

CHAPTER 4

PRINCIPLES OF WORD USAGE, PUNCTUATION, CAPITALIZATION, AND SPELLING

- LESSON OBJECTIVE: When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to perform the following task.
- TASK: Name and define the parts of speech; explain the basic structure of the sentence, phrase, and clause; define agreement of subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent; define other grammatical concepts such as the cases of nouns/pronouns and tenses of verbs; and develop a process to improve your spelling.
- CONDITION: You will be given several questions relative to a review of the principles of word usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. You may use Lesson 4, Principles of Word Usage, Punctuation, Capitalization, and Spelling, which explains these concepts.
- STANDARD: You must identify the basic parts of speech and their relationship and usage in sentences, phrases, and clauses; apply the rules of grammar in solving basic problems in word usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- REFERENCES: AR 25-50, *Preparing and Managing Correspondence* and DA Pamphlet 600-67, *Effective Writing for Army Leaders*.

CHAPTER 4

PRINCIPLES OF WORD USAGE, PUNCTUATION, CAPITALIZATION, AND SPELLING

1. **INTRODUCTION.** All of us can write, some better than others. Putting our thoughts on paper is important, but just as important is to ensure what we have written clearly communicates our intentions. Our understanding of the "how to" of English grammar can help ensure that we communicate clearly. The objective of this lesson, then, is to help you as a writer sharpen your understanding of English grammar by briefly reviewing the parts of speech to assist you in writing effectively.

2. **PARTS OF SPEECH.** English, like every other language, has what we call syntax and morphology. Syntax describes the structure and function of word groups (see lesson 3, clear and concise sentences), while morphology is the formation, function, and classification of words. Understanding how we use words will help us to make sense of information.

Words in the English language are named according to the way they function in a sentence. The major functions and types in English are:

<u>Function</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Example</u>
Naming	Nouns and pronouns	soldier, army, rifle, his, it
Predicating (stating or asserting)	Verbs	march, run, is, was
Modifying	Adjectives and adverbs	tall, short, slowly, quickly
Connecting	Prepositions and conjunctions	in, and, or

The following comments give an overview of how you may use the different functions and types to improve your writing.

a. *Naming.* Nouns and pronouns serve as subjects and objects of sentences. Nouns and pronouns have gender, person, number, and case. Case describes whether a noun or pronoun is functioning as a subject (subjective case), an object (objective case), or as a possessive (possessive case).

Nouns only have two case forms: possessive and a common form. The common form serves as either subjective or objective case. Pronouns, on the other hand, have subjective, possessive, and objective case.

<u>Subjective</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Possessive</u>
▼ <i>Bill</i> gave	▶ <i>me</i>	▼ a <i>week's</i> vacation
<i>Bill</i> gave	<i>whom</i>	a <i>week's</i> vacation? (<i>whom</i> used as an interrogative pronoun)

	<u>Objective</u>
<i>The commander</i>	▼ <i>whom</i> we had expected did not arrive. (<i>whom</i> used as a relative pronoun. <i>Whom</i> is the object of the verb <i>had expected</i> . The clause <i>whom we had expected</i> modifies <i>The commander</i> .)

A helpful test to determine whether you should use *whom* or *whomever* is to place the words in subject-verb-object order. *Whom* and *whomever* is always used as the object in subordinate clauses.

(1) Nouns. Nouns typically serve as the subjects and the objects of verbs and prepositions. Some examples are:

The wind blew. (subject)

CPT Jones assigned the guards. (object of the verb)

SGT Smith locked the door to keep the prisoner inside. (object of the preposition)

Proper nouns name particular people, places, or things (President Lincoln, Fort Knox, Ford Tempo).

(2) Pronouns. Pronouns are words that are substitutes for nouns. Pronouns, like nouns, can be subjects or objects of verbs or prepositions. There are eight types of pronouns: personal, relative, demonstrative, interrogative, indefinite, reflexive, intensive, and reciprocal. Pronouns will always agree in person and number with their noun (antecedent). We call this pronoun-antecedent agreement.

