

Academic Grammar — Guide —

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*A Practical Grammar Workbook for
High School, Dual Enrollment,
and First-Year College Students*

LEARN • PRACTICE • MASTER



— Lessons • Guided Examples • Practice • —
Answer Keys • Comprehensive Reviews

Academic Grammar Guide

Copyright

Academic Grammar Guide

A Practical Grammar Workbook for High School, Dual Enrollment, and First-Year College Students

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This workbook is intended as an educational resource. Although every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, grammar conventions and style recommendations may vary among instructors, institutions, publishers, and style guides. Students should always follow the requirements of their instructor or institution.

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Published by
FMKR Learning Press
St. Johns County, Florida

First Edition
2026

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Introduction

When my oldest child enrolled in dual enrollment English Composition (ENC 1101), I expected it would be easy to find practice materials that matched what she was learning in class. It wasn't.

Her professor gave detailed grammar lectures before each test, but there were no homework assignments or practice exercises to reinforce what had been taught. Each unit ended with a 50-question multiple-choice exam, and I found myself searching for resources that matched the topics covered in class. I never found exactly what I was looking for, so I began creating my own practice pages, answer keys, and explanations. Over time, those pages became this workbook.

This was designed for dual enrollment students, first-year college students enrolled in English Composition (ENC 1101), homeschool students, high school students, and adult learners who want to strengthen their grammar and academic writing skills.

Rather than attempting to cover every grammar rule in the English language, this guide focuses on the concepts students are most likely to encounter in academic writing and introductory college composition courses. Each lesson includes straightforward explanations, realistic examples, practice exercises, and detailed answer keys so that students can learn not only **which** answer is correct, but **why** it is correct.

How to Use This Workbook

Although this guide can be read from beginning to end, it was designed to be flexible. Students may work through the lessons in order, or they may focus on individual topics as they are covered in class. Each section includes practice exercises followed by answer keys with explanations. Additional practice sections provide opportunities to reinforce concepts and prepare for quizzes and exams.

A Note About Grammar

English grammar is not always as absolute as many people believe. Different instructors, textbooks, publishers, and style guides sometimes recommend different conventions. Throughout this workbook, standard American English grammar and punctuation conventions have been used consistently. When more than one convention is considered acceptable, the workbook uses the form most commonly taught in academic writing. If your instructor prefers a different convention or style, always follow your instructor's requirements for that course.

My hope is that this workbook gives students the practice and confidence they need to become stronger, more accurate writers. Whether you are preparing for an upcoming grammar quiz, reviewing for a comprehensive exam, or simply refreshing skills you have not used in years, I hope you find this guide to be a practical and useful resource.

Thanks,



Glossary

Term	Definition
Antecedent	The noun or pronoun that a pronoun refers to.
Clause	Words that contain a subject and a verb. Clauses may be independent or dependent . Example: In “When the rain stopped, we went outside,” <i>when the rain stopped</i> and <i>we went outside</i> are clauses.
Complete Sentence	A group of words that expresses a complete thought, contains a subject and a main verb, and can stand alone. Also called an independent clause . Example: “The students submitted the assignment.” is a complete sentence.
Complete Verb	The main verb together with any helping verbs. Example: In the sentence “The students were studying,” were studying is the complete verb.
Compound Subject	Two or more subjects joined by a coordinating conjunction . Example: In “The teacher and the principal spoke,” <i>the teacher and the principal</i> form a compound subject.
Compound Verb	Two or more verbs that share the same subject. Example: In “The students read and discussed the article,” <i>read and discussed</i> form a compound verb.
Coordinating Conjunction	A conjunction that joins words, phrases, or independent clauses of equal importance. The coordinating conjunctions are for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so (FANBOYS). Example: In “The experiment failed, but the students learned from it,” but is the coordinating conjunction.
Dependent Clause	A clause that has a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone because it does not express a complete thought. Example: “ Because the class was canceled ” is a dependent clause because it cannot stand alone.
Fragment	A group of words punctuated like a sentence that is not a complete sentence. Example: “ After the final bell rang, ” is a fragment because it does not express a complete thought.
Gerund	A verb form ending in -ing that functions as a noun. Example: <i>Swimming is good exercise.</i>
Helping Verb	A verb that works with the main verb to show tense, voice, or mood. Example: In the sentence “The students were studying,” were is the helping verb and studying is the main verb.
Idiom	An idiom is a standard word combination that sounds natural to fluent English speakers.
Independent Clause	A clause that expresses a complete thought and can stand alone. Also called a complete sentence . Example: “The class was canceled.” is an independent clause because it can stand alone
Infinitive	The base form of a verb, usually preceded by to , that does not show tense or act as the sentence’s main verb. Example: In “She plans to study tonight,” <i>to study</i> is an infinitive.

