tell them they're allowed two exclamation points in their whole life."

Not everyone agrees. Kaitlin Duck Sherwood of San Francisco, author of a popular how-to manual on effective e-mail, argued in an interview that exclamation points could help convey intonation, thereby avoiding

confusion in some e-mail.

"If you want to indicate stronger emphasis, use all capital letters and toss in some extra exclamation points," Ms. Sherwood advises in her guide, available at www.webfoot.com, where she offers a vivid example:

">Should I boost the power on the thrombo?"

"NO!!!! If you turn it up to eleven, you'll overheat the motors, and IT MIGHT EXPLODE!!!"

Dr. Hogan, who founded his online Business Writing Center a decade ago after years of teaching composition at Illinois State University here, says that the use of multiple exclamation points and other nonstandard punctuation like the :-) symbol, are fine for personal e-mail but that companies have erred by allowing experimental writing devices to flood into business writing.

He scrolled through his computer, calling up examples of incoherent correspondence sent to him by prospective students.

"E-mails - that are received from Jim and I are not either getting open or not being responded to," the purchasing manager at a construction company in Virginia wrote in one memorandum that Dr. Hogan called to his screen. "I wanted to let everyone know that when Jim and I are sending out e-mails (example- who is to be picking up parcels) I am wanting for who ever the e-mail goes to to respond back to the e-mail. Its important that Jim and I knows that the person, intended, had read the e-mail. This gives an acknowledgment that the task is being completed. I am asking for a simple little 2 sec. Note that says "ok", "I got it", or Alright."

The construction company's human resources director forwarded the memorandum to Dr. Hogan while enrolling the purchasing manager in a writing course.

"E-mail has just erupted like a weed, and instead of considering what to say when they write, people now just let thoughts drool out onto the screen," Dr. Hogan said. "It has companies at their wits' end."



INTRODUCTION

THE DIFFICULTY OF TEACHING GRAMMAR . . . AND A SOLUTION

Poor grammar is all around us. We hear it on television, in school hallways, on the street, and on cellphones. Some incorrect expressions have become so common that correct grammar forms can sound incorrect to our tortured ears.

Many students bring informal language habits to your classroom that have the ring of “bad” grammar. These habits require modification if students are to develop their grammatical skills — and do well on standardized tests. The New York Times Knowledge Network offers students a model that can help reinforce positive grammar and usage, and influence the development of grammar skills.

This curriculum guide has been designed to help your students understand and acquire “good” grammar skills, both written and spoken. The exercises on these Worksheets use The Times to help students experience proper grammar in the context of writing for a highly literate audience. As your students practice using proper grammar on a daily basis with a real-life model, you can expect improvement in their ability to recognize differences between informal and formal language.

We encourage you to share these Worksheets and the value of The New York Times with your colleagues — including teachers in other disciplines, especially social studies, where writing is such an important part of learning. The Times can help all teachers explain concepts in their subject areas while reinforcing good language skills.

USING THE NEW YORK TIMES

To motivate reading: When each student has a copy of The New York Times in your classroom every day, you’ll find that it is much easier to motivate students in active reading and active learning. When every student in your class has his or her own copy of The Times, instead of photocopies of particular articles, they can easily read it in class and take it with them. This allows students to feel ownership and encourages them to read articles that have not been read in class — further enhancing their reading skills.

To involve students from a variety of cultures: You will also discover that one of the greatest benefits of using The New York Times in the classroom is that it provides a link to the entire world. Many schools today have students from a wide range of countries, and Times coverage gives these students material that speaks directly to them. Direct them to the “Foreign Journal” feature on page A4 of the main news section, which focuses on cultures around the world. Reading these articles together is a way for your students to better understand each other and their cultural backgrounds.

To build self-esteem: Teachers have also reported that a copy of The New York Times in the hands of every student builds self-esteem. Students recognize The Times as a quality newspaper, and they may be hesitant to



INTRODUCTION

explore it at first. But within a short period of time you will notice their growing confidence in reading and talking about the wide range of serious — and lighter — topics that The Times covers every day. The Times creates a thirst for continued learning long after students leave your classroom and establish themselves as citizens in our communities.

Try to give students time to freely skim and read what they want in The Times prior to or following the completion of Worksheets and the other activities in this guide. In fact, The Times is widely used as part of SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) or DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) school-wide programs. And of course, in all classrooms, reading time is an investment that reaps rewards in improved vocabulary and grammar.

HOW TO USE THE WORKSHEET ACTIVITIES

Before you use the Worksheets, it's a good idea to look each one over, noting the terminology used as well as the instructions to the students. If you find that some of the terminology is different from what you normally use when working on grammar, you may want to indicate this to your students before they begin to work.

The activities can be used in small or large group settings, and for individualized instruction or as homework assignments.

The Worksheets may be used in any order. Each Worksheet has a specific grammar focus, which is listed in the Table of Contents and on each page.

Worksheets may be photocopied for classroom use with The New York Times and distributed to students.

A model lesson plan and Worksheet are provided to demonstrate how any of the Worksheets can be used with your students.

Most Worksheets in this guide begin with an initial “Getting Started” segment to introduce the grammar rule or concept involved, although additional instruction and practice beyond the Worksheet may be needed for specific students. Individual differences in classrooms are best assessed by the teacher; you may want to consider creating additional Worksheets for extended practice. The Worksheets in this guide should be viewed as models for teacher use/adaptation/extension.

Though Worksheets may direct students to specific sections of the newspaper, you can direct them to other sections to best accommodate your students' needs and interests.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE activity appears on a number of the Worksheets. This activity is intended to connect classroom learning to experiences with grammar outside the classroom.



INTRODUCTION

As suggested in the Model Lesson Plan, students should create a notebook of grammar-building skills for use with enrichment exercises and for taking notes on improving grammar skills. Worksheet 26 includes a suggested format for a grammar notebook.

Encourage students to have fun with these activities as they use The New York Times in building their language skills and developing confidence in their use of the English language. (Worksheet 28 provides a format for a student's vocabulary notebook.)

There are a number of games for reinforcing grammar and spelling that can involve the entire class on Worksheets 35 and 36. Think of other games you can use in your classroom to extend grammar skills.

Create student portfolios by collecting students' completed Worksheets. These portfolios can assist in tracking student progress and in conferences with students and parents to help students reach their individual learning goals.

A PARTIAL LIST OF RESOURCES:

- Grammar textbooks
- A variety of dictionaries
- A thesaurus
- "Painless Grammar," by Rebecca Elliott, Ph.D., Barrons
- "Warriner's English Grammar and Composition," by John E Warriner, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

The Associated Press Stylebook

The New York Times Manual of Style and Usage (available at booksellers and on the Web at www.nytimes.com)



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THE NEW YORK TIMES LEARNING NETWORK

learning.blogs.nytimes.com

The New York Times Learning Network offers interactive classroom activities based on the Monday – Friday editions of The Times. The wealth of features on the site includes lesson plans linked to specific Times articles, a lesson plan archive and search, an interactive daily news quiz, “Word of the Day,” “On This Day in History” feature that links to historical Times articles, “6 Q’s About the News” activity linked to a Times article, “Times Fill-Ins” sentence completion feature, Student Crossword and Student Opinion (for students age 13 and older).

TIMES TOPICS

nytimes.com/topics

Times topics is an excellent starting point for research, providing quality information on thousands of topics. Each topic page contains featured Times articles, graphics, audio and video files, with additional links to other good sources.

THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ARCHIVE

nytimes.com/archive

You can use the “Search” function on nytimes.com for access to the complete backfile of The New York Times from 1851 to the present.

THE NEW YORK TIMES IN COLLEGE

nytimes.com/edu

Our Web site for college faculty offers services for higher education, including course-specific instructional strategies using The New York Times.



CORRELATION TO NATIONAL STANDARDS

The lessons in this curriculum guide are correlated with relevant national standards from McREL (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning). These standards represent a compendium derived from most state standards.

Each McREL standard has subcategories, or benchmarks, for different levels of instruction. For details, see www.mcrel.org.

SOURCE: “Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education,” by John S. Kendall and Robert J. Marzano (2002, 3rd. ed.): Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), Denver, Colo.: www.mcrel.org. Used by permission of McREL, 4601 DTC Blvd., Suite 500, Denver, Colo. 80237; (303) 337-0990.

STANDARDS FOR:

WRITING

- 1 Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process.
- 2 Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing.
- 3 Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions.
- 4 Gathers and uses information for research purposes.

READING

- 5 Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process.
- 6 Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts.
- 7 Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

- 8 Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes.

VIEWING

- 9 Uses viewing skills and strategies to interpret visual media.

MEDIA

- 10 Understands the characteristics and components of the media.

See next page for correlation of standards to individual lessons.



CORRELATION TO NATIONAL STANDARDS

LESSON/WORKSHEET NUMBER	GRAMMAR TOPIC	STANDARDS
1	Categorizing nouns	1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10
2	Identifying proper nouns	1, 3, 5, 7
3	Identifying and categorizing collective and compound nouns	3, 5, 7, 9, 10
4	Using adjectives to modify nouns	1, 2, 3, 8
5	Enhancing the meaning of verbs through the use of adverbs	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8
6	Analyzing the function of pronouns; identifying personal pronouns and the nouns from which they take their meaning	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10
7	Analyzing the function of prepositions in relationship to nouns and pronouns	1, 3, 5, 9, 10
8	Identifying various parts of speech in a sentence	3, 5, 6, 8
9	Identifying parts of speech and the roles that each part of speech may play in a sentence	2, 3, 5
10	Identifying subjects, verbs and modifiers	1, 2, 3, 5, 8
11	Analyzing matching forms of words for subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement	3, 5
12	Analyzing matching forms of words for subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement	1, 3, 5, 8
13	Distinguishing among the various rules that apply to correct comma usage	3, 5, 6, 7, 8
14	Analyzing use of quotation marks in direct and indirect quotations	1, 3, 5, 8, 10
15	Practicing other punctuation used with quotation marks	1, 2, 3, 5, 8
16	Locating various types of punctuation used in print and identifying the punctuation needed	3, 5, 8
17	Finding different conjunctions used in print	3, 5
18	Recognizing compound subjects and compound verbs in writing	1, 3, 5, 6
19	Choosing the correct form of pronouns for case	3, 4, 8
20	Choosing the correct form of pronouns for use in a critique	1, 3, 5, 8
21	Applying simple tests to decide if the selected personal pronouns are correct (standard) usage	1, 3, 5, 8
22	Identifying grammar in action in The New York Times	3, 5, 8
23	Citing reasons for using apostrophes to punctuate, enhance and clarify meaning	1, 3, 4, 5
24	Creating contractions and using apostrophes to show the position of the deleted letters	3, 5, 7, 8
25	Applying spelling rules to words in advertisements	3, 4, 5, 7
26	Recognizing incorrect grammar and spelling in everyday life and correcting the errors	3, 5, 6, 7, 8
27	Distinguishing between informal and formal language use	1, 3, 4, 5, 8
28	Acquiring new vocabulary words	3, 4, 5
29	Applying spelling rules	3, 5
30	Decoding abbreviations for meaning	1, 3, 5
31	Identify correct spelling and context of key vocabulary words	3, 5, 6, 7
32	Writing concise and accurate descriptions	1, 2, 3, 9

MODEL LESSON PLAN**Categorizing Nouns****(Lesson 1)****OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- identify common and proper nouns and categorize them by type.
- utilize common and proper nouns to describe what's going on in a news photo.

TOOLS NEEDED

- Today's New York Times, one copy per student
- Copies of Worksheet 1, one per student
- Overhead transparency of a large photo from the front page of The New York Times
- Overhead transparency of Worksheet 1
- Tape
- Scissors (optional)

PREPARATION

- Assemble tools.
- Review rules for nouns.

WARM-UP

- Distributes copies of today's New York Times to each student in your class.

● ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Can you "see" words in pictures? Look at the large photo on the front page of today's New York Times.
- What does the headline of the article accompanying the photo say? What does the caption say? (*The headline is above the article; the caption, which describes what is going on in the photo, is generally below or alongside the photograph.*)
- What things do you see in this photo?
- List student answers on the board. (*Most will be nouns; many students will also offer modifiers, in the form of adjectives, of the things they see, e.g., angry protesters, little child, red shirt, brown hair.*)

Display overhead transparency of Worksheet 1 (modeling worksheet).

- Look at the words we have listed on the board. Which words are nouns? (Worksheet Step D)
- Today we are going to be sorting nouns into categories; some of these categories may go beyond "person, place or thing" to include ideas, actions and conditions.
- Are any of the nouns you mentioned proper nouns? Identify the proper nouns in the list. *Proper nouns include names of people, brand names of clothing, buildings or street names, etc.*
- How can you tell the difference between a proper noun and a common noun? (*Proper nouns are capitalized, and are generally more specific and exact than common nouns.*)



MODEL LESSON PLAN

Categorizing Nouns

(Lesson

1)

- Looking at the nouns on our list, can you change some of the proper nouns to common nouns and common nouns to proper nouns? (Worksheet Step E) *Answers will vary depending on original student responses. If a person's name was given — John Doe — the common noun would be "man."*

NEWSPAPER ACTIVITY

- Direct students to select another photo and complete the Worksheet, including Step F. *Show students how to crease the paper around a photo and carefully tear it out without using a scissors.*

EXTENSION/INDEPENDENT PRACTICE/HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

- Look at the photos used in the class discussion and the photos selected for the completion of Worksheet 1. Identify *actions, ideas, qualities and conditions* that might be represented in each photo. Discuss these other categories of nouns. (Actions: protest, speech, assistance. Ideas: concern, anger, friendship. Conditions: squalor, excitement, peace. Qualities: bravery, persistence, enthusiasm.)
- Create notebooks of interesting parts of speech. Begin the notebook with noun categories. Use The Times to continue adding to your word bank of nouns. Use any free time during the school day to add to your notebook as you read The Times, your textbooks or other material.

LESSON 1

WORKSHEET 1: At the Scene

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE:

Identifying, categorizing and writing with nouns, using photos in The New York Times

Getting Started: Newspaper photos illustrate the words and ideas in news articles. Photos in The New York Times generally show people or objects that are represented by nouns in the accompanying news article and captions. Note: The headline is in larger type than the article and generally appears above the article. The caption is in smaller type and is generally below the photo.