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Pronoun</u>
Personal	<i>I, you, he, she, it, etc.</i>
Relative	<i>who, which, that</i> I am the man <i>who</i> lives here.
Interrogative	<i>who, which, what</i> <i>Who</i> are you? <i>Which</i> is your rifle?
Demonstrative	<i>this, that, these, those</i>
Indefinite	<i>one, any, each, anyone, somebody, all, etc.</i>
Reciprocal	<i>each other, one another</i> Bill and Bob often argue with <i>each other</i> .
Intensive	<i>myself, yourself, himself, etc.</i> The captain <i>himself</i> was not guilty.
Reflexive	<i>myself, yourself, himself, etc.</i> You <i>yourself</i> must decide

b. Predicating. Predicating (stating or asserting) is a function of the verb which expresses state of being or action (seem, be and all other forms of to be denote state of being while verbs like run, eat, fly, talk, think, walk, etc., express action). We classify verbs as transitive, intransitive, linking, and auxiliary.

(1) Transitive verb. A transitive verb is one that expresses a transfer of action from the subject to the object. A transitive verb requires a direct object to complete its meaning; that is, it must be followed by a word that answers the question whom or what. Examples: He wrote a letter. (Wrote what?) Jim pushed. (Pushed whom?)

(2) Intransitive verb. An intransitive verb is one that expresses no transfer of action; consequently, it does not require an object to complete its meaning. (Examples: The troops marched to the theater. The old man died.)

(3) Linking or state-of-being verb. A linking verb links the subject to some word that names it or describes it. This verb denotes a state of being or condition. The most common linking verbs are forms of to be (is, are, was, were, be, being, been, am), seem, become, appear, prove, look, remain, feel, taste, smell, sound, turn, and grow. For example:

He *is* my friend.

The room *appears* different.

A linking verb is always followed by a complement of the subject. A subject complement following a linking verb identifies or describes the subject of the sentence. When the complement is a noun or pronoun it is a predicate nominative.

Captain Wilson is the instructor. (Noun used as a predicate nominative.)
 It is I. (Pronoun used as a predicate nominative.)

An adjective complement modifies the subject of the verb and is known as a predicate adjective.

I am very ill. (Adjective ill completes the linking verb *am*.)

(4) Auxiliary verb. An auxiliary (helping) verb helps another verb. A verb with its auxiliary is called a verb phrase. (Examples: can, go, had been done.) Some verbs commonly used as auxiliaries are as follows: be (is, are, was, were, been, am), have, has, had, do, did, shall, will, may, can, might, could, would, and should.

(5) Characteristics of verbs. Characteristics of verbs are person, number, voice, tense, and mood.

(a) Person, is the same as nouns and pronouns: first, second, and third. Number refers to singular or plural. For example:

Person	Number	
	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
1st	I take	We take
2d	You take	You take
3d	He/She takes	They take

(b) Voice is either active or passive. Active voice is when the subject performs the action and in passive voice the subject is acted upon. For example, examine the active and passive forms of the verb "to take":

Person	Active	Passive
1st	I take	I have been taken
2d	You take	You were taken
3d	He/She took	He/She was taken

(c) Tense refers to the action or state of being of the verb. There are six tenses: present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect. For example:

Tense	Example
Present	I take
Past	I took
Future	I shall take
Present perfect	I have taken
Past perfect	I had taken
Future perfect	I shall have taken

(d) Mood shows how the action is viewed by the speaker. There are three moods: indicative, imperative, and subjunctive. *Indicative* states a fact or asks a question. *Imperative* expresses a command or a request. *Subjunctive* expresses doubt, wish, or condition contrary to fact.

<i>Indicative:</i>	The soldiers are ready. Will they go?
<i>Imperative:</i>	Report at once to the first sergeant. Please clear your desk.
<i>Subjunctive:</i>	The trees look as though they were dying. I wish he were more friendly.

c. *Modifying.* Words and phrases that describe or limit the meaning of a noun or its equivalent are known as adjectives. Words and phrases that describe or limit the meaning of a verb, an adjective, or a whole sentence are adverbs.

