

# Language Mastery and Analysis

## Lesson five

## Parrallel Structure

# Parallel Structure

Using the same pattern of words to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. This can happen at the word, phrase, or clause level.

◎ The usual way to join parallel structures is with the use of coordinating conjunctions such as “and” or “or.”

## ◎ Words and Phrases

◎ With the -ing form (gerund) of words:

◎ **Parallel Example:** Mary likes hiking, swimming, and bicycling.

◎ With infinitive phrases:

◎ **Parallel Example:** Mary likes to hike, to swim, and to ride a bicycle.

**OR**

Mary likes to hike, swim, and ride a bicycle.

◎ (Note: You can use "to" before all the verbs in a sentence or only before the first one.)

# Do not mix forms.

## ◎ Example 1

### ◎ Not Parallel:

Mary likes hiking, swimming, and to ride a bicycle.

### ◎ Parallel:

Mary likes hiking, swimming, and riding a bicycle.

## ◎ Example 2

### ◎ Not Parallel:

The production manager was asked to write his report quickly, accurately, and in a detailed manner.

### ◎ Parallel:

The production manager was asked to write his report quickly, accurately, and thoroughly.

## Example 3

### ⦿ Not Parallel:

The teacher said that he was a poor student because he waited until the last minute to study for the exam, completed his lab problems in a careless manner, and his motivation was low.

### ⦿ Parallel:

The teacher said that he was a poor student because he waited until the last minute to study for the exam, completed his lab problems in a careless manner, and lacked motivation.

# Clauses

- ◎ A parallel structure that begins with clauses must keep on with clauses. Changing to another pattern or changing the voice of the verb (from active to passive or vice versa) will break the parallelism.

# Example 1

## ⊙ **Not Parallel:**

The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, that they should not eat too much, and to do some warm-up exercises before the game.

## ⊙ **Parallel:**

The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, that they should not eat too much, and that they should do some warm-up exercises before the game.

## ⊙ **— or — Parallel:**

The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, not eat too much, and do some warm-up exercises before the game.

## Example 2

### ⊙ Not Parallel:

The salesman expected that he would present his product at the meeting, that there would be time for him to show his slide presentation, and that questions would be asked by prospective buyers. (**passive**)

### ⊙ Parallel:

The salesman expected that he would present his product at the meeting, that there would be time for him to show his slide presentation, and that prospective buyers would ask him questions.

# Lists After a Colon

◎ Be sure to keep all the elements in a list in the same form.

## ◎ Example 1

### ◎ Not Parallel:

The dictionary can be used to find: word meanings, pronunciations, correct spellings, and looking up irregular verbs.

### ◎ Parallel:

The dictionary can be used to find: word meanings, pronunciations, correct spellings, and irregular verbs.



# Parallelism

- Use parallel Structure as an aid to Coherence
- To get parallel structures, you need to balance a word with a word, a phrase with a phrase, a clause with a clause and a sentence with a sentence.

Study the following examples

## 1)-Words:

**Awkward** : The way we write reveals our bent, our inclinations, and what our inner drives are.

**Parallel:** The way we write reveals our bent  
our inclinations,  
our inner drives.

## 2 )Phrases:

**Awkward:** It is easier to love humanity as a whole than loving one's neighbour.

**Parallel:** It is easier to love humanity as a whole than to love one's neighbour.

## 3) Clauses:

**Awkward** What we say and the things that we do somehow seem out of joint.

**Parallel :** What we say and What we do somehow seem out of joint.

## 4. Sentences:

**Parallel:** The danger of the past was that men became slaves.

The danger of the future is that men may become robots.

**Exercise: Achieve parallelism in each of the following sentences.**

1. The cameramen spent months in primitive areas, in African heat, in Alaskan blizzards, and where there are jungles in South America.

- 2. In the wreck the circus lost a camel and elephant.**
- 3. Take as much time as you need-a day, hour, year.**
- 4. I intend to do two things: to try and succeed.**
- 5. I told John that I could not go and I had good reasons.**
- 6. The sentences are difficult to understand, not because they are long but they are obscure.**
- 7. The child learns in nursery schools to take his turn, to respect the rights of others, and take care of his materials.**
- 8. Not only has he visited the patients, but also sung ballads for them.**

**9. One can learn much more by studying than worrying.**

**10. He was not only kind but also knew when to help people.**

**11. I debated whether I should give the beggar money or to offer him food.**

**12. I like a detective story with exciting action and which keeps me guessing.**

**13. Someone has said that Americans cannot enjoy life without a TV set, an automobile, and a summer**

**The End of Lesson Six**