- A. Select a news photo from any page of today's Times.
- B. Write the headline of the article accompanying the photo below.
- _____
- C. Writing directly on the photo, identify everything you see in the picture.
(For example, if the picture shows a person, you may see a nose, eyes, shirt, watch, eyebrows, etc.)
- D. You should have listed many words that are nouns. Categorize them in the chart below. Use the "Other" category for those nouns that don't fit into any of the first three categories.

People	Places	Things That Can Be Seen	Other



LESSON **1****WORKSHEET 1: At the Scene**

Student Name: _____

- E. For some of the common nouns you've listed, give examples of related proper nouns. Example: street (common noun); Madison Avenue (proper noun). List the proper nouns in the space below. If you listed a proper noun in the chart in section D, give a common noun to replace it. Example: Adidas (proper noun); shoe (common noun).

Common	Proper	Proper	Common

- F. Tape the news photo on the back of this Worksheet and write a paragraph describing your reaction to the photo. Read the accompanying news article, if there is one, for more information.

LESSON 2

WORKSHEET 2: Fit and Proper

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Identifying proper nouns

Getting Started: Common nouns refer to a class of things and are generally not specific. Proper nouns identify a particular person, place or thing and provide more precise information. For example, the common noun “building” does help a reader develop an idea of some type of structure, though one’s idea of a building may range from “barn” to “skyscraper.” A proper noun for “building” might be “Sears Tower,” which gives a reader a very specific image.

- A. Select a news article from any section of The New York Times. Make sure your selection contains several proper nouns.
- B. Read the article. As you read, circle the proper nouns in the article.
- C. Rewrite at least three paragraphs of the selected article by changing the proper nouns you circled to common nouns.
- D. Clip the paragraphs from The Times that you rewrote and tape them alongside your rewrite with common nouns.
- E. Compare the two different writing styles and explain why the use of proper nouns or common nouns is better.

EXTENSION/HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

- F. Search several copies of The Times for proper nouns that might replace the following common nouns:

leader	disease	agency
city	street	man
building	business	woman
country	people	region

- G. **THE JOB CONNECTION:** Select a person from an article in The Times. List common nouns and proper nouns that this individual might use on the job. Read the article for ideas about his or her job. Consult a book or the Internet about whatever kind of work he or she does and look for relevant vocabulary words. At the end of your list of nouns, write a paragraph with your opinion of this kind of work. Use some of the nouns from your list in the paragraph.

LESSON 3

WORKSHEET 3: Compound and Collective

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Identifying and categorizing collective and compound nouns in ads

Getting Started: In addition to common nouns and proper nouns, the English language uses compound nouns and collective nouns. Compound nouns consist of more than one word to identify a person, place or thing (basketball, General Smith, jack-o'-lantern) and may be a compound word, two separate words or a hyphenated word. Collective nouns refer to a group of people or things acting as one (committee, team, crew, congregation, club), but are not considered plural nouns (siblings, members, townspeople). "Hair" is a collective noun in English but in Greek, "hair" is not a collective noun. Greeks say, "Comb your hairs."

- Skim the pages of today's New York Times and clip four ads from the newspaper.
- Study each advertisement you selected and use a highlighter to mark every noun you find in the ad.
- In the chart below, sort every noun you marked into the most appropriate category.

Common Nouns	Proper Nouns	Collective Nouns	Compound Nouns

- Create an ad for any product or service using all four kinds of nouns. Illustrate the ad using images clipped from The Times.

EXTENSION/HOMEWORK ACTIVITY

If you know another language, keep a notebook comparing different kinds of nouns in English and the other language. Make a chart illustrating the comparisons. Share them with the class.

LESSON 4

WORKSHEET 4: Modifiers

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Using adjectives to modify nouns

Getting Started: Adjectives help to define or clarify nouns. For example, the simple noun “man” can be more clearly defined by using various adjectives to modify it. The image of “man” becomes clearer if it is preceded by adjectives such as “angry,” “crooked,” “tall,” “generous,” “uninformed” or “exuberant.”

- A. Read through the House & Home section of The New York Times, which appears every Thursday.
- B. See how Times reporters use adjectives to describe objects around the house.
- C. Look at an object nearby (a chair, a cabinet, a rug, etc.). List at least 10 adjectives that describe (modify) this object.
- D. Use your list of modifiers (adjectives) to write a description of this object in the style of the House & Home section. Use a separate sheet of paper for the first draft of your descriptive writing. Revise it until it is grammatically perfect and describes the object completely and cleverly.

EXTENSION/HOMEWORK ACTIVITY

- E. THE GRAMMAR POLICE: *Well and Good*
Do you know when to use *well* and *good*? These two little words cause big problems for many people. *Well* may be used as either an adjective or an adverb.

As an adjective, *well* has three meanings: to be in good health, to appear well dressed or groomed, to be satisfactory. As an adverb, *well* means capably: The ship was built well.

Good is always an adjective; it cannot be used to modify/describe a verb.

- F. THE GRAMMAR POLICE: Listen for the incorrect use of the word *good* in daily conversation. (An example of INCORRECT USAGE: You did *good*.) Take note of incorrect uses of *good* and *well* that you hear and report on them to your class, without naming the speakers.

LESSON 5

WORKSHEET 5: Adverb Exploration

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Enhancing the meaning of verbs through the use of adverbs

Getting Started: Just as adjectives modify (describe) nouns, adverbs help to modify or further clarify the meaning of adjectives, verbs or other adverbs. Adverbs can further define other words by telling how, when, where or to what extent.

- A. Use the Sports section from today's New York Times to search for adverbs in headlines, captions, news articles and opinion columns. *HINT: Many adverbs end in "ly," but not ALL words ending in "ly" are adverbs. Some adjectives (kindly, lovely) end in "ly" as well.*
- B. Work with a partner to skim the headlines, captions, news articles and columns for adverbs. Circle every adverb you find. Try to find at least 15 adverbs.
- C. Work together with your partner to test your adverb selection.
 - What does each adverb modify — an adjective, verb or another adverb? Indicate the word modified by drawing a square around the word and identifying the modified word as an adjective (adj), verb (vb) or adverb (adv).
 - Does the adverb tell how, when, where or to what extent? If your answer is yes, then it is likely that you've found an adverb.
- D. On your own, use the adverbs you found in today's Sports section to create a brief article about an athletic event you recently attended or watched on television. Use articles about games or events from today's Times for information in writing your review.

Write your new article in the space below.

- F. **THE GRAMMAR POLICE:** Write down every adverb you hear your classmates use when they read their articles. How do adverbs enhance ideas in speaking and writing? Are they accurate? Be courteous: Discuss any errors without naming the speakers.

LESSON 6

WORKSHEET 6: Up Close and Personal

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Analyzing the function of pronouns; identifying pronouns and the nouns from which they take their meaning.

Getting Started: Pronouns are words that are used in place of nouns and take their meaning from the nouns they represent. Examine this sentence: "Jonas Smith led the league in bases stolen, yet he was never properly honored for his accomplishment." The pronoun "he" takes its meaning from the proper noun "Jonas Smith." The actual name of the person in this sentence could have been used twice, but the pronoun effectively replaces the noun and avoids repetition.

- Select a column or a feature article from today's New York Times.
- Circle every pronoun you can find in the column/feature and draw an arrow from each pronoun to the noun from which it gets its meaning. Underline the noun.

Example:

Jonas Smith led the league in bases stolen, yet he was never honored for his achievement.

- After completing step B, read the article or column to yourself, replacing each of the pronouns used with the noun it represents.
- List the advantages of using pronouns in writing.