(1) Adjectives. Adjectives modify a noun or pronoun. The position of the adjectives in the sentence determines whether it is (a) *attributive*, that is, placed next to the nouns they modify, or (b) *predicative*, placed after a linking verb. *Adjectives* may be (a) *descriptive*, naming some quality; (b) *proper*, derived from proper nouns; or (c) *limiting*. Limiting adjectives may indicate possession, point out, number, or be articles.

<i>Descriptive:</i>	green house, small soldier, leaking radiator
<i>Proper:</i>	Roman fountain, American custom
<i>Limiting:</i>	my, his (possession) this, former (point out) three, second (number) a, the (article)

(2) Adverbs. An adverb describes or limits the meaning of a verb, adjective, another adverb, or a whole sentence.

<i>Modify single words:</i>	went quickly, nearly all men
<i>Modify sentences:</i>	Maybe he will go.
<i>Ask questions:</i>	When did he go? Where is the book?
<i>Indicate manner:</i>	secretly envious
<i>Indicate time:</i>	never healthy
<i>Indicate place:</i>	outside the office
<i>Indicate degree:</i>	quite easily pacified

d. *Connecting.* Connecting words (prepositions and conjunctions) help us to link one word or word group with another and to combine them in ways that help us to express our ideas more concisely and to clearly express relationships between ideas. For example, we don't have to say "We had bacon. We had eggs. We had toast." We can say, "We had bacon, eggs, and toast." Nor do we need to say, "We had dinner. We played cards. We went home." Rather we could say, "After eating dinner and playing cards we went home." The words that help us to make these connections are called prepositions and conjunctions.

(1) Preposition. A preposition connects a noun or pronoun (called its object) with some other word in the sentence and shows the relationship between the object and the other word. A preposition and its object form a *prepositional* phrase. For example:

The convoy drove <i>over</i> rough roads.	<i>Over</i> links the verb drove; <i>over rough roads</i> is the prepositional phrase that modifies drove.
He dodged <i>through</i> the traffic.	<i>Through</i> links the verb dodged; <i>through the traffic</i> is the prepositional phrase that modifies dodged.

The most common prepositions are:

about	below	into	through
above	beside	near	to
across	by	next	toward
after	down	of	under
among	during	off	until
around	except	on	up
as	for	out	upon
at	from	over	with
before	in	past	within
behind	inside	since	without

(2) Conjunctions. A conjunction joins words, phrases, or clauses. Conjunctions show the relationship between the sentence elements they connect. The three classes of conjunctions are coordinating conjunctions, correlative conjunctions, and subordinating conjunctions.

Coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet) joins words, phrases, or clauses of equal rank.

<i>Words joined:</i>	We ate ham <i>and</i> eggs.
<i>Phrases joined:</i>	Look in the closet <i>or</i> under the bed.
<i>Clauses joined:</i>	We wanted to go, <i>but</i> we were too busy.

Correlative conjunctions work in pairs to join words, phrases, clauses, or whole sentences. The most common correlative pairs are *both ... and*, *either ... or*, *neither ... nor*, *not ... but*, and *not only ... but also*.

He is *both* courageous *and* loyal.
You must complete the inspection *either before* you go *or* after you get back.
This company is *neither* a circus *nor* a sideshow.
Not only did she act this way as a child *but also* as an adult.

Subordinating conjunctions join clauses that are not equal in rank. Clauses introduced by a subordinating conjunction is called a dependent or subordinate clause. A subordinate clause cannot stand by itself as a sentence; it must be joined to a main, or independent, clause. Following are the most common subordinating conjunctions:

after	even if	than	where
although	even though	that	wherever
as	if	though	whether
as if	in order that	unless	while
as though	rather than	until	
because	since	when	
before	so that	whenever	

3. PUNCTUATION. Punctuation is a device we use to clarify the meaning of written text. The general principles governing the use of punctuation are (a) that if it does not clarify the text it should be omitted, and (b) that in the choice and placing of punctuation marks the sole aim should be to bring out more clearly the writer's thought. Punctuation should aid in reading and prevent misreading.

