

The **LEAST**
You Should Know about
ENGLISH

WRITING SKILLS

Form **A**



PAIGE WILSON
TERESA FERSTER GLAZIER

TENTH EDITION

To the Instructor *vii*

What Is the Least You Should Know? 1

1. WORD CHOICE AND SPELLING 3

Your Own List of Misspelled Words	3
Words Often Confused (Set 1)	4
Proofreading Exercise	12
Sentence Writing	13
Words Often Confused (Set 2)	14
Proofreading Exercise	22
Sentence Writing	22
The Eight Parts of Speech	23
Paragraph Exercise	28
Sentence Writing	28
Adjectives and Adverbs	29
Proofreading Exercise	35
Sentence Writing	35
Contractions	36
Proofreading Exercise	41
Sentence Writing	41
Possessives	42
Proofreading Exercise	47
Sentence Writing	47
Review of Contractions and Possessives	48
Words That Can Be Broken into Parts	50
Rule for Doubling a Final Letter	50
Progress Test	54
Using a Dictionary	55

2. SENTENCE STRUCTURE 61

Finding Subjects and Verbs	63
Paragraph Exercise	68
Sentence Writing	68

Locating Prepositional Phrases	69
Paragraph Exercise	73
Sentence Writing	74
Understanding Dependent Clauses	75
Paragraph Exercise	80
Sentence Writing	81
Correcting Fragments	82
Proofreading Exercise	87
Sentence Writing	88
Correcting Run-on Sentences	89
Review of Fragments and Run-On Sentences	95
Proofreading Exercise	96
Sentence Writing	96
Identifying Verb Phrases	97
Review Exercise	101
Using Standard English Verbs	103
Proofreading Exercise	108
Sentence Writing	108
Using Regular and Irregular Verbs	109
Progress Test	118
Maintaining Subject-Verb Agreement	119
Proofreading Exercise	125
Sentence Writing	125
Avoiding Shifts in Time	126
Proofreading Exercises	127
Recognizing Verbal Phrases	128
Paragraph Exercise	133
Sentence Writing	133
Correcting Misplaced or Dangling Modifiers	134
Proofreading Exercise	137
Sentence Writing	137
Following Sentence Patterns	138
Paragraph Exercise	143
Sentence Writing	144
Avoiding Clichés, Awkward Phrasing, and Wordiness	145
Proofreading Exercises	148
Correcting for Parallel Structure	149
Proofreading Exercise	153
Sentence Writing	154
Using Pronouns	155
Proofreading Exercise	162
Sentence Writing	162
Avoiding Shifts in Person	163
Proofreading Exercises	163
Review of Sentence Structure Errors	165
Proofreading Exercise	167

3. PUNCTUATION AND CAPITAL LETTERS 168

Period, Question Mark, Exclamation Point, Semicolon,
Colon, Dash 168

Proofreading Exercise 174

Sentence Writing 174

Comma Rules 1, 2, and 3 175

Proofreading Exercise 180

Sentence Writing 181

Comma Rules 4, 5, and 6 182

Proofreading Exercise 187

Sentence Writing 188

Review of the Comma 188

Comma Review Exercise 189

Sentence Writing 189

Quotation Marks and Underlining/*Italics* 190

Paragraph Exercise 194

Sentence Writing 195

Capital Letters 196

Review of Punctuation and Capital Letters 202

Comprehensive Test 203

4. WRITING 205

What Is the Least You Should Know about
Writing? 206

Basic Structures 207

I. The Paragraph 207

Defining a Paragraph 207

Types of Paragraphs 207

II. The Essay 209

The Five-Paragraph Essay and Beyond 210

Defining an Essay 211

A Sample Essay 211

“Paper Chase” 211

Writing Skills 213

III. Writing in Your Own Voice 213

Narration 214

Description 217

Writing Assignments 217

Assignment 1 Narration: Famous Sayings 218

Assignment 2 Description: A Picture Worth 250 Words? 218

IV. Finding a Topic 218

Look to Your Interests 218

Focused Free Writing (or Brainstorming) 219

Clustering 220

Talking with Other Students 220

Assignment 3 List Your Interests 221

Assignment 4 Do Some Free Writing 221

Assignment 5 Try Clustering Ideas 221

Words Often Confused (Set 1)

Learning the differences between these often-confused words will help you overcome many of your spelling problems. Study the words carefully, with their examples, before trying the exercises.

a, an

Use *an* before a word that begins with a vowel *sound* (*a*, *e*, *i*, and *o*, plus *u* when it sounds like *ub*) or silent *b*. Note that it's not the letter but the *sound* of the letter that matters.

an apple, *an* essay, *an* inch, *an* onion

an umpire, *an* ugly design (The *u*'s sound like *ub*.)

an hour, *an* honest person (The *b*'s are silent.)

Use *a* before a word that begins with a consonant sound (all the sounds except the vowels, plus *u* or *eu* when they sound like *you*).

a chart, *a* pie, *a* history book (The *b* is not silent in *history*.)

a union, *a* uniform, *a* unit (The *u*'s sound like *you*.)

a European vacation, *a* euphemism (*Eu* sounds like *you*.)

accept, except

Accept means "to receive willingly."

I *accept* your apology.

Except means "excluding" or "but."

Everyone arrived on time *except* him.

advise, advice

Advise is a verb. (Pronounce the *s* like a *z*.)

I *advise* you to take your time finding the right job.

Advice is a noun. (It rhymes with *rice*.)

My counselor gave me good *advice*.

affect, effect

Affect is a verb and means "to alter or influence."

All quizzes will *affect* the final grade.

The happy ending *affected* the mood of the audience.

Effect is most commonly used as a noun and means "a result." If *a*, *an*, or *the* is in front of the word, then you'll know it isn't a verb and will use *effect*.

The strong coffee had a powerful *effect* on me.

We studied the *effects* of sleep deprivation in my psychology class.

**all ready,
already**

If you can leave out the *all* and the sentence still makes sense, then *all ready* is the form to use.

We're *all ready* for our trip. (*We're ready for our trip* makes sense.)

The banquet is *all ready*. (*The banquet is ready* makes sense.)

But if you can't leave out the *all* and still have a sentence that makes sense, then use *already* (the form in which the *al* has to stay in the word).

They've *already* eaten. (*They've ready eaten* doesn't make sense.)

We have seen that movie *already*.

are, our

Are is a verb.

We *are* going to Colorado Springs.

Our shows we possess something.

We painted *our* fence to match the house.

brake, break

Brake used as a verb means "to slow or stop motion." It's also the name of the device that slows or stops motion.

I had to *brake* quickly to avoid an accident.

Luckily I just had my *brakes* fixed.

Break used as a verb means "to shatter" or "to split." It's also the name of an interruption, as in "a coffee break."

She never thought she would *break* a world record.

Enjoy your spring *break*.

choose, chose

The difference here is one of time. Use *choose* for present and future; use *chose* for past.

I will *choose* a new major this semester.

We *chose* the wrong time of year to get married.

clothes, cloths

Clothes are something you wear; *cloths* are pieces of material you might clean or polish something with.