Language Arts 905
Language in Literature

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Introduction

Concern is growing in the United States over the quality of education and over the alarming illiteracy rate. To counteract these tendencies, schools are stressing “the basics”—reading, writing, and arithmetic. Increased emphasis is being placed upon grammar and spelling as aids to effective writing. Colleges are strengthening their freshman composition requirements. Some high schools are requiring that juniors and seniors take writing courses.

Individual students can help to prevent the erosion of English by improving their language habits. In this LIFEPAC® you will study collective nouns and regular and irregular verbs, learning to use each correctly. In your study of comparisons, you will learn what double comparisons are, when they are acceptable, and when to avoid them. You will study double negatives, which are never acceptable in modern usage. You will review gerunds and participles and study their use in poetry. In the last section, you will study various types of literature, including the novel, the short story, poetry, and drama. You will learn about the characteristics of each type.

All of these subjects will help you broaden your view of English. Language is a means of communicating your own ideas and of receiving and analyzing the ideas of others. Language is a link with other minds. Studying this LIFEPAC will help you to make the most of the precious gift of language.

Objectives

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC. When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Identify collective nouns and use them correctly.
2. Use regular and irregular verbs correctly.
3. Correct sentences that have double negatives.
4. Use comparisons correctly.
5. Correct double comparisons in your writing.
6. Distinguish between participles and gerunds and use each correctly.
7. Analyze the use of comparisons, double comparisons, gerunds, and participles in poetry.
8. Recognize the characteristics of novels, short stories, poetry, and drama.
9. Write a short story using good English.
1. LANGUAGE IN DAILY USE

Nouns and verbs are among the most frequently used words in the English language. Because every complete sentence contains a verb, a knowledge of verb forms is essential for the mastery of English. Most English sentences also contain nouns. In this section you will study a particularly tricky type of noun that is plural in meaning but singular in form. You will also learn about the various forms of regular and irregular verbs.

A knowledge of English usage also involves studying forms that are not considered good English. Your study in this section of double negatives will tell you what they are and how to avoid them.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Identify collective nouns and use them correctly.
2. Use both regular and irregular verbs correctly.
3. Correct sentences that have double negatives.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

affirmative (u fěr´ mu tive). A statement that something is so; a positive statement.

conversely (kun věr´ s lé). Turned the other way around.

indicative (in dik´ u tive). A verb form that denotes a state or happening as actual.

infinitive (in fin´ u tive). A form of a verb not inflected for person or number and commonly preceded by to.

inflection (in flek´ shun). A variation in the form of a word to show gender, tense, and so forth.

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAC appear in boldface print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

Pronunciation Key: hat, āge, căre, făr; let, equal, těrm; it, těce; hot, ôpen, ôrder; oil; out; cup, pút, rûle; child; long; thin; /TH/ for then; /zhi/ for measure; /u/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /l/ in pencil, /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.

COLLECTIVE NOUNS

One of the difficulties in English is the use of nouns that refer to more than one person or object. These nouns, called collective nouns, can represent a collection of people, such as a committee, a group, a team, a class, a family, an audience, and a government. Collective nouns can also represent a collection of animals or objects, such as a flock, a collection, a set, a herd, and a pride (of lions). These nouns are plural in sense, but they require singular pronouns and singular verbs. Notice the verbs and the pronouns in the following examples:

- The committee is making its decision.
- The flock follows its shepherd cautiously.

Collective nouns are treated as plural in England. A speaker of British English would say:
The crowd are applauding their speaker.

The government were defeated in their new bill.

American English speakers would say:

The crowd is applauding its speaker.

The government was defeated in its bill.

Neither variety of English would combine singular and plural forms in the same sentence.

Circle the correct word in each pair. (Choose the American version.)

1.1 The team a. (was, were) beautiful in b. (its, their) unity of movement.
1.2 A committee of six persons (meets, meet) every Friday.
1.3 The orchestra (rise, rises) when the audience (applaud, applauds).
1.4 (Is, Are) the crowd going to be unruly?
1.5 His flock of sheep (race, races) to the water without waiting for a signal.
1.6 The junior class (raise, raises) money each year for a banquet.
1.7 The insurance agency a. (opens, open) b. (their, its) doors at nine o’clock.
Complete these activities.

1.8 Underline each collective noun with one line. If the noun is the subject of a verb or a phrase containing a verb, underline the verb with two lines.

In an emergency the whole community of fruit growers gathers in a grove to help pick the oranges. With such a crowd it does not take long. Each family then takes its share of the profits from the agency that sells the produce.

1.9 Using a page from your newspaper, skim quickly down each column and pick out all the collective nouns you can find. Write them here.