Sometimes the careless omission of a punctuation mark can lead to a humorous statement as in the following sentence:

Wrong: While they ate the other men prepared for departure.

At first glance the sentence gives the impression that "they ate the other men." By adding a comma after "ate" we can clarify the meaning of the sentence.

Right: While they ate, the other men prepared for departure.

In its simplest sense, punctuation in writing takes the place of pauses and emphasis in speaking. One test for effective punctuation is to read your writing aloud; if you pause or use emphasis where the punctuation appears, you have punctuated correctly.

Modern writers minimize punctuation and rely on skillful phrasing to make the meaning clear. If a sentence requires a lot of punctuation, it is likely to be long and hard to understand. In addition, excessive punctuation tends to break the smooth flow of words. If your sentences seem overly punctuated, try rewriting them for greater effectiveness.

a. The comma. About half of the errors in punctuation are comma errors. The following gives you a quick reference so you will not make the most common errors with commas. We will not cover all of the minute details of the commas, just the ones we use most often.

- (1) Commas set off independent clauses which are joined by a coordinating conjunction.

The Commander is LTC Jensen, and the executive officer is MAJ Roe.

- (2) Commas set off introductory elements.

Adverb clauses:

If you register now, you can vote by mail.

Long prepositional phrases:

In the cool air of the April morning, we prepared for the field problem.

Verbal phrases:

Speaking off the record, the Senator addressed the battalion.

- (3) Commas separate the items in a series when there are more than two items.

The book is available in bookstores, at newsstands, or by mail.

- (4) Commas separate coordinate adjectives when they are of equal importance.

Tall, stately trees lined the boulevard.

- (5) Commas set off parenthetical expressions. These words or phrases interrupt the flow of the sentence and are not essential to its meaning.

General parenthetical expressions--

She was, in my opinion, an outstanding officer.

The entire briefing, moreover, lacked vitality.

Nonrestrictive (nonessential) clauses:

Parsons Boulevard, which runs past my house, is being repaved.

Nonrestrictive (nonessential) phrases:

Mrs. Atlee, wearing red, is the commander's sister.

Nonrestrictive (nonessential) appositives.

America's first general, George Washington, started his own navy.

- (6) Commas set off absolute phrases.

The day being warm, we headed for the beach.

- (7) Commas set off names or words used in direct address.

Sergeant Jones, what are you doing?

- (8) Commas set off yes or no at the beginning of a sentence.

Yes, there is a lot of reading to this course.

- (9) Commas set off mild interjections.

Well, I'll have to think about that.

b. The colon. The colon is a mark of anticipation. The material which follows the colon illustrates, restates, or depends on that which precedes the colon.

- (1) Colons introduce:

A list, but only after as follows, the following, or a noun for which the list is an appositive:

Each soldier will carry the following: MREs for three days, a survival knife, and a sleeping bag.

The division had four new officers: Lieutenants Smith, Tucker, Fillmore, and Lewis.

A long quotation (one or more paragraphs):

In *The Killer Angels* Michael Shaara wrote: "You may find it a different story from the one you learned in school. There have been many versions of that battle [Gettysburg] and that war [the civil War]."

The brackets indicate that the comment was added by the person quoting the author.

A formal quotation or question:

The President declared: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." The question is: What can we do about it?

A second independent clause which explains the first:

Potter's motive is clear: he wants the assignment.

After the introduction of a business letter:

Dear Sirs: or Dear Madam:

The details following an announcement:

For sale: Large lakeside cabin with dock.

A formal resolution, after the word *resolved*:

Resolved: That this council petition the mayor

The words of a speaker in a play:

Macbeth: She should have died hereafter.

(2) Colons separate the following:

Parts of a title, reference, or numeral:

Principles of Mathematics: An Introduction

Luke 3:4-13

8:15 a.m.

