*Parallelism*

If two or more ideas are parallel, they should be expressed in parallel grammatical form. Single words should be balanced with single words, phrases with phrases, clauses with clauses.

Ex: Spectators should not yell obscenities at the players, throw things on the field, or disrespect other fans during games.

This novel is not to be disregarded, but to be enjoyed.

Whatever is right should be done; whatever is wrong should be avoided.

*Balance parallel ideas in a series:*

Readers expect items in a series to appear in parallel grammatical form. When one or more of the items violates readers’ expectations, a sentence will be needlessly awkward.

Ex: Abused children commonly exhibit one or more of the following symptoms: withdrawal, rebelliousness, restlessness, and ~~they are depressed~~. *depression*.

Esperanza is responsible for stocking merchandise, writing orders for delivery, and ~~sales of~~ computers.

*selling*

After assuring us that he was sober, Sam drove down the middle of the road, ran one red light, and ~~two stop signs~~.

*went through two stop signs*.

*Balance parallel ideas presented as pairs:*

When pairing ideas, underscore their connection by expressing them in similar grammatical form. Paired ideas are usually connected in one of three ways: (1) with a coordinating conjunction such as *and, but*, or *or*; (2) with a pair of correlative conjunctions such as *either... or* or *not only... but also*; or (3) with a word introducing a comparison, usually *than* and *as*.

*A. Parallel ideas linked with coordinating conjunctions*

Coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, or, nor, for, so*, and *yet*) link ideas of equal importance. When those ideas are closely parallel in content, they should be expressed in parallel grammatical form.

Ex: At Georges Vanier School, vandalism can result in suspension or ~~even~~

~~being expelled~~ from school.

*expulsion*

Many economists propose reducing property taxes for homeowners and ~~extend~~ financial aid in the form of tax credits to renters. *extending*

*B. Parallel ideas linked with correlative conjunctions*

Correlative conjunctions come in pairs:

either.... or neither... nor

not only... but also both... and

whether... or

Make sure that the grammatical structure following the second half of the pair is the same as that following the first half.

Ex: The shutters were not only too long but also ~~were~~ too wide.

I was advised either to change my flight or ~~take~~ the train.

*to take*

*C. Comparisons linked with t****han*** *or* ***as***

In comparisons linked with than or as, the elements being compared should be expressed in parallel grammatical structure.

Ex: It is easier to speak in abstractions than ~~grounding~~ one’s thoughts in reality. *to ground*

Mother could not persuade me that giving is as much a joy as

~~to receive~~.

*receiving*.

Exercise A: Repair the following sentences.

1. When you get home from school, I’d like for you to clean your room, tidy up the kitchen, make sure dinner is prepared, and don’t forget to wrap Mr. Bain’s Christmas gift.

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1. To pass this course, a student needs to demonstrate a good work ethic, proper organization skills, efficient work habits, and *it doesn’t hurt to study from time to time*.

excellent study strategies.

1. Either you pass this driver’s test if you want to borrow the car to go on that road trip.

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1. My mom was not only upset, but she yelled at me too.

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Exercise B: Follow the instructions below when composing your sentences.

1. Compose a simple sentence which includes “neither… nor”.

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1. Compose a complex sentence which includes ideas in a series.

~~Ind. #1~~

~~Sub. #1~~

~~Ideas in a series~~

Even though her birthday is tomorrow, I still need to go to the store to get milk, eggs, and flour.

1. Compose a compound sentence which includes “not only… but also”.

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1. Compose a compound-complex sentence which includes the coordinating conjunction “yet” and the words “squee” and “padawan”.

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