LESSON 6

WORKSHEET 6: Up Close and Personal (continued)

Student Name: _____

- E. Read the following sentence that is similar to, yet very different from, the sentence in step B.

Jonas Smith led the league in stolen bases, but Tommy Jones, his coach, said he never got the recognition that was due to him.

In this new sentence, who does the word “he” refer to?

- F. Discuss this sentence as a class and talk about some of the errors or confusion that can occur when using pronouns.
- G. Suggest a new structure for the sentence in step E to make its meaning clearer.

EXTENSION/HOMEWORK ACTIVITY

Be on the alert for ambiguity (confusion or double meaning) in whatever you read. Look carefully at school announcements, bulletin boards, video game instructions or ads. When you find ambiguity created by a confusing pronoun reference, bring the example to class and ask your classmates to clear up the confusion. Make a poster or establish a classroom bulletin board with examples that you and your classmates find.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE: Clear Up the Confusion

The following article, “College Board Corrects Itself On Test Score,” from The New York Times is about a situation in which unclear pronoun references resulted in confused meaning — with real consequences for those involved. Read the article and write several alternative ways that the sentence from the PSAT could have been written more clearly.



LESSON 6

WORKSHEET 6: Up Close and Personal (continued)

THE NEW YORK TIMES **NATIONAL** THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2003

College Board Corrects Itself On Test Score

By TAMAR LEWIN

For the first time in almost 20 years, the College Board has rescored the PSAT to give the 1.8 million students who took the test on Oct. 15 credit for a different answer on an ambiguous grammar question.

The question asked students whether there was a grammatical error in the following sentence: "Toni Morrison's genius enables her to create novels that arise from and express the injustices African Americans have endured."

The College Board thought the sentence was correct, and considered the right answer to be "E" or "no error."

But Kevin Keegan, a high school journalism teacher in Silver Spring, Md., disagreed. He complained to the testers that, strictly speaking, the word "her" referred not to Toni Morrison, but to "Toni Morrison's," a grammatical error. So the correct answer, he said, was "A," signifying a mistake within the words "her to create."

Slightly more than half of those tested gave the answer the College Board originally considered right, far more than chose any other answer. But an unusually high number of students skipped the question — some, perhaps, because they were aware of the ambiguity and did not want to choose a wrong answer.

"We decided the question was flawed," said Lee Jones, a vice president of the College Board.

But because of the way the PSAT is scored, there was no perfect way to change the scores. Students get a point for each correct answer on the test and a quarter-point off for each incorrect answer.

"We decided to throw the question out, which gave the students who selected A a little bump in their score, because they were no longer penalized for a wrong answer," Mr. Jones said. "But we didn't want to penalize the students who chose E, so we rescored and let students keep whichever is the higher of the two scores. We know it's not perfect, but it seemed like the best solution."

Mr. Keegan, though, said it was a terrible solution. "This still means that students who answered A don't get as good a score as those who answered E," he said.

The question would count for only a point or two of a student's overall score. But that can be crucial, Mr. Keegan said, since the PSAT's are used as the screening test for National Merit Scholarships.

LESSON 7

WORKSHEET 7: On Top of Prepositions

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Analyzing the function of prepositions in relation to nouns and pronouns

Getting Started: Prepositions are words that show the relationship of a noun or a pronoun to other words in a sentence. "The government building across the river is securely guarded" contains the preposition "across." This preposition shows the relationship of the noun "building" to the noun "river." Changing the preposition "across" to "beside" or "near" would change the relationship between "building" and "river." Prepositions may seem to be small matters, but they are important in defining relationships and conveying meaning.

- A. Select an interesting photo from any page in today's New York Times.
- B. Clip the photo from the newspaper and tape it on the reverse side of this Worksheet or on another piece of paper, as your teacher directs.
- C. Identify the people, places and things (nouns) in the picture by writing what you see on the photo.

Study the relationship of the nouns to each other and write five sentences about what you see in the photo. Use prepositions to describe the relationships between the nouns. Underline each preposition you use. Write your sentences in the space below.

Example: The Secretary of State is seated behind the president of the United States.

EXTENSION/HOMEWORK ACTIVITY

Look at the large map in the Weather Report in today's Times. Write a review of the weather for your state and the states that surround it. Use prepositions and prepositional phrases to describe the position of the surrounding states in relation to your state. Use prepositions and prepositional phrases to describe the weather movement shown and changes in the weather expected in your region (your state and surrounding states).

LESSON 8

WORKSHEET 8: On the Clock

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Identifying various parts of speech in a sentence

Getting Started: Each part of speech (noun, pronoun, preposition, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, interjection) performs a specific function in a sentence. The most basic sentences contain a subject (one of the functions of a noun/pronoun, for example) and a predicate (a function of a verb). "He speaks" is a complete sentence, though a very simple one. "He" is the subject; the part of speech playing the role of the subject is a pronoun. "Speaks" is the predicate, a role performed by the part of speech known as a verb.

- A. Select a sentence from the Op-Ed page, Business Day and Sports section of The New York Times. Choose sentences that tell you something you didn't know before you read today's Times. Copy each of the three sentences below.

- B. Look carefully at each sentence. Work with a partner to identify the part of speech for each word in the sentences, as in the example below. Be sure to review the eight parts of speech (noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, preposition, interjection) before beginning this exercise.

(sentence) Game 2 of this series will be in Detroit Tuesday.
 (parts of speech) (n) (adv) (prep) (pron) (n) (v) (v) (prep) (n) (n)

- C. To check your answers, look in your grammar book (or a dictionary) for assistance.



LESSON 8

WORKSHEET 8: On the Clock (continued)

Student Name: _____

GRAMMAR BINGO

Create a Bingo card with nine squares for you to use at your desk. In each square, write the name of a different part of speech. Put an X in the center square you will have left over. Here's an example:

Verb	Preposition	Noun
Pronoun	X	Adverb
Adjective	Conjunction	Interjection

Cut nine small squares of plain paper — about the same size as the squares on your Bingo card — to use as chips. In class, play Grammar Bingo:

- Write one of your sentences from section A on the board.
- Challenge your classmates to identify the part of speech as you point to each word in sequence. As you call out each word and a classmate correctly identifies the part of speech, announce that it is correct and that classmates may cover that part of speech on their card with a chip. (The X may be covered with a chip at the beginning of the game.)
- When someone has completed a line (down, across, diagonally) by covering three squares with chips, he or she should call out BINGO. Start over with new sentences from The New York Times written on the board.

LESSON 9

WORKSHEET 9: Functionality

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Identifying parts of speech and the roles that each part of speech plays in a sentence*Getting Started: A word can function as a different part of speech depending on how that word is used in a given sentence. For example, the word “long” can be a noun, adverb or adjective.*

VERB: “I long for the quiet days in the country.”
 ADVERB: “It has been so long since we have seen each other.”
 ADJECTIVE: “The long stretch of road between Kansas City and Denver was shortened by good company.”

In any section of The New York Times, find examples of the same word used as different parts of speech. Clip these examples and make them into a poster.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE

In your notebook, record examples of words you hear used incorrectly. Identify the part of speech for the word that is incorrectly used, and then correct its usage.

For example: “Drive careful” is incorrect because an adjective (careful) is modifying a verb (drive). An adverb should be used to modify the verb: “Drive carefully.”