The place of publication from the publisher, and the volume number from the pages in bibliographies:

Miller, Jonathan. *The Body in Question*. New York: Random House, 1978.

Jarchow, Elaine. "In Search of Consistency in Composition Scoring." *English Record* 23.4 (1982): 18--19.

c. *The semicolon*. The semicolon has two main purposes: first, to separate two or more independent clauses when coordinating conjunctions are not used; second, to separate items in a series when commas have already been used.

(1) Semicolons can join closely related independent clauses which are not joined by a coordinating conjunction.

Since the mid-1970's America's campuses have been relatively quiet; today's students seem interested more in courses than causes.

(2) Semicolons punctuate two independent clauses joined by a conjunctive adverb.

On weekdays the club closes at eleven; however, on weekends it's open until one.

(3) Semicolons punctuate clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction when the clauses have commas within them.

Today people can buy what they need from department stores, supermarkets, and discount stores; but in colonial days, when such conveniences did not exist, people depended on general stores and peddlers.

- (4) Semicolons punctuate items in a series when there are commas within the series.

At the alumni dinner, I sat with the school's best-known athlete, Gary Wyckoff; the editor of the paper; two stars of the class play, a fellow and a girl who later married each other; and Tad Frump, the class clown.

d. The apostrophe. Apostrophes are used to show possession, to form certain plurals, and to mark omissions in contracted words or numerals.

- (1) The apostrophe forms the possessive case of nouns.

Mrs. Smith's car.

Bob Davis' boat—singular.

the Davises' boat—plural.

the women's coats—plural.

father-in-law's--In hyphenated words, add the apostrophe to the last word.

Do not use an apostrophe with the possessive form of pronouns. Be particularly careful not to confuse *its* with the contraction *it's* (*it is*). The personal pronouns *his*, *hers*, *its*, *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*, and the pronoun *whose* are possessive and do not require an apostrophe.

- (2) Apostrophes show the omission of letters or numerals.

don't for do not

can't for can not

class of '84 for class of 1984

e. The dash. Dashes mark a sudden break or abrupt change in thought.

- (1) The dash (indicated by two hyphens in typing) shows a sudden break in thought.

Well, if that's how you feel--I guess the game is over.

- (2) The dash sets off parenthetical elements.

The train arrived--can you believe it--right on time.

- (3) The dash emphasizes an appositive.

Bill only worried about one thing--food.

- (4) The dash precedes the author's name after a direct quotation.

"That is nonsense up with which I will not put."

--Winston Churchill

f. The hyphen. We use hyphens to join compound words and to break a word at the end of a line.

- (1) The hyphen joins compound words.

mother-in-law

- (2) The hyphen joins words to make a single adjective.

organizational-level leadership

- fractions. (3) The hyphen indicates two-word numbers (twenty-one to ninety-nine) and two-word

twenty-two for 22
three-fourths for $\frac{3}{4}$.

- (4) The hyphen separates the prefixes ex- (when it means former), self-, all-, and the suffix -elect from the base word.

ex-president
all-conference
self-confident
Senator-elect

- (5) The hyphen indicates words divided at the end of a line.

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx The classroom accom-
modates thirty-six people.

g. *Italics and underlining.* Italics are not punctuation, but they are sometimes used in place of quotation marks and to set off words to make the meaning clear. In papers which are typed or written in longhand, underlining takes the place of italics.

- (1) Use italics (underlining) to indicate titles of separate publications.

Books -- *The Catcher in the Rye* or The Catcher in the Rye
Magazines and newspapers --
Newsweek or Newsweek
The New York Times or The New York Times
Pamphlets -- *Bee Keeping* or Bee Keeping
Plays, TV and radio programs, and films -- *The Burning Bed* or The Burning Bed
Long Poems -- *The Candelbras Tales* or The Candelbras Tales

- (2) Use italics to indicate the names of ships, aircraft, and spacecraft.

Schultz sailed on the *Enterprise* (Enterprise).
The explosion aboard the *Challenger* (Challenger) was a tragedy.

