

World's Shortest Grammar Handbook

1. Nouns' missing articles:

- a. Countable nouns: a, an, the, or -s
 - (O) an example, a case, studies, figures, the theory
- b. Uncountable nouns: the, or nothing
 - (O) the earth, the sun – one and only one in the reality
 - (O) water, money, math, English
 - (V) World Englishes -> unless you are referring to the term that many scholars have used.
 - (X) waters, researches

2. Subject-verb never agree?! & verb tense consistency

- a. Verb needs an s when the subject is the third person singular, or a verb is used as the subject with an -ing ending [gerund].
 - Macneil (2014) shows that learners with attention deficits are more likely to....
 - Using the qualitative methodology helps to uncover....
- b. When you write the essay, make sure that the verb tense is consistent. If you want to use past tense to describe a story, then most of the time, the verb will need an -ed ending.

3. Conjunctions to connect ideas – FANBOYS

- a. “For”, “And”, “Nor”, “But”, “Or”, “Yet”, or “So” are used to connect two ideas and several sentences together.
 - (O) She’s late to my meeting, so I make her stand outside.
 - (O) Michael (2014) and Fox (2011) have investigated the effect of chemical B...

4. Adjectives/Adverbs/Adjectival Clauses to describe nouns

- a. Adjectives are used to describe nouns; sometimes nouns can be compounded to function as adjectives too.
 - (O) In the late 1980s, Swain (1988) investigated a group of language learners...
 - (O) A strong relationship was found between ice cream sale and the level of depression.
- b. Adverbs are used to describe adjectives or verbs.
 - (O) Results were not consistently reported in the literature of applied linguistics.
 - (O) The learners were really sick, so they could not come to school.
- c. Small clauses are used to describe nouns by using relative pronouns (which/who/that/whose/where/whom)
 - (O) Three studies, which one of them is a case study, have found that bilingual children are more likely to...
 - (O) Those learners who did not participate in condition A were more likely to...
 - (O) Those scholars whose research focus is on bilingualism will argue that

- (O) The present study will argue against Marple (2011)'s idea that bilingualism has no benefits.

5. Prepositions to describe relationships

- a. Prepositions indicate relationships between other words in a sentence.
- b. Most prepositions have several definitions, so the meaning changes quite a bit in different contexts.
 - (O) Three post-secondary students were interviewed at Pacific Coast College.
 - (O) In an attempt to uncover the truth, the method was used to....
 - (O) On the 18th of December, our company will close the cafeteria for renovation. Therefore, a seven \$10-dollar food vouchers will be available for pick-up at the front door.
 - (O) In the essay, I will argue against Skinner's ideas of....

6. Words that go together – word usage

- a. Collocation: some words that always go together.
 - Macneil (2014) took a risk of examining the effect of airplane crashes on...
 - Susan always comes prepared for tests and exams.
 - You need to deposit the cheque as soon as possible.
- b. Accuracy of the word
 - (X) The typhoon assassinated many villages in Singapore.
 - (O) The typhoon killed/destroyed many villages in Singapore.
- c. Simplicity of the word/tone
 - (V) It is okay to use the method to see how chemical A affects the density level of water.
 - (O) The method is appropriate to investigate the effect of chemical A on the density level of water.