

Rhetorical Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing

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STUDENT VERSION

MODULE 12: BULLYING: A RESEARCH PROJECT

Parallelism and Bulleted Lists

Activity 1

Guided Composition

This activity is based on Dan Olweus, “A Profile of Bullying at School.”

The purpose of this activity is for you to write a paragraph on the topic of bullying. Your teacher will read a paragraph while you listen, and then read it again while you take notes. You will then write your own paragraph based on what you heard using your notes.

Noticing Language

1. What’s wrong with this sentence?

Students report two kinds of bullying with more boys experiencing physical bullying and more girls report that they experience indirect bullying.

2. What’s wrong with this list?

People believe erroneously that bullying is caused by the following:

- It’s a consequence of large class or school size.
- Caused by competition for grades
- Failing in school.
- Victims wear glasses
- Different ethnic origins and to speak with a different dialect.

**Rhetorical
Grammar
Concepts**

Note: The materials labeled Rhetorical Grammar Concepts are for your reference as you do the activities in this unit.

Connecting Ideas Using Parallel Structure

Coordinating words are used not only to connect main clauses, but also to join other elements in sentences: verb phrases, infinitives, adverbs, adverbial clauses, nouns, noun phrases, adjectives, adjective clauses, and participial phrases (*-ing* and *-ed* forms). When two or more matching grammatical structures are joined by coordinating words, we call them parallel structures. Using parallel structure shows that the elements are equal and enables writers to write more varied and interesting sentences that include more information in a concise way.

To make elements in a sentence parallel, use the *same grammatical form* (nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, phrases, clauses) for each element in the series. Use a conjunction (*and, but, or, either . . . or, neither . . . nor*) to join the elements.

Parallel Structures	Examples
Verb phrases	A bully intentionally inflicts or attempts to inflict injury or discomfort on someone else.
Infinitives	Everyone in a school can help to stop bullying and [to] create a safe environment for all students.*
Adverbs	It is important to apply sanctions on bullies firmly and consistently .
Adverbial clauses	Bullying is a serious problem because victims suffer lasting pain and [because] bullies often suffer also .*
Nouns/noun phrases	Personality characteristics and reaction patterns are important in the development of bullying.
Adjectives/Adjective phrases	Bullying is a very old and well-known phenomenon.
Adjective clauses	It is difficult to know which programs work and which interventions are most successful .
Present & past participles (<i>-ing</i> and <i>-ed</i> words)	Adults play a major role in carrying out the program and [in] restructuring the environment.*

* Words that are part of a parallel structure do not have to be repeated if they are the same in the second structure. However, it is all right to repeat them to make the parallel structure clear. A pronoun may replace a noun in the second parallel structure.

Activity 2

Identifying Parallel Elements

This activity is based on Eleanor Migliore, “Eliminate Bullying in Your Classroom.”

Underline the parallel elements in the following sentences. A sentence may have more than one set of parallel elements; be sure to underline all of them.

1. Significant negative effects have been documented on the physical and emotional health of both bullies and their victims.
2. Schools can create a climate where bullying is reduced and where students feel safe and supported.
3. Migliore recommends that teachers lead a class discussion on bullying, write a no-bullying policy into classroom rules, and support students who speak out about bullying or who seek extra adult help.
4. Students need to know what bullying is and why it is harmful.
5. Teach students how to avoid being a victim and what to do if they are victimized.
6. Use a confidential “message box” for student suggestions or comments.
7. Teacher behavior is extremely important and conveys a powerful message to students.
8. Recognizing academic and non-academic achievement, having a clear process to report bullying, and enlisting students in no-bullying activities are all ways to reduce bullying at school.

Punctuation Rule: How are parallel structures punctuated in the sentences above?

Activity 3

Editing to Make Structures Parallel

This activity is based on Ron Banks, “Bullying in School.”

Rewrite the following sentences to make the elements parallel (grammatically the same). Make the new sentences as concise as possible while communicating the same information.

1. Bullying can have negative consequences for the school climate and because of students’ right to learn in a safe environment.

Bullying can have negative consequences for the school climate and [for] students’ right to learn in a safe environment.