GRAMMAR POLICE NOTEBOOK PAGE

INCORRECT USAGE	WHY	CORRECT USAGE

LESSON 10

WORKSHEET 10: Structural Matters

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Identifying subjects, verbs and modifiers

Getting Started: Simple sentences must contain a subject and a verb. Clauses, phrases and other modifiers can add to the basic foundation of a sentence (subject and verb) to include more information.

- A. Most headlines in The New York Times are complete sentences. A complete sentence contains a subject and a verb. Select any page of today's Times and analyze each headline on the page. Look for the basic sentence structure of a subject and verb. When you find a complete sentence in any (or all) of the headlines, write both the headline and the subject/verb below.

Headline: _____

Subject and Verb: _____

Headline: _____

Subject and Verb: _____

Headline: _____

Subject and Verb: _____

- B. Rewrite the headlines you found that were NOT complete sentences and did not contain a subject and a verb. Check to see if a complete sentence would have fit in the space available.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Select any one of the headlines from this activity and read the accompanying article. Read the story carefully and write a letter to the editor to explain your point of view or your feelings about this article. Look at the letters to the editor in today's Times for examples to help you understand how to write a letter to the editor.

Exchange your letters with two other classmates. Review your classmates' writing to check for complete sentences. When you are satisfied that every sentence in the letter written by one classmate is complete, pass the letter to the next classmate in the group for review. By the time you finish your reviews, you will have read three letters to the editor (including your own). If you find a sentence you think is incomplete, talk to your classmate about it and suggest a way to make it complete.

Discuss the content of the letters. Why do you agree or disagree with the opinions stated?

LESSON 11

WORKSHEET 11: In Agreement

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE:

Analyzing matching forms of words for subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement

Getting Started: "Agreement" refers to the matching of word forms in a sentence.

People are supporting the mayor.

(The plural subject, "people," and the plural verb, "are," agree.)

One person is supporting the mayor.

(The singular subject, "person," and the singular verb, "is," agree.)

A student must turn in his paper.

(The pronoun, "his," agrees with the noun, "student," which is the antecedent.)

Students must turn in their papers.

(The pronoun, "their," agrees with the antecedent, "students.")

- A. Select an article from the Business Day section of today's New York Times. As you read, find examples of subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
- B. Create a list of the examples you found.
- C. Create a poster on this aspect of grammar, using articles from different sections of The Times. Compare the complexity of the sentences from the different sections. Do some sections use more complex sentences? Note your findings on the poster.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Collect examples of incorrect subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement you find in writing and hear in conversation. As you see and hear these examples, decide why the incorrect usage occurred and what could be changed to make the subject and verb or pronoun and antecedent agree.

Add these examples to your grammar notebook.

LESSON 12

WORKSHEET 12: In Agreement Again

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE:

Analyzing matching forms of words for subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement

Getting Started: So what's so difficult about correct subject-verb agreement? Singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects require plural verbs — but it can get more complicated.

You just breezed through the previous exercise, but you may not have encountered *compound* subjects, which present challenges for subject-verb agreement. Sometimes it is difficult to figure out whether a subject is singular or plural (*crew, team, neither, anyone, etc.*), and therefore which verb should be used with it. It can be particularly challenging when subjects and verbs are separated by a number of words.

- Create a Grammar Test using your favorite section of today's New York Times. First, select and read several articles in the section.
- Select a long sentence from one of the articles you chose and rewrite the sentence using *incorrect* subject-verb or pronoun-antecedent agreement below.

- Clip out the article and tape it on the back of this Worksheet as an answer key.
- Exchange “tests” with a classmate. Correct the grammar. Check accuracy by reading the article on the reverse side of the Worksheet.
- Discuss the article. Why is it important enough to be published in The Times?

LESSON **13****WORKSHEET 13: Punctuation Perfection**

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Understanding the rules that apply to correct comma usage

Getting Started: Notice the use of commas, which indicate when to take a breath or pause as you read your copy of today's New York Times. Writers do not insert commas randomly. Specific rules of punctuation guide their usage.

- A. Select an article from the international pages (in Section A) of today's Times to read as a group. Take turns reading paragraphs aloud and as others read, circle the commas in each paragraph.
- B. For each comma you find in the article you read as a group, look at the section on comma usage in your grammar book to find the rule that is being followed.
- C. Discuss the rules you think are reflected in the use of commas in the article. Write the rules of comma usage on the board or on an overhead projector as you state each rule.
- D. Identify other rules of comma usage.
- E. Skim the pages of today's New York Times to find examples of comma usage and the rules that apply to each. Create a poster of comma uses with clippings from The Times. Connect the comma rules to the Times articles taped on the poster.

JOURNALISM NOTES:

Newspapers employ grammar and style experts known as “copy editors.” (The word “copy” refers to the text of an article.) They review the work of reporters and other editors and change punctuation or words, if needed. In everyday life, people don't have copy editors handy to check their writing! That's why understanding grammar is important to making your own writing better.

Differences exist between some of the rules in grammar books and the grammatical style used in journalism. Read the following excerpt from “The New York Times Manual of Style and Usage” about using commas in a series:

In general, do not use a comma before “and” in a series: The snow stalled cars, buses and trains.

What do your classroom grammar resources say about the use of commas in a series?

Continue your investigation of this rule in your classroom copy of “The New York Times Manual of Style and Usage.” The explanation of the rule(s) about serial commas offers more detail.

LESSON 14

WORKSHEET 14: Quote Me On That

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Analyzing the use of quotation marks in direct and indirect quotations (paraphrasing)

Getting Started: Quoting someone means writing down the exact words he or she says. Quotation marks are placed around the words to indicate that someone used those exact words. Paraphrasing what someone says (which is sometimes referred to as an indirect quotation) captures the essence of what someone says, but does not show the exact words used. Paraphrasing does not require quotation marks.

Example of direct quotation:

The president of the company stated, "There probably will be more layoffs in the future."

Example of paraphrasing:

The president of the company indicated that layoffs could be expected in the future.

- A. Find a feature article or an interview in any section of today's New York Times.
- B. Read the article for information.
- C. Look for examples of direct quotations. Write the direct quotes and the name of the speaker in the space below.

DIRECT QUOTE: _____

Speaker: _____

- D. Look through the article one more time to find examples of paraphrasing. Write an example of paraphrasing and the name of the speaker in the space below.

PARAPHRASING: _____

Speaker: _____

- E. Paraphrase the direct quote from step C. _____

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Listen to radio or television news broadcasts to find out how quotes are handled in these types of reporting. Do they use direct quotations? How do you know? Discuss your findings in class. Give an example of how you would report a direct quote on a TV or radio show.

LESSON 15

WORKSHEET 15: Interviewing Matters

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Reviewing the use of other punctuation with quotation marks

Getting Started: Other types of punctuation marks are used with quotation marks. For example, where does the period at the end of a sentence go? Does it belong inside or outside the quotation mark?

A. Review the rules below regarding punctuation with quotation marks.

- Always place a comma or a period *inside* the final quotation mark.
*Example: The chairman said, "This meeting is adjourned."
"This meeting is adjourned," said the chairman.*
- Always put a semicolon or a colon *outside* the final quotation mark.
*Example: The general remarked, "I couldn't have asked for better response to the call to duty"; another leader indicated the response was less than expected.
(In this instance, the semicolon connects two complete, yet closely related sentences.)*
- Place a question mark or exclamation mark *inside* the final quotation mark *if* it is part of the quotation.
Example: The activist cried out, "When will this war ever end?"
- Place a question mark or an exclamation mark *outside* the final quotation mark *if* it is NOT part of the quotation.
Example: Do you believe that the television news anchor was exaggerating when he said, "Everybody is leaving town due to the West Nile virus scare"?

