



Seventh Grade

ELA

KCS Grade 7 Task 2

SpringBoard® English Language Arts

Language Checkpoint: Writing Parallel Lists

Learning Targets

- Understand how to create parallel lists of words, phrases, and clauses.
- Correctly use commas and semicolons to separate parallel items in a series.

Preview

In this activity, you will practice writing parallel lists and punctuating them correctly.

Writing Parallel Lists

Strong writers use various techniques to make their writing clear and engaging. One such technique is using parallel structure when writing lists. When a list is parallel, all the items in the list share a similar structure.

1. Look at the example that follows from the article “America the Not-So-Beautiful” by Andrew A. Rooney. Notice the words in bold. How many items does Rooney list? What is similar about them?

The best solution may be for all of us to pack up, board a spaceship, and move out.

2. Look at this sample student sentence from an essay about “America the Not-So-Beautiful.” What do you notice about the items in the list? How might you change the sentence to make it clearer?

Rooney is worried that poisonous wastes are seeping into rivers, make people sick, and damaging the environment.

Parallel Lists with Words and Phrases

Sometimes lists contain a series of words or phrases. In these cases, the words or phrases should have a similar form. In other words, they should be parallel. Look at the following examples.

Not Parallel: My mom likes to recycle, reusing, and refurbishes old things.

Parallel: My mom likes recycling, reusing, and refurbishing things around our house.

Notice how the form of the word was the same in the correct sentence. The consistent use of the *-ing* ending clarifies the meaning and draws attention to the action.

Not Parallel: The recycling truck comes down the street, around the block, and then he would come by our house.

Parallel: The recycling truck comes down the street, around the block, and by our house.

Notice that the phrases here all tell where the truck is going—*down*, *around*, and *by*. Then the extra information follows the same pattern: *the street*, *the block*, *our house*. This will keep the pattern clear and allow the reader to easily picture what is taking place.

3. Complete the sentences with parallel words and/or phrases. Write the correct answer on lined paper.

1. Collecting recyclable trash and the water bottles are included in Simon's jobs as waste management leader. [also to refill / refilling / refill]

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Simon's jobs as waste management leader. [also to refill / / refill]

2. Sweat poured off her face, ran down her neck, and as Cheyenne focused intently on picking up trash in her neighborhood. [soaked her shirt / was soaking her shirt / did soak her shirt]

Sweat poured off her face, ran down her neck, and as Cheyenne focused intently on picking up trash in her neighborhood. [/ was soaking her shirt / did soak her shirt]

3. “My idea of a good time is to up the back of the car with junk on a Saturday morning and it to the dump” (Rooney). [loading; taking / load; take / then load; to take]

“My idea of a good time is to up the back of the car with junk on a Saturday morning and it to the dump” (Rooney). [loading; taking // then load; to take]

Parallel Lists with Clauses

A clause is a word group that contains both a subject and a verb. Clauses can stand alone when they express a complete thought (independent clause), or they can need another clause to help them make sense (dependent clause). Sometimes a sentence can contain a series of clauses. In these cases, the clauses should be written in parallel form.

Not Parallel: The sanitation workers were told that **long sleeves would protect their skin, goggles would protect their eyes, and to use dust masks to protect their throat and lungs.**

Parallel: The sanitation workers were told that **long sleeves would protect their skin, goggles would protect their eyes, and dust masks would protect their throat and lungs.**

Because clauses are typically longer, it is important to use parallel structure when writing or your reader may become confused.

5. Read the following sentences from the article “America the Not-So-Beautiful” and mark the words, phrases, or clauses that use parallel structure:
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Ten years ago, most people thought nothing of dumping an old bottle of weed or insect killer in a pile of dirt, in the back yard, or down the drain in the street, just to get rid of it.

They have their own schedules and their own holidays.

Ten years ago, most people thought nothing of dumping an old bottle of weed or insect killer , or , just to get rid of it.

6. Read the sentences and decide whether or not they contain parallel structure. If the sentence is correct, then write "correct" in the correction column. If it is incorrect, then mark the part or parts that are not parallel and rewrite the sentence to demonstrate how it could be fixed.

Sentence	Correction (if needed)
<p>In 1031, the Japanese began to recycle and then repulped their paper.</p> <p>In 1031, the Japanese began to recycle and their paper.</p>	
<p>When the Black Death struck Europe in 1348, the illness spread because of the garbage people threw in the streets and the lack of sanitary living.</p>	
<p>One of the early purposes of the Salvation Army was to collect, sorting, and recycling used or unwanted items.</p> <p>One of the early purposes of the Salvation Army was to collect, , and used or unwanted items.</p>	
<p>Today, neighborhoods are filled with dark green cans for trash and bright blue cans in order for people to be able to recycle.</p> <p>Today, neighborhoods are filled with dark green cans for trash and bright blue cans .</p>	

Punctuating Parallel Lists

Now that you understand how to correctly create parallel lists of words, phrases, and clauses, the next step is to make sure you correctly punctuate these structures.

Punctuation Rules:

- Use a comma to separate items in a series. For logic and consistency, it is helpful to include a final comma (called a serial, or Oxford, comma) before the conjunction; however, it is usually not incorrect to omit it.
 - Use a semicolon to join items in a series when the items themselves include commas.
8. Underline the parallel verb phrases in the following sentence and circle the commas that separate them.

Andrew A. Rooney also says, “Prosperity in the United States is based on using things up as fast as we can, throwing away what’s left, and buying new ones” (“America the Not-So-Beautiful”).

Andrew A. Rooney also says, “Prosperity in the United States is based on using things up as fast as we can throwing away what’s left and buying new ones” (“America the Not-So-Beautiful”).

9. Underline the parallel items in the following sentence and circle the semicolons that divide them.

My parents had their first meeting on April 3, 1992; their first conversation on April 27, 1992; and their first date on April 30, 1992.

My parents had their first meeting on April 3, 1992 their first conversation on April 27, 1992 and their first date on April 30, 1992.

Revising

Read the sample student response and make corrections to create parallel structure. Add the necessary punctuation to the paragraph.

[1] Sometimes it's hard to think about the results of recycling or not to recycle because we only see the immediate effects of our choices. [2] However, this should be a reason to care about recycling. [3] We are preparing the world where our grandkids will live and hope that it will be better. [4] My mom won't let me keep food in my room because she knows that it will cause a bug infestation. [5] It's the same with recycling. [6] Since we know what will happen if we don't start taking care of our trash, we should do all we can to stop our own "infestation."

Check Your Understanding

In Task 1 you were asked to write a "clear and concise claim for Andrew Rooney's essay" using information from the SOAPSTone analysis. The following is a sample response. Correct any mistakes in parallel structure and/or its punctuation and then write an explanation for how you knew that something was wrong and what you did to fix it.

In his article "America the Not-So-Beautiful," Andrew Rooney addresses the trash problems of our country in order to get people's attention and then he wants to present the problem and after that to inspire change.

Practice

Using the information you collected in your SOAPSTone from **Task 1**, write a short paragraph (4–5 sentences) about what you believe would be the best way to address the problem of too much waste. Be sure to:

- Use at least one example of parallel structure.
- Keep your verb tenses consistent.
- Punctuate any listing.