______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________

REGULAR AND IRREGULAR VERBS

When a child is learning to talk, he solves the problem of regular and irregular verbs by making all verbs regular. He might say, “I beed good today. I comed in when Mommy called, and I seed a bird.” Some children double the -ed or add it to an irregular form, as “I seeded” or “I sawded.” Listen carefully to the speech of a two- or three-year old child, and note how many irregular verbs he makes regular.

A person speaking as a second language, if he has not studied the verbs carefully, may make the same mistake. The following paragraphs are from *Miracle Hill*, by Emerson Blackhorse Mitchell and T. D. Allen. The book is an autobiography written by a young Navajo in a government school. His irregular verbs were allowed to stand as he wrote them. Only his serious grammatical errors were corrected. Because the Navajo language does not contain consonant clusters or consonant blends without vowels between them, the boy spells his nickname, Bronco, “Bronco.”

Now Bronco has to unload and get the bundle off the horse and put the several things under the shade house which stood there for a year. Quickly he cutted the tallest weeds, and sweeped the hard dirt and pile up some sticks and build fire so he can have a hot coffee and eat.

Grandmother fixed the place to sleep while Bronco ties the horse’s front feet together so that they won’t be far the next morning. Annie was real tired so she fall asleep with her cat.

Bronco and his Grandmother chatters, sitting in front of the fire watching the horses move over the hill, and the sheep are in corral going to sleep too. The stars began to twinkle and the cool air blew from the wet ground as it smell cool. Grandmother and Bronco went to sleep late at night. There was no more sound except the wind whisper.
The next day, the sun rise brightly and the grass has already turned green. Grandmother, Bronco, and Annie were still asleep when Grandfather came. He stack the fire kindling wood and build a fire and put on a hot coffee and prepared the breakfast. He knew that his family were tired. When he opened the gate for the sheep, then Grandmother wake up.1

Since you are neither learning to talk nor learning English as a second language, you need to be familiar with the common verbs that are irregular in the past tense, in the past participle, or in both. An irregular verb is one that does not form its past tense or its past participle by adding the inflection -ed. Regular verbs in English have four different forms in addition to the infinitive. Some irregular verbs have five different forms; some have four; some have only three. The most complex of all English verbs, to be, has eight different forms. If you are not familiar with the inflection of the regular verbs, study this chart of the indicative forms carefully.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
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<th>Past/Past Participle</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third Person Singular</td>
<td>All Other Forms</td>
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<td>to ask</td>
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<td>to carry</td>
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<td>to employ</td>
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<td>employed</td>
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<tr>
<td>to fret</td>
<td>frets</td>
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<tr>
<td>to jump</td>
<td>jumps</td>
<td>jump</td>
<td>jumped</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Answer these questions.**

1.10 How is the indicative form of a verb used? ____________________________

1.11 What kinds of spelling differences do you notice among the verbs listed under present indicative (third person singular) and under past indicative? ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
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<td>jumps</td>
<td>jump</td>
<td>jumped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.12 How is the present participle *usually* formed? __________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Complete the chart of regular verbs. You may use a dictionary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Third Person Singular</th>
<th>All Other Forms</th>
<th>Past/Past Participle</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to marry</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to miss</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to mix</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to move</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to occur</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to play</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to rely</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to shout</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to skate</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to skim</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
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<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to stay</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to stop</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to trip</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to wash</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
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<td>to watch</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
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<tr>
<td>to work</td>
<td>a. _______</td>
<td>b. _______</td>
<td>c. _______</td>
<td>d. _______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The infinitive form of a verb is used in combination with other verbs.

Examples:
- I want to be a mechanic.
- I hope to see you soon.

The same indicative form of the verb is used for all present forms both singular and plural except the third person singular. This form is also combined with helping verbs.

Examples:
- I will work for three months.
- Joe did water the lawn, Mother.

This form causes much confusion for English-speaking people who try to learn another language. The tendency is to attempt to translate the do, did, and will of English even though the auxiliary is included in the form of the verb in other languages. Conversely, a person learning English as a second language tends to leave out the helping word.

Examples:
- Yes, I water the lawn.
- I work there next week.

In regular verbs, the form of the past tense and of the past participle, used with auxiliary verbs, are the same. The same form of ask is used in these examples.

Examples:
- Joe asked him.
- Joe had asked him.

The past participle of irregular verbs usually is not the same form as the past tense. Study the verbs in the following chart, which includes many verbs that are commonly misused or misspelled.

Answer these questions.

1.30 What change do you notice in the spelling of occur when -ed or -ing is added?

1.31 What is the difference between the infinitive form of a regular verb and its third person singular present indicative form?