2. 15% of students are either bullied regularly or being initiators of bullying behavior.
3. Direct bullying seems to increase through the elementary years, peaked in the middle school years, and declining during the high school years.
4. School size, racial composition and in which setting the school is (rural, suburban, or urban) do not seem to predict the occurrence of bullying.
5. Students who engage in bullying behaviors seem to have a need to feel powerful and having control.
6. Students who are victims of bullying are typically anxious, insecure, cautious, and that they suffer from low self-esteem.
7. Bullying tends to increase some students' isolation because of their peers not wanting to lose status or because they do not want to risk being bullied themselves.
8. Smith and Sharp (1994) emphasize the need to develop whole-school bullying policies, implementing curricular measures, and that students are empowered.

Rhetorical Grammar Concepts

Using Parallelism to Create Bulleted Lists

When writers of reports or articles need to communicate information in the form of a list, they often use bullets. Bullets make the information stand out on the page so it is easier for a reader to understand. In academic essay and journalistic articles, good writers usually prefer to avoid bullets, but in other kinds of writing, bullets are useful and appropriate. The items in a list have to be parallel grammatically whether they are in a paragraph or in a bulleted list. In other words, the grammatical form has to be the same for each item. If the list is introduced by a partial sentence, the grammatical form used in the list must be able to finish the partial sentence grammatically.

Look at the paragraph below, and compare it with the bulleted lists that convey the same information.

Without bullets

Bullying is not a normal part of growing up. Victims of bullying suffer psychological and sometimes physical scars that last a lifetime. Victims report greater fear and anxiety, feel less accepted, suffer from more health problems, and score lower on measures of academic achievement and self-esteem than students who are not bullied.

With bullets

Bullying is not a normal part of growing up. Victims of bullying suffer psychological and sometimes physical scars that last a lifetime. In comparison to students who are not bullied, victims of bullying

- experience greater fear and anxiety,
- feel less accepted,
- suffer from more health problems, and
- score lower on measures of academic achievement and self-esteem.

With bullet introduced by “the following:”

Bullying is not a normal part of growing up. Victims of bullying suffer psychological and sometimes physical scars that last a lifetime. Victims report some or all of the following:

- experiencing greater fear and anxiety
- feeling less accepted
- suffering from more health problems
- scoring lower on measures of academic achievement and self-esteem

Note: If the bulleted list is composed of complete sentences, they need to begin with a capital and be punctuated with a period at the end.

Activity 4

Using Parallelism to Create Bulleted Lists

This activity is based on Agatston et al., “Students’ Perspectives on Cyber Bullying.”

Read the paragraph below. Summarize the information in the paragraph in a bulleted list.

Based on their research on cyber bullying, Agatston, Kowalski, and Limber made recommendations to reduce the problem in schools. They recommended that school districts that allow cellular phones on campus prepare for

this potential by ensuring that cellular phone policies are enforced with consistent consequences for students who use their phones during the school day. It is also recommended that school districts have parents and students read and sign the school district's policies regarding acceptable use of technology, and that the district accompany these policies with literature for parents on cyber bullying. Finally, schools are encouraged to adopt bullying prevention programs that include lessons on cyber bullying to ensure that students understand that targeting classmates through negative messages or images online through cellular phones is a form of bullying. Classroom lessons should include steps that bystanders can take to report and respond to cyber bullying, whether it occurs on campus or in the community.

Create a bulleted list that reflects the main ideas of the paragraph above. Use the partial sentence below as the introduction for your list. The first item has been provided as an example. Only include the most essential information in your bulleted list.

To reduce incidents of cyber bullying, the researchers Agatston, Kowalski, and Limber recommended that school districts

- *enforce cellular phone policies with consistent consequences,*
-
-
-
-

Rhetorical Purpose: What are the differences for the reader of the two forms of communicating the same general information? Why might a writer choose one form instead of another?

Activity 5

Editing to Create Information-Dense Sentences

This activity is based on Secretary Arne Duncan's, June 14, 2011 Policy Letter.

Edit the sentences below to make them shorter and more information-dense sentences using the varied grammatical options that you have learned including parallelism. Use the sentence starter to begin your sentence. When you have created your edited sentence, check that it contains all the original information in as concise a form as possible and that it is punctuated correctly.

