Grammar Tips

English 12 (British Literature) and English 10H (World Literature) Classes

1. I assign an online interactive grammar experience, personalized for each student’s area of copy-editing weakness, each time I return an essay. I have students google “interactive grammar” and suggest my personal recommendation for Grammar Bytes (URL below). I instruct students to read about the error and how to correct it before doing an exercise. They have to do the exercise until they score 100%. For accountability, I have them submit one page from the exercise. I model the exercise for the entire class at the beginning of the year, using a student from each class and his/her choice of topic.

GRAMMAR BYTES: http://www.chompchomp.com/

INTERACTIVE QUIZZES:
http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/quiz_list.htm

2. I use Grammar Bytes for creating diagnostic quizzes on copy-editing skills, as well as for quizzes following instruction on a particular copy-editing quiz. A sample quiz is attached.

3. I take one error from each paper, with no name, and ask the class to copy edit the list. In cooperative groups of four, students discuss and reach consensus on how to correct each error. It helps to have a grammar text with each student (or one per cooperative group). Possible roles are the following: #1 Error Finder; #2 Error Corrector; #3 Grammar Text Consultant; #4 Presenter.

4. My vocabulary quizzes offer each vocabulary word in context, as it appears in the literature from which it’s taken. I offer a bonus point for correctly identifying the part of speech for all ten vocabulary words on occasional vocabulary quizzes.

5. During class reading we engage in analysis of sentence constructions.

6. Lessons on sentence combining, including use of participial phrases, appositives, relative clauses, and absolute phrases.
Grammar Rules: Correct each of the sentences below.

1. Make sure each pronoun agrees with their antecedent.
2. Just between you and I, the case of pronoun is important.
3. Watch out for irregular verbs which have cropped into English.
4. Verbs has to agree in number with their subjects.
5. Don't use no double negatives.
6. Being bad grammar, a writer should not use dangling modifiers.
7. Join clauses good like a conjunction should.
8. A writer must not shift your point of view.
9. About sentence fragments.
10. Don't use run-on sentences you got to punctuate them.
11. In letters essays and reports use commas to separate items in series.
12. Don't use commas, which are not necessary.
13. Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas.
14. Its important to use apostrophes right in everybodys writing.
15. Don't abbrev.
16. Check to see if you any words out.
17. In the case of a report, check to see that jargonwise, it's A-OK.
18. As far as incomplete constructions, they are wrong.
19. About repetition, the repetition of a word might be real effective repetition – take, for instance, the repetition of Abraham Lincoln.
20. In my opinion, I think that an author when he is writing should definitely not get into the habit of making use of too many unnecessary words that he does not really need in order to put his message across.
21. Use parallel construction not only to be concise but also clarify.
22. It behooves us all to avoid archaic expressions.
23. Mixed metaphors are a pain in the neck and ought to be weeded out.
24. Consult the dictionary to avoid mispelings.
25. To ignorantly split an infinitive is a practice to religiously avoid.
26. Last but not least, lay off cliches.
Three little words you often see
Are ARTICLES: a, an, and the.

A NOUN's the name of anything,
As: school or garden, toy, or swing.

ADJECTIVES tell the kind of noun,
As: great, small, pretty, white, or brown.

VERBS tell of something being done:
To read, write, count, sing, jump, or run.

How things are done the ADVERBS tell,
As: slowly, quickly, badly, well.

CONJUNCTIONS join the words together,
As: men and women, wind or weather.

The PREPOSITION stands before
A noun as: in or through a door.

The INTERJECTION shows surprise
As: Oh, how pretty! Ah! how wise!

The whole are called the PARTS of SPEECH,
Which reading, writing, speaking teach.
English Grammar Quiz: Comma-Spliced and Fused Sentences (adapted from online sources)

Circle the best response and then mark the answer on your Scantron card.

1. The Ramones were an influential punk band of the seventies and eighties, the band was from Forest Hills, New York.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

2. Although the Ramones are reaching their forties, they are still playing high-energy music.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

3. The typical length of a dragonfly today is about four inches, at one time some species had a wingspan of almost three feet.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

4. Poets have written about dragonflies in imaginative language; people have given them colorful names.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

5. The Ramones were a favorite of the English punk scene of the 1970s, the Sex Pistols greatly admired them.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

6. Although she typed, her typing was slow.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

7. Because her handwriting was bad.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

8. Dragonflies have been called snake doctors they have also been called devil's darning needles.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

9. Leaving in a dense puff of dust.
   A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

10. The dragonfly is an aquatic insect it has been around in various forms for millions of years.
    A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

11. That at eighteen he could vote.
    A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

12. Dragonflies can fly up to fifty miles an hour, their slender bodies and long, slender wings aid them in flight.
    A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

13. Dragonflies mate while flying the female often lays her eggs into the water without landing.
    A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)
14. The Ramones had different last names, but they changed them for the sake of group identity.  
A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

15. Dragonflies use their long legs to catch the insects they encounter in the air.  
A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

16. Dragonflies catch mosquitoes, and therefore they are helpful to people.  
A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

17. Hong Kong and Bangladesh which are among the most densely populated places in the world.  
A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

18. Dragonflies can be green, blue, or brown, their eyes look like clear BBs.  
A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

19. A dragonfly's wings resemble gauze, and its body is slender.  
A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

20. The Ramones' music has always been simple they rely on a fast beat, simple chords, and humorous lyrics.  
A. Correct  B. Fragment  C. Comma-Spliced  D. Fused (or Run-On)

English Grammar Quiz: Pronoun and Subject-Verb Agreement
Choose the single best response for changing one or more of the bolded words or filling in the blank, and then mark the answer on your Scantron card.

21. If everyone thoughtfully used turn signals, they would find that their daily commute required less honking, cursing, and fist shaking.  
A. drivers  B. he or she  C. his or her  D. no change

22. Someone needs to move their car out of Gloria's parking spot immediately; otherwise a tow truck will happily move his vehicle for him.  
A. his  B. their  C. them  D. no change

23. Everyone should dissect a frog for Dr. Wright because the extra credit points will help them improve their averages at the end of the semester.  
A. Biology students  B. him or her  C. his or her  D. no change

24. Neither the students nor their instructor _________ happy with the long cafeteria line for squid eyeball stew.  
A. is  B. are

25. Each of these women _________ that she had read the care instructions before washing the delicate and expensive dresses.  
A. wishes  B. wish