Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Formal written English is quite different from informal or spoken English. This packet will call attention to many areas of confusion or those in need of improvement.

**Commonly Confused Words:**

1. Between vs. among

Between- two things

Among- three or more things

Between you and me, these mistakes are common among all of us.

2. Affect vs. Effect

Affect (verb) to influence

Effect (noun) a result

* Social activities affect your grades, but the effect better be little.
* Bad weather will affect the quality of the fruit.
* The effect of the bad weather is a reduction in fruit quality.

3. All right vs. alright

All right is the correct form.

Alright is NEVER grammatically correct.

4. Who vs. that

Who- Person / people

That- Things

* The teacher who is most interesting is my high school teacher.
* The woman who was waiting alone stood outside a café that was closed.
* Most dogs \_\_\_\_\_that\_\_\_\_\_ go to the vet regularly often live longer than those \_\_\_that\_\_\_ do not.

5. Cannot is ALWAYS one word.

6. ***A lot*** is always two words.

Don’t use this in formal writing.

7. Then vs. than

Then refers to time

Than is used for comparisons

* First you write the paper, then you edit it.
* This paper is longer than that one.
* I went to the mall then I met friends at Sushi Blues for dinner.
* Jamey is taller than John.
* Marc-André is a better goalie than Andrew.

8. Dessert vs. desert

Hmmm, how can we remember this?

You want more dessert. It has more ss than desert.

<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/may-versus-might>

<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/can-versus-may>

9. Can VS May VS Might

Can- possibility / not permission

May- more likely / permission

Might- possible but not as likely

* It might rain this morning; may I get my raincoat from your car?
* May I use the bathroom, Mrs. Schimenheimer?
* He might/may be able to explain the reasons behind his actions.

10. Good vs. well

Good acts as an adjective.

Well acts as an adverb.

Adverbs usually answer HOW- slowly, quickly, peacefully, abruptly, etc.

However, when using a linking verb or a verb that has to do with the five human senses, you want to use the adjective, *good*, instead.

* After a bath, the baby smells so good.
* Even after my careful paint job, this room doesn't look good.
* He swims well.
* Mark did a good job on his literary analysis.
* He is doing well at his new job.
* He is doing well this morning.
* It looks good.
* It was written well.
* Tricia did a good job on her first English assignment.
* The baking cake smells good; I cannot wait to eat it.

11. Bad vs. badly

Bad is an adjective

Badly is an adverb

Adverbs usually answer the question *how.*

* Mark behaved badly at the rookie dinner.
* Robin had a bad test grade which affected her grade.
* Leon usually plays golf superbly, but today he played badly.
* Sam dances badly.
* You received a bad grade on your math quiz this morning.

**The above information needs to be used correctly in formal writing and speaking. Additionally, the information below needs to followed and correctly demonstrated in formal writing.**

12. Point of view

Singular Plural

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I | We |
| You | You |
| He/She | They/Them |

1. 1900’s, 80’s vs 1900s, 80s
   * I was born in the 80s.
   * I had 90’s hair.

The hair style is from the 1990’s. It is possessive.

14. Justify all formal writing documents.

15. Titles

**NEVER *italicize*, underline, or “quote” your own title unless it was published.**

16. Contractions

Never use contractions in formal writing!

* Don’t, won’t, can’t, didn’t, aren’t, you’re, they’re, etc.. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

17. Do not ask questions. Ever.

* For example: “Have you ever wondered what it was like back in Shakespeare’s time?”
* Instead, you might want to rephrase it to “One might wonder what it was like back in Shakespeare’s time.”

18. The dictionary definition

* Webster defines symbolism as…… (Don’t say this.)
* If you feel the need to define a word you should include a\_\_\_\_citation\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

19. Clichés

* Examples: *-up one side and down the other, -so hungry I could eat a horse, -time flies when you're having fun, -people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones, -like there's no tomorrow, -from dusk till dawn, -till the cows come home, -too little too late, -only the strong survive, -survival of the fittest*

20. Conclusions

* Never introduce new information in your conclusion.
* Don’t say “In conclusion…”

21. Dialogue

* When you write dialogue, begin a new paragraph whenever the speaker changes. See attached sheet.

**Pronouns**

1. Me and Mark went to the Remsen Barn Festival.
2. He went to the Remsen Barn Festival with I.
3. Sarah, Julia, and me had a party Friday night.
4. Take him and me with you.
5. They thought the home was too large for him and I.
6. Andy and me bought a house.
7. Her and Elizabeth carried the fruit to the stand.
8. Him and Tim wrote the lyrics for the songs we sang at the fundraiser.
9. The instructions were given to Mark and me.
10. That is a picture of you and I.
11. I cannot remember if her or her assistant manager is supposed to set up the exhibit.
12. Every New Year’s Eve, without fail, the two of us call he and Adam.
13. In fact, Ben has already offered to drive me and Mike to the train station.
14. Amanda should not wear those boots, but let’s keep that between you and I.
15. His friends and him from down the street spend most of their weekends at the beach.
16. They just moved next door to Katie and he.
17. Who wants to walk with Justin and I to the top of the mountain?
18. Her, Amanda, and Marissa are good students.
19. Although Lindsay and her left at four a.m., they did not make it to the bus for the senior trip early enough.
20. Ifirst met Ross when we went to see a movie; he was standing in line behind my friend and I.