Glossary	
Term	Definition
Main Verb	The primary verb that expresses the main action or state of being. Example: In the sentence "The students were studying," studying is the main verb, and were is the helping verb.
Modifier	A word, phrase, or clause that describes or gives more information about another word. Example: In "The red car stopped," red modifies car .
Parallel Structure	Using the same grammatical form for items in a list or comparison. Example: "She enjoys reading, writing, and painting " uses parallel structure. (In this case they all end in "ing".)
Participle	A verb form that functions as an adjective by describing a noun or pronoun. Participles may be present participles, usually ending in -ing , or past participles, often ending in -ed, -en, -d, -t , or another irregular form. Example: <i>The cracked window needs to be replaced.</i>
Phrase	A group of related words that does not contain both a subject and a verb. A phrase cannot stand alone as a sentence. Example: " After the meeting " is a phrase because it does not contain both a subject and a verb.
Predicate	The part of the sentence that tells what the subject does or is. Example: In "The students finished the project ," <i>finished the project</i> is the predicate.
Preposition	A word that shows the relationship between a noun (or pronoun) and another word. Examples: about, above, after, at, before, behind, below, beside, between, by, for, from, in, near, of, on, over, through, to, under, with, (there are many)
Prepositional Phrase	A phrase that begins with a preposition and ends with its object. Example: In "The book on the table is mine," on the table is the prepositional phrase.
Pronoun	A word that takes the place of a noun.
Run-on Sentence	Two or more independent clauses joined incorrectly.
Subject	The noun, pronoun, or noun phrase that tells who or what the sentence is about.
Subject-Verb Agreement	The rule that the subject and verb must agree in number.
Subordinating Conjunction	A word that introduces a dependent clause. Examples include because, although, after, before, if, since, when, and while.
Tense	Shows when an action or state of being occurs.
Verb	A word that expresses an action, occurrence, or state of being.
Verb Phrase	A group of verbs consisting of one or more helping verbs and a main verb.

C. PRONOUN–ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT

What Is Pronoun–Antecedent Agreement?

A pronoun must agree with the noun it replaces (its antecedent).

Antecedent = the noun a pronoun refers to or replaces.

Example: Maria lost her notebook. “Maria” is the antecedent of “her.”

Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in number and gender.

★ Key Point

Singular antecedent → singular pronoun

Plural antecedent → plural pronoun

Basic Agreement Rules	
A singular antecedent takes a singular pronoun.	The student lost her backpack.
A plural antecedent takes a plural pronoun.	The students finished their homework.
Indefinite Pronouns	
Words that look plural but are actually singular:	
another, anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, one, other, somebody, someone, something, (this is not a complete list)	Everyone should bring his or her ID.
	Each student must submit his or her essay
Indefinite pronouns that are always plural:	
both, few, many, others, several	Many of the students forgot their pencils.
	Both of the applicants included their résumés.
Indefinite pronouns that depend on context:	
all, any, more, most, none, some	Some of the pie lost its flavor. (Some pie = singular - because there is one pie)
	Some of the cookies lost their flavor. (Some cookies = plural – because there are multiple cookies)

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Additional Practice

Collective Nouns	
Collective nouns acting as one unit use “its”.	
team, class, committee, family, crowd	The team won its game
	The family celebrated its reunion.
If the sentence emphasizes the individuals within the group, plural pronouns are used.	
This sentence is talking about the people themselves. The whole team cannot take one seat, use “their.”	The team took their seats one by one.

Compound Antecedents	
Antecedents joined by ‘and’ are plural.	Monica and Kent forgot their tickets.
	The dog and the cat sleep in the bed.
With ‘or’ and ‘nor’ the pronoun agrees with the closest antecedent.	Neither Steve nor the boys brought their lunches.
	Neither the boys nor Steve brought his lunch.

Pronoun Case Agreement	
Who is used as a subject.	Who wrote the essay?
Whom is used as an object.	Whom did the professor choose?

Person Shifts

Avoid shifting between first person, second person, and third person unnecessarily.

Incorrect:	Correct:
When a student studies hard, you will succeed.	When students study hard, they will succeed.
A person should keep your password private.	A person should keep his or her password private.
If you want to improve your writing, students should revise carefully.	If you want to improve your writing, you should revise carefully.

Pronoun Antecedent Examples

Example	Explanation
Each of the players must bring his or her jersey.	“Each” is the antecedent, and it is singular. Since “players” refers to people, “his or her” is the correct pronoun.
The committee gave its approval.	“Committee” is a collective noun acting as one unit.
Neither Liam nor the twins brought their jackets.	The pronoun agrees with the closest antecedent: twins (plural).
If anyone calls, tell him or her I’ll return later.	“Anyone” is traditionally singular.
Many of the students forgot their pencils.	“Many” is always plural.
All of the cake lost its sweetness.	“All” refers to cake, which is singular.

Academic Note: Many instructors now accept singular “they” in formal writing. However, some professors still prefer traditional singular forms in academic assignments. Always follow your instructor’s expectations.