B. As a class, look through the pages of today's New York Times for examples of punctuation used with quotes. Identify the types of punctuation you find and the rules above that seem to explain their usage.

C. Provide your teacher with each example as you find it and ask your classmates which rule of punctuation applies.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

With a partner, stage an interview for the class on a topic from a Times article. Tape the interview as you interview your partner. Have the class listen to the live interview and takes notes, then write up the interview in news-article style using direct quotes and paraphrasing. Exchange final drafts. Then, play the tape so students can check the accuracy of their direct quotes and paraphrasing. Underline any errors in red. Return the written interviews and discuss whatever was wrong.

LESSON 16

WORKSHEET 16: Seek and Find

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Locating various types of punctuation used in print and identifying the punctuation needed in various kinds of writing

Getting Started: Punctuation helps to clarify the meaning of anything written. A quick scan of The New York Times will give you an idea of the many types of punctuation that are in common use, as well as the reasons for their use.

ACTIVITY A

- Make a list of every type of punctuation mark you can recall.
- Look in The Times for examples of punctuation marks used. Add any punctuation marks you find that you did not list. (Does your original list include colons? Does your list include dashes?)
- As a class, discuss some of the punctuation marks you found and determine why a specific punctuation mark was used in each case. As you discuss the reasons, keep your grammar book handy in case you need to look up guidelines for the use of different punctuation marks.

ACTIVITY B

- Select a feature article from the Sports or Arts sections, or Dining In/Dining Out, which runs on Wednesdays. Read the article.
- Select one or two paragraphs from the article and retype the paragraphs on a computer. Eliminate all of the punctuation used in the paragraph(s) chosen. Print out one copy.
- Pair up with a classmate and exchange printouts. Insert punctuation that will make the writing clearer and easier to read.
- Compare your punctuation additions to the original punctuation used in The Times.

Discuss the content of the articles you chose. Think like a Times editor: Why do you think these specific articles were selected for publication in The Times?

LESSON 17

WORKSHEET 17: Conjunction Functions

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Finding different conjunctions used in print

Getting Started: Conjunctions act as “joiners” in a sentence: They join related words, phrases or clauses. There are three different types of conjunctions: coordinating conjunctions, correlative conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions.

- A. Look in your grammar books for information about the three types of conjunctions. Make a list of the conjunctions generally found in each category.
- B. Look through the National and International news pages of today’s New York Times to find examples of conjunctions. Sort the examples you find.

Coordinating	Correlative	Subordinating

- C. Select two of the sentences in which you found conjunctions and rewrite them without conjunctions. What does this tell you about the uses of conjunctions?
What happens to the sentences? _____

Correlative conjunctions are pairs that are used together, but in different parts of a sentence. These pairs include *neither/nor, either/or, not only/but also*.

Read several reviews in the Arts section of today’s Times and write statements about the artists featured. Use each of the correlative conjunction pairs to describe the artists discussed by the writers.

Examples:

McLachlan is neither bothered nor upset by the lack of pesky fans.

McLachlan is busy with either marriage or motherhood.

McLachlan not only has dealt with career changes, but also has survived the impact of the death of her mother.

What did you discover about these artists that you did not know before reading The Times?

LESSON 18

WORKSHEET 18: Compound Conundrum

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Recognizing compound subjects and compound verbs in writing

Getting Started: Compound subjects are two or more subjects, joined by a conjunction, that take the same verb. Compound verbs are joined by a connecting word and have the same subject.

Example: “The C.E.O. and his colleagues met in private quarters prior to releasing their statements to the press.” The underlined words are the compound subject. Note that the compound subject, joined by the conjunction “and,” takes a plural verb form.

Example: “The department met and discussed financial concerns.” The underlined words are the compound verb.

- A. Clip any article of interest to you in the Science Times (Tuesday) or Escapes (Friday) sections of The New York Times. Tape the article in the space below or on a separate sheet of paper.
- B. Read the selected article. Circle any compound subjects and underline any compound verbs you find.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Write a short essay about the article you analyzed. Why did it interest you? What did you learn? How could you learn more about the subject? Submit your essay to the school newspaper.

LESSON 19

WORKSHEET 19: State Your Case

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Choosing the correct case when using pronouns

Getting Started: Personal pronouns are little words that can cause big usage problems. To avoid errors, be aware of the pronoun's case. There are three cases: "nominative," "objective" and "possessive." When pronouns are the subject in a sentence (the "doer" of the action), they are in the nominative case. When pronouns are used as objects (the "receiver" of the action), the case is objective. When pronouns are used to show possession (ownership), they are in the possessive case.

A. Use the chart below as a reference for personal pronoun selection.

PERSONAL PRONOUNS*Singular*

	<u>Nominative Case</u>	<u>Objective Case</u>	<u>Possessive Case</u>
First Person	I	me	my, mine
Second Person	you	you	your, yours
Third Person	he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her, hers, its

Plural

	<u>Nominative Case</u>	<u>Objective Case</u>	<u>Possessive Case</u>
First Person	we	us	our, ours
Second Person	you	you	your, yours
Third Person	they	them	their, theirs

B. Work with a partner to find some of the pronouns in the chart above in today's New York Times. After each pronoun, identify its case based on how it was used in the article. Find five different examples.

Example: She and I wanted to start our own business. Note: The personal pronouns in this sentence are used as SUBJECTS (the doers of the action, nominative case)

- She (third-person singular, nominative case)
- I (first-person singular, nominative case)

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Pronoun Patrol: Work with your partner to find examples of pronouns you hear spoken and in material you read outside of class. After a week on patrol, present what you and your partner heard/read to your classmates and ask for a verdict of Right (thumbs up) or Wrong (thumbs down) on the pronoun usages you found.

Listen for "my friends and I." Why is this incorrect?
(Hint: Review subject and object phrases in your grammar book.)

LESSON 20

WORKSHEET 20: Stay On the Case of the Pronouns

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Choosing the correct form of pronouns for use in a critique

Getting Started: Correct use of personal pronouns improves with practice. In using personal pronoun combinations (he and I, him and me), courtesy plays a role in deciding which of the two items in the pronoun pair should go first. Put others before yourself: him and me; not me and him.

ACTIVITY A

- Look in the Arts section of today's New York Times for a movie advertised that you and a friend have both seen.
- Read a movie review in the Arts section, if one appeared today. (If there isn't a movie review, there might be a review of a concert, book or television show.)
- Write a review of the movie that you and your friend saw in the style of a Times review. Use pronouns that refer to you and your friend.

ACTIVITY B

- Select an article from the international or national news pages of The Times about a meeting of leaders of various countries or states.
- Write a paragraph summarizing the meeting. Use pronouns to represent the leaders after you have used their names.
- Have someone read your paragraph and explain which pronouns refer to which leaders, to check the clarity of your writing.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Listen for correct/incorrect pronoun pairs around your school (in the lunch room, in hallways, in classes, during assemblies) or on television. Report on these examples of "pronoun abuse" to your class, without identifying the speakers. Explain the incorrect examples, and then correct them.

