

GRE Analytical Writing Grammar Essentials

Pronoun–Antecedent Agreement

- Pronouns must match their antecedents in **number**, **person**, and **gender**.
- Avoid ambiguous references.
- Ensure every pronoun has a clear, stated antecedent.

Examples

- Incorrect: *Each student must submit their essay.*
Correct: *Each student must submit his or her essay.*
 - Incorrect: *When the committee met with the board, they decided...*
Correct: *The committee decided...*
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Subject–Verb Agreement

- The verb must agree with the subject in **number**, even when modifiers intervene.
- Compound subjects joined by *and* are plural; those joined by *or/nor* agree with the nearer subject.
- Indefinite pronouns such as *each*, *everyone*, *anyone* are singular.

Examples

- Incorrect: *The rise of online platforms have changed communication.*
Correct: *The rise has changed communication.*
 - Incorrect: *Neither the students nor the instructor were satisfied.*
Correct: *Neither the students nor the instructor was satisfied.*
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Sentence Fragments

A fragment lacks a subject, a verb, or a complete thought.

Common causes

- Beginning with subordinating conjunctions (*because*, *although*, *when*) without completing the idea.

- Misusing participial phrases.

Examples

- Incorrect: *Because the policy was poorly implemented.*
Correct: *The policy failed because it was poorly implemented.*
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Run-Ons and Comma Splices

A run-on joins independent clauses without proper punctuation; a comma splice uses only a comma.

Examples

- Incorrect: *The study was flawed it lacked a control group.*
- Incorrect: *The study was flawed, it lacked a control group.*
- Correct: *The study was flawed; it lacked a control group.*

Fixes

- Add a coordinating conjunction.
- Use a semicolon.
- Create two sentences.
- Subordinate one clause.

Education plays an essential role in building a resilient society and nourishing the country's economic performance however offering free education has many limitations

Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers

Modifiers must be placed next to the words they describe.

Examples

- Misplaced: *The researcher analyzed the data using outdated software.*
Correct: *Using outdated software, the researcher analyzed the data.*

- Dangling: *To improve accuracy, the experiment was redesigned.*
Correct: *To improve accuracy, the researchers redesigned the experiment.*
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Parallel Structure

Items in a list or comparison must follow the same grammatical pattern.

Examples

- Incorrect: *The policy aims to reduce costs, increasing efficiency, and to improve morale.*
Correct: *The policy aims to reduce costs, to increase efficiency, and to improve morale.*
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Verb Tense Consistency

Maintain consistent tense unless the time frame changes.

Examples

- Incorrect: *The author argues that the plan was effective and improves productivity.*
Correct: *The author argues that the plan is effective and improves productivity.*
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Pronoun Case

Use the correct case (subjective, objective, possessive).

Examples

- Incorrect: *The committee selected John and I.*
Correct: *The committee selected John and me.*
 - Incorrect: *Who should the manager promote? (object needed)*
Correct: *Whom should the manager promote?*
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Faulty Comparisons

Comparisons must be logical and complete.

Examples

- Incorrect: *The new policy is more effective than the previous administration.*
Correct: *The new policy is more effective than the one implemented by the previous administration.*
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Common Word-Choice Errors

- **affect / effect** — *affect* (verb), *effect* (noun)
 - **less / fewer** — *less* for uncountable, *fewer* for countable
 - **its / it's** — *its* (possessive), *it's* (it is)
 - **that / which** — *that* for essential clauses; *which* for non-essential
 - **comprise / compose** — *The whole comprises the parts; the parts compose the whole.*
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Passive Voice Overuse

Passive voice is not incorrect, but excessive use weakens clarity.

Examples

- Weak: *It is believed that the policy will fail.*
Stronger: *Many analysts believe the policy will fail.*
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"There is/There are" Agreement

The verb must agree with the real subject.

Examples

- Incorrect: *There is many reasons to doubt the claim.*
Correct: *There are many reasons to doubt the claim.*
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Connector and Conjunction Errors

Misused connectors distort logic.

Examples

- Incorrect: *The study is flawed; however it still proves the claim.*
Correct: *The study is flawed; however, it still supports the claim.*
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Redundancy (Grammar-Based)

Some redundancies are grammatical errors.

Examples

- Incorrect: *The reason is because...*
Correct: *The reason is that...*
 - Incorrect: *Each and every citizen...*
Correct: *Every citizen...*
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Preposition Errors

Examples

- Incorrect: *The author is concerned on the issue.*
Correct: *The author is concerned with the issue.*
- Incorrect: *The policy is superior than the alternative.*
Correct: *The policy is superior to the alternative.*

Professional athletes dont go into important games or finals thinking about all the shots they missed, and neither do their coaches.

Education plays an essential role in building a resilient society and nourishing the country's economic performance however offering free education has many limitations.

Universities and colleges need resources to operate, a rent to pay and salaries to be provided.

Revision

Universities and colleges require resources to operate, including funds for rent and staff salaries

However, I mostly disagree with this recommendation for the following two reasons: when negative actions are not corrected, it could lead to severe repercussions for the parties concerned, and the role of the teacher would not be fulfilled if they were to simply disregard any misdemeanors.

Revision

Option A: Keep both reasons as noun phrases

However, I mostly disagree with this recommendation for the following two reasons: the failure to correct negative actions can lead to severe repercussions for the concerned parties, and disregarding misdemeanors prevents the teacher from fulfilling their role.

Option B: Keep both reasons as full clauses

However, I mostly disagree with this recommendation for the following two reasons: when negative actions are not corrected, they can lead to severe repercussions for the concerned parties, and when teachers disregard misdemeanors, they fail to fulfill their role.

Ever since we were kids our teachers preach that “Everyone has the right for education.”

When you are working in a team to finish a university project, and a student that does the bare minimum gets encouraged for doing the bare minimum, the rest of the team members might feel discouraged to go all out and might underperform and lower their ambitions, because in this case the bare minimum is praised, why would they put more effort and achieve more if the benchmark is already established by the positive praise.

Revision

When a team is working on a university project and a student who contributes only the bare minimum receives praise, the other members may feel discouraged. This can lead them to underperform or reduce their ambitions, since rewarding minimal effort sets a low benchmark for achievement.

While giving compliments to people and praising them of what good stuff they have did or planning to do is considered a good motivational action.

Revision

While giving compliments to people and praising them for what they have done or plan to do is considered a positive motivational strategy, it must be used thoughtfully.

“The best way to teach is to praise positive actions and ignore the negative one”, a statement that highlights the importance of seeing the positive aspect while performing a task , specifically teaching.

Revision

“The best way to teach is to praise positive actions and ignore the negative ones.” This statement highlights the importance of focusing on the positive aspects of a task, particularly in teaching.