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3 Reasons to Review Your Grammar Often

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Writers take pride in their use of the written word. They playfully dig at one another's grammar; it's a favorite tease. Sometimes a correction can explode into a major fallout between long-time friends, as though grammar proficiency makes one person better than another.

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Really, all writers should be showing their love for their craft by continuously reviewing the tools of grammar and language use.

Here are three reasons to review them, and review them often.



Be Fluent in English: Fluency takes effort, even in our first language.

Any language has levels of fluency, and this does not exclude a person's first language. Children learning to read and write in schools develop their skills to be not only functional, but articulate in their world.

Writing well, and accurately, is a kind of super power when highly developed. Even at early stages, skills of written communication foster academic development, encourage emotional interpretation/expression, exercise social communication skills, and foster literacy for a technological age (The Importance of Writing in Elementary

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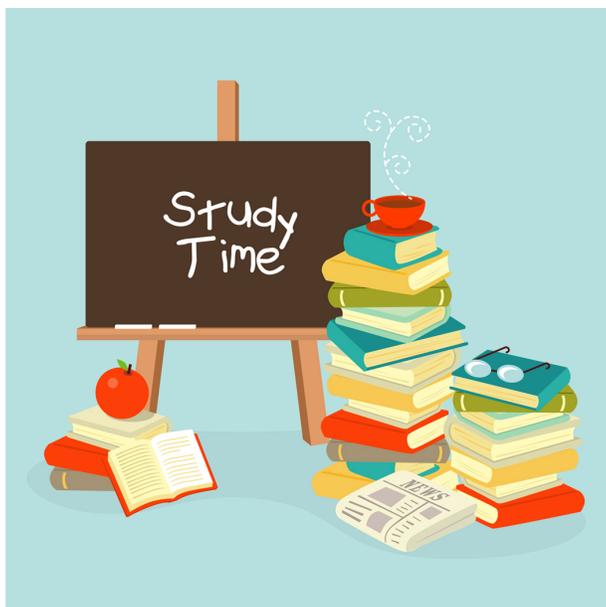
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Schools). This fluency in written language begins with the basics of vocabulary, spelling, parts of speech, and sentence structure.

These tools (for when first learned, they're tools not rules) enable thought to be captured and revisited. They become a cultural vehicle for displaying intelligence, knowledge, and competence. While this isn't always a fair measurement for students with learning disabilities, reading and writing skills are one of the measuring tools for educators. A difficulty in these areas often aids in identifying students who need extra help.



Use it or Lose it: The same rules are relearned and kept fresh by diligent efforts of good editors.

Basic grammar skills seem to have been

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thoroughly forgotten by some on the Internet. Google "grammar fails" and watch the parade of disappointing language go on for hours in lists, forums, and memes. Don't judge them too harshly, though. As many authors can attest, the pen of a skilled editor humbles even the most articulate writers.

Just writing higher-level material will not result in well-maintained grammar skills. This takes time, effort, and constant practice using the same techniques learned back in writing class. Adult courses on editing (for both technical and creative applications) often contain and assign the same exercises from fourth and fifth grade level English curriculum. The one difference is volume.

Where a worksheet packet may ask grade-school students to identify the parts of speech, sentence structure, and devices of 20 sentences, an assignment for a technical editing course would offer a packet of 600 to be completed over the course of a semester. The sentences for the adult course would come from a variety of sources: newspaper clippings, classic books, bestsellers, technical manuals, blog posts, official documents, etc.

Keep up that knowledge of what is correct in whatever way possible. Manuals, like [Webster's New World](#)



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English Grammar Handbook, Oxford Modern English Grammar, and others make for dry but necessary reading for anyone serious about accuracy and clarity in written speech. However, they don't exactly lend themselves well to long periods of reading. Instead, one author and writing instructor recommends reviewing individual usage rules gradually, keeping the book in a place you visit often; like the restroom. (Bill Roorbach)

Balance the Articulate with the Accessible: The ultimate goal is to be understood.



Everything can be overdone. There's often a tone that goes along with perfect grammar and higher language. Take this last sentence for example:

"A certain tone accompanies the impeccable execution of grammatically correct language using an articulate, cultivated vocabulary."

See? Few typical readers want to read more than a sentence of that.

While accuracy is important, correct grammar is meant to make the writer's hand invisible in the work. Catching a typo in a book is one thing, but

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struggling to understand a poorly constructed sentence is another. Both jolt readers away from the meaning in order to decipher the symbols of language. Grammar rules are in place to make this deciphering mechanism seamless through the agreed-upon, consistent guides to language use.

Demanding perfection in language is, however, unrealistic. Not only is purity not the ultimate goal, but pushing boundaries and playing with limits create new tools of language. Consider the unique grammar of internet communication. **Fail** is now a noun, not just a verb. **Derp** is a colloquial character, behavior, and noun. How about phrases like, "I **can't even**"? Language is, at its core, a tool for groups to communicate.

When checking grammar, remember the audience and the medium. Internet speak does not belong in an official document. Neither does high English belong in an advertisement for cat meme sweaters. In short, develop the grammar skills and talent to write effectively for varying audiences, and be well-practiced in the manipulation of rules for wit, humor, and power.

Resources and Links:

Philosophies of Grammar Studies –

Literary Analysis: Using Elements of Literature

Importance of Writing in Elementary Schools

Early elements –

What is Figurative Language?

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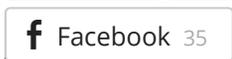
Free grammar worksheets for grades 1, 2 and 3

Grammar – Elementary

Elementary English Grammar

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All stories, even the ones we love, must eventually come to an end and when they do, it's only an opportunity for another story to begin. - Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium

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