- (3) Use italics to indicate the titles of paintings and sculptures.

The Staff Ride or The Staff Ride
Arrival at Fort Leavenworth or Arrival at Fort Leavenworth

- (4) Use italics to indicate foreign words not yet anglicized.

We identified the phrase's *sitz im leben* (sitz im leben).

- (5) Use italics to indicate words, symbols, letters, or figures when used as such.

The *t* (t) is often silent.
Avoid using *&* (&) in formal writing.

- (6) Use italics to show emphasis.

You are *so* (so) right about the car.

h. Quotation marks. Quotation marks enclose quotations, slogans, slang expressions, or ordinary words used in other than their usual fashion.

- (1) Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations.

MacArthur vowed, "I shall return," as he left the islands.

With an interrupted quotation, use quotation marks only around the quoted words.

"I heard," said Amy, "that you passed the course."

With an uninterrupted quotation of several sentences, use quotation marks before the first sentence and after the last.

Jenkins said, "Something's wrong. I know it. He should have called in by now."

With long uninterrupted quotations of several paragraphs, use either of the following forms.

--Put quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph but at the end of only the last paragraph.

--Use no quotation marks at all; instead, indent the entire quotation and type it single-spaced.

With a short quotation that is not a complete sentence, use no commas.

Barrie described life as "a long lesson in humility."

Use the ellipses (three periods (...)) to indicate the omission of unimportant or irrelevant words from a quotation, and brackets [] to indicate explanatory words added to the quotation.

"What a heavy burden is a name that has become . . . famous."
--Voltaire

"From a distance it [fear] is something; nearby it is nothing."
--La Fontaine

When quoting dialogue, start a new paragraph with each change of speaker.

"He's dead," Holmes announced.
"Are you sure?" the young lady asked.

- (2) Use quotation marks around the titles of short written works: poems, articles, essays, short stories, chapters, and songs.

The first chapter in *The Guns of August* is entitled "A Funeral."

I still get misty-eyed when I hear "Danny Boy."

- (3) Use quotation marks around the definition of words.

The original meaning of lady was "kneader of bread."

- (4) Use quotation marks to indicate the special use of a word.

Organized crime operates by having its ill-gotten gains "laundered" so they appear legitimate.

- (5) Use a set of single quotation marks to indicate a quotation within a quotation.

She asked, "Who said, 'Let them eat cake.'?"

- (6) Place periods and commas inside quotation marks.

Dr. Watson said, "It's the speckled band."

- (7) Place colons and semicolons outside the quotation marks.

Coe barked, "I have nothing to say"; then he left.

- (8) Place question marks, exclamation marks, and dashes inside the quotation marks when the punctuation belongs to the quote and outside the quotation marks when they do not.

Shauna said, "Who is my opponent?"

Did Shauna say, "I fear no opponent"?

4. CAPITALIZATION.

Readers generally expect a capital letter to identify one of two things--the beginning of a sentence or a proper name. Using capitalized letters otherwise only misleads the reader. If you are unsure about whether or not a word should be capitalized, the best rule is *not* to capitalize it.

- a. *Capitalize the first word of every sentence, including quoted sentences.*

She said, "The work is finished."

- b. *Capitalize the first word of a line of poetry.*

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
--Andrew Marvel, "To His Coy Mistress"

- c. *Capitalize words and phrases used as sentences.*

Why?
Yes, indeed.
Of course.

- d. *Capitalize the first word of a formal question or statement following a colon.*

He asked several questions: Where are you going? What will you do? What is your goal?
I offered a word of advice: Read only the best books.

- e. *Capitalize the first word of each item in a formal outline.*

1. Sports taught this semester.

- A. Swimming
- B. Softball

f. *Capitalize the first and last word and all other important words in a title.*

The Naked and the Dead

g. *Capitalize the first word and all principal words in addresses, salutations, and signatures.*

My dearest Son,
Very truly yours,

h. *Capitalize proper nouns and adjectives.*

i. *Capitalize nouns indicating relationships only when they are used as names or titles as in combination with proper names. Do not capitalize mother and father when they are preceded by possessive adjectives.*

(1) Proper nouns and proper adjectives. A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place, or thing. A proper adjective is an adjective derived from a proper noun, e.g., American from America.