LESSON 21

WORKSHEET 21: A Test Case

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Applying simple tests to decide if the usages of personal pronouns are correct

Getting Started: There are simple tests for correct personal pronoun usage.

When using compound personal pronouns as the *subjects* of a sentence (*nominative* case), separate the pronouns to test your sentence. The same test can be applied to the use of personal pronouns in the *objective* case. (See the second example below.)

Examples: Him and I went to the movies: wrong. Both pronouns are subjects of this sentence, but “him” is an objective pronoun, which is incorrect as a subject for this sentence.

- *Him* went to the movies? NO! *He* went to the movies.
- *I* went to the movies? YES! *I* went to the movies.
- Correct sentence: He and I went to the movies.

Example: The movie frightened both her and I: Wrong.

- The movie frightened *her*? YES!
- The movie frightened *I*? NO! The movie frightened *me*.
- Correct sentence: The movie frightened both her and me.

- A. Select and read an article from Tuesday’s Science Times section of The New York Times.
- B. Find a partner and discuss what you each read. Jot down notes so you’ll remember who said what.
- C. Write a summary of the information from the article you read and include references to the discussion between you and your partner. On what points did you agree? Were there any pieces of information that were a surprise to you OR your partner? What did your partner think about the information you shared? In your summary, use personal pronouns to refer to your partner and yourself.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Make a poster explaining correct and incorrect personal pronoun use.

Use the following headings: RIGHT! WRONG! WHY?

Illustrate your poster with examples of correct usage from The Times.

LESSON 22

WORKSHEET 22: Focus of the Week

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Identifying grammar in action in The New York Times

Getting Started: Development of grammatically correct writing skills takes time and practice. Using The New York Times as a practice tool can help anyone recognize — and use — standard written English.

- A. As a class, select a weekly topic for items to look for in your daily reading of The Times. For example, one week, your teacher may ask you to focus on finding examples of apostrophes in the newspaper. Another week, the focus may be on the correct use of adjectives. Whatever the topic of the week is, use the format below to keep track of your findings as you add them to your grammar/language notebook.

Focus/Topic of the Week: _____

Rules to remember: _____

Examples found during the week:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Page/Section/Headline</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Each week, your teacher will identify a class member to be the Acting Staff Sergeant. If you are selected, your daily duty for one week is to find an interesting guideline in your classroom's copy of "The New York Times Manual of Style and Usage." For example:

store (-), (-)store. Most compounds formed with "store" as a prefix are one word: storefront, storehouse, storekeeper, storeroom. Most but not all compounds formed with "store" as a suffix are two words; bookstore, cigar store, department store, drugstore, grocery store.

Share the information with your class and ask them to look for opportunities to apply the guideline selected.

LESSON 23

WORKSHEET 23: Apostrophe Cleanup

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Understanding how apostrophes enhance and clarify meaning

Getting Started: Apostrophes cause more problems than they should. If you understand the proper uses of apostrophes and practice them, you can eliminate “apostrophe catastrophes” from your writing.

- A. Look for apostrophes in the ads in today’s New York Times. For each apostrophe you find, explain below how it is used and find the rule in a grammar resource that explains why the apostrophe was used.
- B. Repeat this activity with different parts of today’s New York Times. Refer to your grammar book to find out why the apostrophes were used.
- C. Select 20 nouns from the front page of today’s New York Times that do not indicate possession. List these nouns on a large chart in your classroom and show the possessive form of the singular and plural nouns you found.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Evidence of apostrophe misuse — apostrophes that are unnecessary or those that are left out — can be found everywhere. Focus on store signs, advertising fliers, letters, textual information scrawling across the bottom of the television screen, posters, the Internet and e-mail. Keep an especially watchful eye out for *its* and *it’s*.

Note the crime and the perpetrator and prepare an A.P.B. (All Points Bulletin) each time this failure to observe a law of grammar is discovered.

LESSON 24

WORKSHEET 24: Contracting Verbs

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE:

Creating contractions and using apostrophes to show the position of dropped letters

Getting Started: The use of contractions is more acceptable in informal writing than in more formal written communication. Newspaper articles generally contain fewer contractions than in more informal writing.

- A. Scan Science Times (Tuesday), Dining In/Dining Out (Wednesday), Editorials and Op-Ed pages (every day) of The New York Times to find examples of verbs that could have been contracted but were not.
- B. In the space below, write the original verb used in the newspaper, the contraction that could have been used and errors that are commonly made with the use of this contraction. Put a large X over each error example, as a reminder not to make this mistake.

	<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Contraction</u>	<u>Frequent Error!</u>
<i>Example:</i>	<i>I have been</i>	<i>I've been</i>	<i>I've been</i>

- C. As you find contractions in the newspaper, add them to the list above. Make sure you correctly write out the verbs used to form the contraction.

THE GRAMMAR POLICE:

Many product advertisements in The New York Times contain a simple illustration or picture of the product and a few words to describe it.

Select one of these ads and write a description of the item for sale. Use adjectives and contractions in your description.

Clip the original ad from The Times and tape it on a plain sheet of paper. Put your description below or beside the advertisement and present your work to the class.

Discuss: Why do some ads have little or no written information about the product that is being advertised?

LESSON 25

WORKSHEET 25: Spelling Rules!

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Applying spelling rules to words in advertisements

Getting Started: There are some basic spelling rules that you review every school year and that you use without even thinking. Some of these rules have to do with changing words from singular to plural forms.

- A. Look through your grammar and spelling textbooks to find the spelling rules for changing singular words to plural forms. Review these rules and keep a copy of them handy for reference in completing this activity.
- B. Clip singular and plural nouns from some of the retail advertisements in today's New York Times. Use the chart below to plug in the nouns in the appropriate spaces.
- C. Design a poster with these clips, showing how you made singular nouns into plural nouns, and the rules you applied in each case.

Example:

<u>Singular Form</u>	<u>Plural Form</u>	<u>Rule Application</u>
car	cars	Add the letter "s" to form the plural of most nouns
fax	faxes	Add "es" to singular nouns ending in "s," "sh," "ch" and "x."
video	videos	Add the letter "s" to nouns ending in "o" when the "o" is preceded by a vowel. Add "es" when the singular form of the noun ends in a consonant.
mother-in-law	mothers-in-law	Form the plural of a hyphenated compound word by adding the letter "s" to the chief word even if it does not appear at the end.

LESSON 26

WORKSHEET 26: Department of Corrections

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Recognizing incorrect grammar and spelling in everyday life and correcting the errors

Getting Started: We see language violations everywhere: on television, in print, and on the Internet. We may hear errors, but to see them repeatedly on signs, on news scrolls on television, on the Web, on fliers and in other printed materials can make us question our own ability to distinguish correct and incorrect grammar.

You've been drafted into the ranks of the grammar police! Your first assignment is to respond to an A.P.B. on grammatical errors that surround us every day. Work in teams of four or five to find examples of grammar and spelling errors (even those that are intentional).

Your team's job is to ferret out the glaring errors that bombard us every day. Be watchful and like every good police officer, keep track of all the "violations" you encounter. Write a ticket for each offense.