Quick Check

1. Find the antecedent.
2. Decide whether it is singular or plural.
3. Match the pronoun to the antecedent.
4. Watch for distracting phrases and compound antecedents.

Test Tip

With “or” and “nor,” always match the pronoun to the closest antecedent.

Test Trap

Words like everyone, each, and neither may sound plural, but they are traditionally singular.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement Practice

Choose the best answer.

For this practice, use traditional singular agreement with indefinite pronouns such as each, every, and one.

1. The game studio delayed (its / their) launch announcement until Friday.
2. Both finalists brought (his or her / their) own headsets to the championship.
3. Every member of the stunt team checked (his or her / their) safety harness before filming.
4. The actors and director reviewed (his or her / their) notes before the table read.
5. Neither Rachel nor the editors changed (her / their) minds after seeing the rough cut.
6. When viewers leave comments during the livestream, (they / you) should keep spoilers out of the chat.
7. Most of the footage retained (its / their) original color after restoration.
8. The voice actors recorded (his or her / their) dialogue in separate sessions.
9. Someone at the convention left (his or her / their) badge beside the registration desk.
10. Several players said (he or she / they) preferred the original game.
11. The production crew submitted (its / their) final schedule to the studio.
12. The actors changed into (its / their) costumes in separate trailers before filming.
13. Either the technicians or Kent will bring (his / their) laptop to the editing room.
14. The console and projector were returned to (its / their) storage cases after the presentation.
15. One of the editors said (she / they) would stay late to finish the trailer.
16. The reviewers, including the podcast host, posted (his or her / their) ratings after the screening.
17. All of the animation retained (its / their) detail on the larger screen.
18. All of the episodes kept (its / their) original opening sequences.
19. The designer (who / whom) created the winning costume received an Oscar.
20. The composer (who / whom) the studio hired wrote the final theme.
21. The fan club announced (its / their) sweepstakes during the convention.
22. Neither the moderators nor Jessica realized that (she / they) had muted the wrong microphone.
23. The moderators and Meghan apologized because (she / they) had interrupted the interview.
24. When you save a custom character, (you / they) can use it again in a later game.

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Additional Practice

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement Practice Answer Key		
#	Answer	Explanation
1.	its	The antecedent is game studio , which refers to one organization. The singular pronoun its agrees with that antecedent.
2.	their	The antecedent is Both , which is plural. A plural antecedent takes the plural pronoun their .
3.	his or her	The antecedent is Every member , which is singular. Every makes the antecedent singular, so his or her agrees with it.
4.	their	The antecedents actors and director are joined by and , so they form a plural antecedent. The correct pronoun is their .
5.	their	With neither/nor , the pronoun agrees with the closest antecedent. The closest antecedent is editors , which is plural, so their is correct.
6.	they	The antecedent is viewers , which is plural and third person. They maintains agreement without shifting unnecessarily to second person.
7.	its	The pronoun Most depends on the noun that follows. Here it refers to footage , which is singular and uncountable, so its is correct.
8.	their	The antecedent is voice actors , which is plural. The plural pronoun their agrees with it.
9.	his or her	The antecedent is Someone , an indefinite pronoun that is singular. In this workbook's formal agreement style, use his or her .
10.	they	The antecedent is Several , which is plural. The plural pronoun they agrees with Several .
11.	its	The antecedent is production crew , a collective noun acting as one unit. The singular pronoun its matches that meaning.
12.	their	The antecedent is crew , but the sentence emphasizes the individual members changing into separate costumes. Because the members are acting individually, their fits the meaning.
13.	his	With either/or , the pronoun agrees with the closest antecedent. The closest antecedent is Kent , so the singular pronoun his is correct.
14.	their	The antecedents console and projector are joined by and , so the antecedent is plural. Use their .
15.	she	The antecedent is One , not editors . One is singular, so the singular pronoun she is correct.
16.	their	The antecedent is reviewers , which is plural. The phrase including the podcast host does not change the number of the antecedent, so use their .
17.	its	The pronoun All can be singular or plural depending on what follows. Here it refers to animation , which is singular and uncountable, so use its .
18.	their	Here All refers to the plural noun episodes . The plural pronoun their agrees with that antecedent.

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Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement Practice Answer Key

#	Answer	Explanation
19.	who	Who is used as the subject. Here who performs the action created , so who is correct.
20.	whom	Whom is used as an object. The studio hired him or her , so the object form whom is correct.
21.	its	The antecedent is fan club , a collective noun acting as one group. Because the club is acting as one unit, its is correct.
22.	she	With neither/nor , the pronoun agrees with the closest antecedent. The closest antecedent is Jessica , which is singular, so she is correct.
23.	they	The antecedents moderators and Meghan are joined by and , so they form a plural antecedent. The correct pronoun is they .
24.	you	The sentence begins in second person with you , so it should remain in second person. Changing to they would create an unnecessary person shift.