Eskimo
English
Japanese
Louisa May Alcott

(2) Specific places. This includes geographic directions when they refer to a specific area, but not points of the compass.

Japan
Atlantic Ocean
Missouri River
The Todd Building
Fairmount Park
the Old South

(3) Specific organizations.

United Nations
Warsaw Pact
Red Cross
Ace Tire Company

(4) Days of the week, months, and holidays, but not the seasons.

Monday
October
Veterans Day
Fourth of July
spring
fall

(5) Religious names.

Allah
God

the Virgin
the Bible
the Lord

- (6) Historical events, periods, and documents.

the Constitution
Battle of Gettysburg
the Middle Ages

- (7) Names of educational institutions, departments, specific courses, and specific academic degrees. This does not mean to capitalize academic disciplines such as mathematics (unless they are proper adjectives like French).

Washboard College
Biology 101
MEd

- (8) Names of flags, emblems, and school colors.

Old Glory
Bronze Star
Green and Gold

- (9) Stars and planets.

Earth
the North Star
the Big Dipper
Jupiter

- (10) Ship, trains, aircraft, and spacecraft. Also, names of ships, aircraft and spacecraft are italics.

Titanic
the Crescent Express
City of Los Angeles
Enterprise

- (11) Initials which are used as acronyms.

B.C.
NATO
OK (for Oklahoma)
FBI

- (12) Personifications

Mother Nature
Old Man Winter
the face of Death

- (13) A title preceding a name.

Professor Jane Melton
Chief Justice Burger
Reverend Beliveau

(14) The interjection *O* and the pronoun *I*.

(15) Military titles standing alone are not capitalized. Capitalize ranks and positions only when they precede names.

5. SPELLING.

a. *Introduction.* There is no substitute for the ability to spell. Some writers try to avoid misspelling by using only familiar words. For instance, a writer who wants to express "*moving forward*" in a sentence and wants to use the word "*edging*" to describe the action might instead substitute the less descriptive word "*moving*" simply because he does not know how to spell "*edging*." This results in writing that is flat and colorless.

b. *Suggestions for improving spelling.*

(1) Proofread. Care in writing and proofreading your work will help eliminate errors in the spelling of simple words, such as, *to*, *there*, and *its*.

(2) Use the dictionary. Some people do not like to use the dictionary. However, the only sure way to find the correct spelling, or correct hyphenation of a word is to look it up in the dictionary.

(3) Keep a list of your spelling errors. Although it is a difficult habit to establish, the habit of recording correctly the words you misspell is one technique many have found helpful. Ensure you spell the word correctly when entering it on your list.

(4) Learn to spell words by syllables. A long word when divided into syllables becomes a number of short words. Since short words are usually simpler to spell than long ones, you can simplify your spelling problem by dividing words into syllables and spelling them part by part. Often you will discover that you have spelled the word incorrectly because when pronouncing it you omitted or added a syllable. For example, a person who spells *reference* as though it were *refrence* has made the mistake of omitting a syllable. On the other hand, if he spells *incentive* as though it were *incentative*, he has made the mistake of inserting an extra syllable. Errors such as these are errors in pronunciation which, in turn, are the result of not knowing the exact syllables in the word. Dividing a word into its pronounceable parts (syllables) will help you to pronounce and spell the word correctly.

(5) Watch for word idiosyncrasies. When the spelling of a word is contrary to the usual word structure, give particular attention to that word. Observe its special qualities. Look at it. Sound it out to yourself. Memorize it. Write it repeatedly. Write it in different sentences. Taking these steps will help you master the difficult words.

(6) Distinguish between homonyms. Homonyms present special problems because they are words which sound alike but have different meanings and often different spellings. Some common homonyms that plague Army writers follow:

(a) *Accept* is a verb meaning to receive. *Except* as a preposition means to leave out.