1. Harassment and bullying are serious problems in our schools, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students are the targets of disproportionate shares of these problems.

Harassment and bullying, both serious problems in our schools, target lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students disproportionately.

2. To promote safer schools and create more welcoming learning environments, groups that address LGBT issues such as gay-straight alliances (GSAs) and other groups initiated by students can play an important role.

Gay-straight alliances (GSAs) and similar student-initiated groups addressing

3. Some such groups, however, have been unlawfully excluded from the school grounds, or they have been prevented from forming, or they have been denied access to school resources in spite of the positive effects these groups can have in schools.

But in spite of the positive effects

4. When they develop or improve district policies, it may be helpful for school officials to explain to the school community that the Equal Access Act requires that public schools afford equal treatment to all non-curricular student organizations and that those organizations include GSAs as well as other groups that focus on issues that are related to LGBT students, or to sexual orientation, or to gender identity.

In developing or improving district policies, school officials may find it

Activity 6

Editing Student Writing

Read the following student essay. Then edit the essay by filling in the blanks with parallel elements that add information on the topic of bullying and make sense within the context of the essay. When you are finished, compare your responses with a partner and make any changes you wish to your own version.

Bullying is one of those tyrannies of silence that Audre Lorde talked about in *The Cancer Journals*. Many people are bothered to see bullying, but not many people speak out about it.

Bullying can be stopped, but only if _____ and
if _____.

Kids of all ages are victims of bullying. Whether they are attacked
with _____ or with _____ and
_____, bullying makes victims feel bad about themselves.
Kids get pushed so far they feel that killing themselves is the only
way out of the torture they experience every day. According to
Dan Olweus, in “A Profile of Bullying at School,” bystanders are
always part of the bullying circle. Being a bystander and watching
an innocent child get bullied is just as bad as you being the one
to bully that innocent child, so don’t _____, but do
_____, and _____.

However, it is difficult to speak out about bullying whether you are
_____ or _____. Lorde writes, “In the
cause of silence, each one of us draws the face of her own fear—
fear of contempt, of censure, or some judgment, or recognition, of
challenge, of annihilation.” Yes, speaking out can be hard because
_____ and _____. You are afraid
that _____ and _____.

Don’t let your fear stop you! Think about what could happen if
you don’t speak out—someone will continue to _____, to
_____, and perhaps even to _____. All you
have to do to prevent these tragedies is to speak out. You don’t want
to live with the burden of knowing you _____ and you
_____.

Whether you are a _____, a _____, or a _____, bullying needs to be stopped. If you see an incident of bullying, tell an adult. You're not _____; you could be _____. Now for the bullies out there, stop where you stand. Don't hurt another person because you are hurting. Bullying is awful for everyone involved and should never, ever happen.

Activity 7

Editing Your Guided Composition

Return to your guided composition from Activity 1.

- Revise your guided composition by constructing information-dense sentences
- Connect elements in sentences with coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, and transitions.
- Combine short sentences below into longer, information-dense sentences using the varied grammatical options that you have learned including parallelism.
- Use adverbial and adjective modifiers, including appositives and gerunds.
- Check that your new sentences contain all the original information, are as concise as possible, and are punctuated correctly.
- Compare your edited version with the original.

What did you learn through this activity that you can apply to your own writing?

Activity 8

Editing Your Own Writing

Reread the anti-bullying guide that your group created, focusing on the section that you have agreed to edit.

Revise your section of the guide by constructing information-dense sentences using the following techniques:

- Connect elements in sentences with coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, and transitions.
- Combine short sentences below into longer, information-dense sentences using the varied grammatical options that you have learned, including parallelism.

- Use adverbial and adjective modifiers, including appositives and gerunds.
- Check that your new sentences contain all the original information, are as concise as possible, and are punctuated correctly.
- Put a question mark in the margin next to any parallelism or punctuation you are unsure about.
- Exchange your section with a partner in your group, and discuss any questions you have. Check with your teacher if you can't agree on an answer.

Your group should go through this process several times with different members editing different sections of the guide, so you can produce the most polished and information-dense final version possible.