

# Gruesome Grammar



*It's not just for Halloween!*

# Flee from Freaky, Frightening Fragments



A sentence must convey a complete thought.

# Frightening Fragments

If you go to Wal-Mart

**Corrected:** If you go to Wal-Mart, buy a new book for me.

While you were in English class

**Corrected:** While you were in English class, the fire erupted.

Running down the street in the pouring rain

**Corrected:** Running down the street in the pouring rain, Jack slipped and broke his arm.

# Frightening Fragments

For additional information, see  
SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) pages  
432-434



# Run from Revolting, Repulsive Run-ons



Two or more complete thoughts cannot be merged into a single sentence without the proper punctuation.

# Repulsive Run-ons

- I studied hard I passed the test.

***Ways to correct this sentence:***

- I studied hard. I passed the test.
- I studied hard; I passed the test.
- I studied hard, and I passed the test.
- I studied hard and passed the test.
- Because I studied hard, I passed the test.

# Repulsive Run-ons

For additional information,  
see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)  
pages 437-438



# Beware of deadly, devilish disagreement



Subjects and verbs must agree.

Pronouns and antecedents must agree.

# Devilish Disagreement

- Singular noun + singular verb
  - **Example:** The boy teases his sister.
- Plural noun + plural verb
  - **Example:** The boys tease *their sister*.
- A singular noun must be replaced by a singular pronoun; a plural noun must be replaced by a plural pronoun
  - **Example:** If students park a car on campus, they must buy a parking sticker.

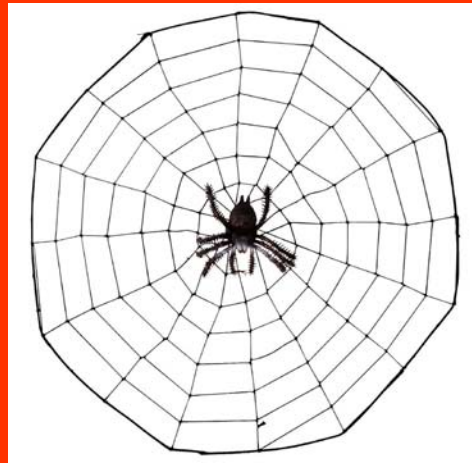
# Devilish Disagreement

For additional information on **subject-verb** agreement, see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) pages 448-455

For additional information on **pronoun agreement**, see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) pages 469-472



**Beware of terrifying,  
terrorizing, tangled tenses**



**Don't go from past tense to present tense.**

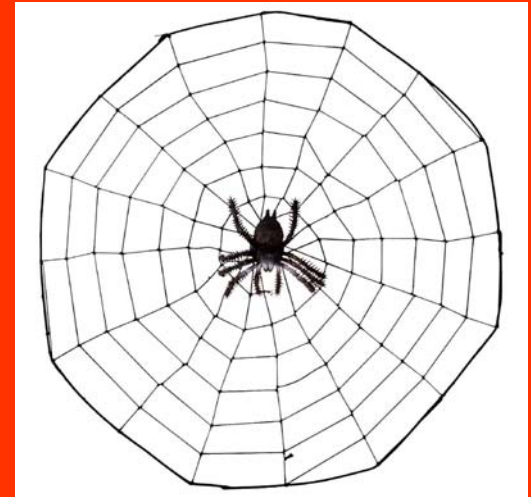
# Tangled Tenses

The ocean contains (present tense) rich minerals that washed down (past tense) from rivers and streams.

**Corrected:** The ocean contains (present tense) rich minerals that wash down (present tense) from rivers and streams.

# Tangled Tenses

For additional information,  
see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)  
pages 456-458



# Be careful with creepy, crawly, crafty commas



An introductory phrase should be set off from the main part of the sentence with a comma.

If extra information is necessary for the meaning of your sentence, do not use commas.

# Creepy Commas

- In the morning before breakfast I like to go for a walk.
  - **Corrected:** In the morning before breakfast, I like to go for a walk.
- The novel *I Am the Cheese* has been banned in many school districts.
  - **No changes necessary**
- My essay, which is due on Friday, is about sexism in children's literature.
  - **No changes necessary**

# Creepy Commas

For additional information,  
see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)  
pages 494-503



# **Watch out for weird and wacky misplaced modifiers**



**A descriptive or explanatory phrase should go next to the thing it is describing.**

# Misplaced Modifiers

- Women should seek protection from husbands if they are being abused.
  - **Corrected:** Women who are being abused by their husbands should seek protection.
- As a den mother, Mrs. Henderson's station wagon was always full of Cub Scouts.
  - **Corrected:** As a den mother, Mrs. Henderson always had her station wagon full of Cub Scouts.

# Misplaced Modifiers

- For additional information, see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) pages 439-441



# Items in a series should be parallel



Items in a series should follow the same general pattern.

# Parallel Items

- I spend my spare time reading, hiking, or at a movie.
  - **Corrected:** I spend my spare time reading, hiking, or watching a movie.
- At camp, I learned to cook over an open fire, pitch a tent that wouldn't blow down in the wind, and the proper way to pack a backpack.
  - **Corrected:** At camp, I learned to cook over an open fire, pitch a tent that wouldn't blow down in the wind, and pack a backpack properly.

# Parallel Items

For additional information, see  
SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) pages  
430-432

# Do not let awful, atrocious apostrophes drive you batty!



- An apostrophe is used to show possession (ownership).
- Apostrophes are also used in contractions: I'm, he's, they're, etc.

# Atrocious Apostrophes

- All the **boy's** park their **bicycle's** next to the fence.
  - **Corrected:** All the boys park their bicycles next to the fence.
- My brothers said **they're** / **their** coming to my birthday party.
  - **Corrected:** My brothers said they're coming to my birthday party.
- The dog lost **it's** / **its** bone.
  - **Corrected:** The dog lost its bone.

# Atrocious Apostrophes

For additional information,  
see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)  
pages 529-530

# Pronoun Perils



**Pronouns as subjects:** I, he, she, we, they, and who

**Pronouns as objects:** Me, him, her, us, them, and whom

**Pronouns that show possession:** my (mine), your (yours), his, her (hers), it (its), our (ours), their (theirs), and whose

# Pronoun Perils

- Bob and me travel a good deal.
  - **Corrected:** Bob and I travel a good deal.
- He gave the flowers to Jane and I.
  - **Corrected:** He gave the flowers to Jane and me.
- He is taller than me.
  - **Corrected:** He is taller than I.
- Us men like the coach.
  - **Corrected:** We men like the coach.

# Pronoun Perils

For additional information,  
see SF Writer (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)  
pages 469-478

# Gruesome Grammar