The infinitive form of a verb is used in combination with other verbs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>begins</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some irregular verbs have more than one acceptable past particle in good usage. Examples are forget: forgot or forgotten; get: got or gotten; hide: hid or hidden; shrink: shrunk or shrunken; strive: strived or striven; and tread: trod or trodden. All of these words are ancient and are losing their Old English forms slowly.
Write the correct form of the verb in parentheses on the line.

1.32 (lie) I could have _______________________ on the beach all morning.
1.33 (choose) The chairman of the committee will be _______________________ tomorrow.
1.34 (break) Someone has _______________________ into the mailboxes again.
1.35 (ride) Have you ever _______________________ in a convertible with the top down?
1.36 (throw) Jan _______________________ the clothes into the hamper.
1.37 (fly) The birds in our neighborhood have already _______________________ south for the winter.
1.38 (know) I _______________________ Janice would return the book on time.
1.39 (ring) Has the warning bell _______________________ yet?
1.40 (grow) Our next-door neighbor has _______________________ six-foot marigolds.
1.41 (speak) I have _______________________ to Pete about his messy desk.
1.42 (drive) Uncle John has never _______________________ faster than twenty-five miles an hour.
1.43 (begin) Polly had just _______________________ to wash her hair when the phone rang.
1.44 (write) Have you _______________________ a thank-you note to Aunt Martha?
1.45 (drink) Phil _______________________ a gallon of lemonade.
1.46 (blow) The wind _______________________ the screens off the front porch.
1.47 (sink) The dinghy must have _______________________ in the storm last night.
1.48 (freeze) “My fingers and toes are _______________________!” complained Bill.
1.49 (swim) Yesterday my dog _______________________ out to the island and back.
1.50 (spring) The boat must have _______________________ a leak.
1.51 (tear) I must have _______________________ my dress on that loose board.
DOUBLE NEGATIVES

Words that show the absence of something or that deny or contradict a positive statement are negatives. No, no one, not, none, and nothing are negatives. The words hardly, only, and scarcely are weak or partial negatives.

The use of two negatives in the same statement is called a double negative. At one time double negatives were a means of intensifying negative statements and of making them stronger. Double negatives, however, are not considered standard or acceptable English today. The following statements are examples of double negatives:

- I can’t do nothing right.
- No one didn’t see it.

Statements that combine negatives and partial negatives, such as not hardly, are also considered to be double negatives. Such phrases as not unwilling and not unkind, on the other hand, are weak affirmatives.

Complete these activities.

1.64 Underline the double negatives in the following paragraph.

“I do not want nothing,” the boy said, shaking his head. “I just come to look at the horse. I do not mean no harm, mister. I won’t never do it again, I promise.”

Complete the following activities. Write DN on the line if the sentence contains a double negative. If the sentence is correct, write C.

1.65 _______ I do not want to go.
1.66 _______ The dress was old but not unsuitable.
1.67 _______ I can’t never get this seam straight.
1.68 _______ Dan said none of us couldn’t go.
1.69 _______ Nobody saw the comet, neither.

Review the material in this section in preparation for the Self Test. The Self Test will check your mastery of this particular section. The items missed on this Self Test will indicate specific areas where restudy is needed for mastery.
SELF TEST 1

Complete these statements (each answer, 3 points).

1.01 In American English a collective noun takes __________________________ verbs and pronouns.
1.02 Not never is an example of a __________________________.
1.03 Speakers of English as a foreign language often make all of their verbs ____________________

Underline the five collective nouns in this paragraph (each answer, 2 points).

1.04 The whole family started out early to look for the herd of buffalo. An old Indian told them that he had seen, not far away, a group of animals resembling cattle. “They don’t like an audience,” said Father, “but this team of hunters should find them.”

Match these items (each answer, 2 points).

1.05 ______ affirmative
1.06 ______ double negative
1.07 ______ infinitive
1.08 ______ indicative
1.09 ______ inflection

Write on each line the past participle of the verb in parentheses (each answer, 3 points).

1.010 After he had (drink) ________________________ the tea, he felt better.
1.011 The box had (lie) ________________________ there all summer.
1.012 He must have (swim) ________________________ at least forty laps.
1.013 If I had (wear) a. __________________________ my new dress, I would have (rise) b. ________________________ to greet her.

Label each inflection as infinitive, third person singular, past tense, or present participle (each answer, 2 points).

1.014 married __________________________
1.015 missing __________________________
1.016 plays __________________________
Rewrite the following sentences, correcting the double negatives (each sentence, 3 points).

1.024 We didn’t eat no ice cream after all.

1.025 Nobody lost no time in getting to the game.

1.026 I never went there, neither.

Define each term (each answer, 4 points).

1.027 collective noun -

1.028 irregular verb -