(b) *Advice* is a noun meaning counsel or opinion. *Advise* is a verb meaning to give counsel.

(c) *Affect* is a verb meaning to produce a change in. *Effect* used as a noun means result. Used as a verb *effect* means to cause or to accomplish.

(d) *Capitol* (spelled with an o) is the building in which state or federal legislature meets. *Capital* (spelled with an a) can mean the official seat of government or wealth. Used as an adjective *capital* means of primary importance.

(e) *Complement* (with an e) used as a verb means to make complete. Used as a noun *complement* means that which is filled up or completed. *Compliment* (with an i) used as a verb means to praise or congratulate, and used as a noun it means a formal expression of courtesy, praise, or admiration.

It is beyond the scope of this lesson to list all the homonyms that plague Army writers. Whenever you use a word that may be a homonym, *use* a dictionary to ensure you *use* it correctly.

(7) Learn lists of frequently misspelled words. Collect lists of frequently misspelled words. From the lists identify the words you have trouble spelling. Study them. Practice writing the words several times until you have memorized them.

(8) Helpful spelling rules. The following is a list of spelling rules which can help you become a proficient speller.

(a) Distinguish between *ie* and *ei*. Remember this jingle:

Write *i* before *e*
Except after *c*
Or when sounded like *a*
As in *eighty* and *sleigh*.

(b) Drop the final *e* before a suffix beginning with a vowel but not before a suffix beginning with a consonant.

--Suffix beginning with a vowel: guide + ance = guidance

--Suffix beginning with a consonant, final *e* retained: hate + ful = hateful

(c) Final *y* is usually changed to *i* before a suffix, unless the suffix begins with *i*: defy + ance = defiance. Cry + ing = crying.

(d) A final single consonant is doubled before a suffix beginning with a vowel when (a) a single vowel precedes the consonant, and (b) the consonant ends an accented syllable or a one-syllable word. Unless both these conditions exist, the final consonant is not doubled.

stop + ing = stopping

admit + ed = admitted

stoop + ing = stooping (*p* ends a one syllable word but is preceded by a double vowel)

benefit + ed = benefited (*t* is preceded by a single vowel *i* but it does not end the accented syllable)

(e) Nouns ending in a sound that can be smoothly united with *s* usually form their plurals by adding *-s*. Verbs ending in a sound that can be smoothly united with *s* form their third person singular by adding *s*.

Nouns

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
radio	radios
flower	flowers

Verbs

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
blacken	blackens
criticize	criticizes
radiate	radiates

(f) Nouns ending in a sound that cannot be smoothly united with *s* form their plural by adding *es*. Verbs ending in a sound that cannot be smoothly united with *-s* form their third person singular by adding *es*.

Nouns	
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
porch	porches
bush	bushes

Verbs	
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
pass	passes
tax	taxes

(g) Nouns ending in *y* preceded by a consonant form their plurals by changing *y* to *i* and adding *es*. Verbs ending in a *y* preceded by a consonant form their third person singular in the same way.

Nouns	
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
nursery	nurseries
mercy	mercies

Verbs	
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
pity	pities
carry	carries

(h) Nouns ending in *y* preceded by *a*, *e*, *o*, or *u* form their plurals by adding *-s* only. Verbs ending in a *y* preceded by *a*, *e*, *o*, or *u* form their third person singular in the same way.

Nouns	
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
day	days
key	keys

Verbs	
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
buy	buys
enjoy	enjoys

(i) Compound nouns form their plurals by making the main word plural.

<i>Compound Noun</i>	<i>Plural Compound Noun</i>
father-in-law	fathers-in-law
lieutenant colonel	lieutenant colonels
major general	major generals
court-martial	courts-martial
passer-by	passers-by

(j) The spelling of plural nouns borrowed from French, Greek, and Latin frequently retains the plural of the original language.

Singular

alumna (feminine)
alumnus (masculine)
analysis
basis

Plural

alumnae
alumni
analyses
bases