NOTEBOOK MODEL

GRAMMAR VIOLATION

Offense: _____

Correction: _____

Law (rule) broken: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Grammar Officer: _____

LESSON 27

WORKSHEET 27: Just a Formality

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Distinguishing between informal and formal language use

Getting Started: Informal language characterizes most casual conversation. Speaking with friends, we may use slang, colloquial expressions and grammar that may not be acceptable in more formal written expression.

- A. Select an article or review from the Arts or Weekend sections of The New York Times.
- B. Read the item you selected and prepare to tell a classmate about it.
- C. Partner with a classmate. One of you will be the recorder and the other will be the speaker. Tell your classmate what you read in the piece you selected. Your partner's job is to write down what you say, while the tape recorder is running.
- D. After you talk, switch roles with your classmate.
- E. Together, listen to the recordings of your *talks* with each other and compare what you hear with what you each wrote.
- F. Identify any differences you note in your writing, compared to the recording of your *talk*. List below any of the informal statements, words, slang, and affectations of speech that you noted in the recording that were not in your writing.
 - WHAT YOU WROTE ABOUT THE TIMES ARTICLE (formal)
 - HOW YOU TALKED ABOUT IT (informal)

LESSON 28

WORKSHEET 28: A Personal Word Bank

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Acquiring new vocabulary words

Read an editorial in The New York Times and circle any words you do not understand.

Clip the editorial and tape it in your vocabulary notebook.

Look up the words you do not know in a dictionary or thesaurus and write possible synonyms for each word alongside the editorial. (A synonym is a word that is similar in meaning.)

Note: Editorials are the newspaper's opinions about an important issue in the news. To have a better understanding of the editorial, read news articles on the topic that appeared that day or in the days before the editorial was published.

Model Vocabulary Notebook Page:

A38

N

THE NEW YORK TIMES **EDITORIAL**

The Padilla Decision

**bad,
flagrant**

In a signal 2-to-1 ruling yesterday, a federal appeals court in Manhattan struck a blow against egregious presidential overreaching in the name of fighting terrorism. The court, ruling in the case of Jose Padilla, the so-called dirty bomber, denied the Bush administration's sweeping claim that the president has executive authority to hold Americans indefinitely in secret without access to lawyers simply by declaring them "enemy combatants."

Mr. Padilla, an American citizen, was taken into custody in Chicago in May 2002. He is being held incommunicado at a Navy brig in Charleston, S.C., where he has been denied access to counsel. Not long after his arrest, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced that Mr. Padilla was part of a plot by Al Qaeda to explode a radiological "dirty bomb." But no charges have yet been brought.

While the ruling was in the particular case of Mr. Padilla, the decision's larger message — that there are constitutional limits on the president's power to deny basic civil liberties in the name of fighting terrorism — is one that protects the liberty of all Americans.

The two-judge majority underscored that it was not denying the serious threat that Al Qaeda poses, nor the president's responsibility to protect the nation. The court also did not address the substance of the government's suspicions about Mr. Padilla. Rather, the decision correctly found that the president possesses no inherent constitutional authority as commander in chief to detain as enemy combatants American citizens seized on

under the circumstances of Mr. Padilla's case, the ruling said, citing a 1971 statute, was not authorized by Congress.

The dissenting judge, Richard Wesley, disagreed with that reading of the president's power. But he, too, objected to the denial of counsel to Mr. Padilla.

The decision now gives the government 30 days to release Mr. Padilla from military custody. But that does not mean he will be released. The government remains free to transfer him to civilian authorities, who can bring criminal charges or, if appropriate, hold him as a material witness in connection with grand jury proceedings.

At a critical moment when various aspects of the Bush administration's troubling record of curtailing civil liberties in the name of fighting terrorism are working their way to a resolution by the Supreme Court, yesterday's ruling on Mr. Padilla's detention could not have been more welcome.

It came just hours before another judicial repudiation of the administration's view that fighting terrorism essentially exempts it from normal constitutional constraints. A federal appeals court in California ruled in a separate case that prisoners held at the Guantánamo Bay naval base in Cuba should have access to lawyers and the American court system.

Together, these could be signs that the administration's strategy of aggressively bypassing the traditional protections of the criminal justice sys-

LESSON 29

WORKSHEET 29: Spelling Rules in Action

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Applying spelling rules

For each spelling rule you review as a class, look for examples of the rule being used in The New York Times. Add each word to your grammar/language notebook and to a classroom chart of spelling-rule reminders.

Model Spelling Notebook Page:

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2003

DRIVING

Halfway There, A Family Stops to Eat

By STEVE KURUTZ

drop the "e" (in stumble) when
adding -ing

plural form adds "s" before the
suffix "by"

plural form changes the "y" to "i"
and adds "es"

FOR travelers inclined to take the long and winding back roads, there is, perhaps, no greater reward than stumbling upon a ramshackle old roadside restaurant. With little more than a clapboard frame and a colorful sign, the best of them seem to promise to hungry passersby all the most desirable charms: Delicious Food, Local Character, Depression-Era Prices.

Red's & Trudy's, which sits at the bottom of a gentle, sloping pull-off near the intersection of Routes 305 and 417 in Portville, N.Y., possesses all these qualities. In fact, I believe it's one of the finest roadside restaurants in the history of roadside restaurants. This is a biased opinion, of course, but it is the kind of bias informed by extensive research; my family has been stopping at Red's & Trudy's for over 60 years now, dating to the early 1940's when my maternal grandparents found the place while traveling to visit relatives.



A FIXED POINT Over the decades, Red's & T

up in a small, railroad town in central Pennsylvania named Renovo and moved, after they married, to Buffalo. Partly because of homesickness and, in later years, for holidays, they often made the 200-mile drive back to their birthplace. When my mother was grown, she moved to Renovo and, in turn, my family drove up to Buffalo.

Red's & Trudy's is indelibly linked with these trips.

LESSON 30

WORKSHEET 30: Abbreviation Elation

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Decoding abbreviations for meaning

Create a chart of abbreviations you find in The New York Times.
(You may include acronyms, e.g., C.E.O., for chief executive officer of a corporation.)

Use news articles in The Times to decode the meaning of the abbreviations and/or acronyms.

Write the meaning next to each abbreviation.

<u>Abbreviation/Acronym</u>	<u>Headline of Times Article</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Write a news article about an event that took place in your class. Use abbreviations that are appropriate to the report. Study the writing style of The Times as your model. Submit your edited report to the school newspaper.

LESSON 31

WORKSHEET 31: A Times Spelling Bee

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Identify correct spelling of key vocabulary words and their context in news articles in The New York Times

- Prepare for the spelling bee by reading the international pages in section A of today's New York Times.
- Create a list of spelling words drawn from these pages. See especially the "Foreign Journal" feature on page A4.
- Participate in the spelling bee. You will be asked to spell a word from the list created by your classmates and identify its context based on the report in The Times.

Each team receives one point if its representative spells the word correctly and a second point for identifying the context of the word in the article.

Repeat the spelling bee using each section of The Times.

LESSON 32

WORKSHEET 32: Photo Op

Student Name: _____

OBJECTIVE: Writing concise and accurate descriptions

- Clip a powerful photo from The New York Times. Separate the photo from the caption.
- Tape the photo on one side of a piece of paper.
- Hold on to the caption.
- Exchange the photo with another student.
- Looking only at the photo, write a caption for it.

When finished, compare the professional caption written by a Times copy editor with your version. Tape the original here.

Explain the difference: _____

What is required to write a concise and accurate caption?

