

**CWE Writing Consultants**

***Here to Help***

Writing consultants are available to help you develop your ideas and strengthen your writing through drafting, organization, revision, self-editing skills, and strategies. Writing consultants are not editors.

Everything about the interactions between you and the writing consultant is in line with CWE’s central goal of helping you achieve independence in your writing, research, and learning. What does that mean? It means that, at the CWE, our writing consultants are here to help you refine your understanding of critical reading and writing, as well as research leading you to successful scholarship.

Consultants assist you with all kinds of writing: critical essays, response papers, persuasive essays, research projects, creative writing, autobiographical essays, speeches, summaries, and note-taking. You can request help brainstorming your ideas, writing the first draft, revising, and editing. Consultants are also prepared to assist you with quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing and citing sources. All consultants have ESL experience.

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**Make your 30-minute appointment at the front desk**

**Tuesday, September 5—Wednesday, December 20, 2017**

**Monday—Friday**

**4:30-8:00pm**

**Saturday**

**10am-1:30pm**

Visit Our Website

**cwewritingcenter.wordpress.com**

We look forward to seeing you.

*Write On!*

*Michele Sweeting-DeCaro, Director*

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**THE BIG 3 at the Writing Center**

1. Be on time for your [scheduled appointment](https://esars.sbccd.org/V_TutoringCtr/eSARS.asp).

2. Bring relevant materials, such as lecture notes, assignments, and graded essays.

3. Think of specific questions you want to ask the consultant.

***Reminder****:*

*Do not expect the writing consultant to do your work.*

*Writing Consultants do not edit compositions,*

*or assist with take-home exams.*



***Grammar Tips***

“Good writing makes a good impression, but many students have problems with grammar. Below are five basic grammar tips that are essential to academic writing.”

*~Prof. Michele, Director of the CWE Writing Center*

## 1.  Me, myself, and I

We all need to look out for number one, and that includes knowing how to refer to ourselves.

In the case of me, myself, and I, [*the best tip*](http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/myself)is to remove all other people from the sentence to see whether it still makes sense. For example, “Jesse and myself are studying the periodic table” would not sound right if you removed Jesse from the sentence. Myselfwould need to be replaced with I.

Or how about this trickier example: “Professor Easter gave an assignment to Jesse and I.” Again, remove Jesse, and “Professor Easter gave an assignment to I” does not work. Instead, changeI to me.

Me is the object of a sentence, as in “give me more knowledge,” or “Professor Easter taught chemistry to Jesse and me.”

Myself should only ever be used to describe yourself as the object of a sentence, as in “I read Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye* to myself this morning.”

## 2.  You’re and your; they’re, there, and their; it’s and its

For some people, the rules for these words are obvious. Other people struggle to remember which word should be used where, and that’s understandable. After all, they all sound alike!

Your is the possessive form of you, as in “Advanced Composition is your favorite subject,” while you’re is a contraction of “you are,” as in “you’re really good at writing essays!”

Similar to you’re, they’re is a contraction of “they are,” as in “they’re getting a Range Rover.” There describes a place, as in “we should go over there.” And lastly, their is the possessive form of they, as in “their favorite color is blue.”

It’s is a contraction of “it is,” as in “it’s a good day to work together.” Its, on the other hand, is the possessive form of it, which is confusing since possessives in English typically use an apostrophe. No wonder so many people get this one wrong! Example: “Its color was tan with yellow, orange, and red stripes down the side.”

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## 3.  Ending sentences with prepositions

Although this one’s [*not so much a rule*](http://blog.oxforddictionaries.com/2011/11/grammar-myths-prepositions/)as it is a suggestion, the general principle is still important for college students to be familiar with. It can make for choppy writing when prepositions are dangling at the end of sentences, the rule for which many people lack an understanding of.

Did you notice that the previous two sentences ended in prepositions?

Any words you could use to describe where a squirrel went—on, off, at, onto, over, and approximately [*150 more words*](https://www.englishclub.com/grammar/prepositions-list.htm) we call prepositions—should not be placed at the end of a sentence unless an alternative structure would sound equally as awkward.

For example, “What did you step on?” sounds more natural than, “On what did you step?” But, “The general principle is still important for college students to be familiar with,” may be improved by saying, “It is still important for college students to familiarize themselves with this rule.”

## 4.  Commas and semicolons

Some people play fast and loose with commas, inserting them anywhere their voice would naturally pause in a sentence. But that’s overkill, since we likely pause way more in speaking than we do in writing. Here are a few clear rules to keep in mind regarding *commas*:

Use commas to separate independent clauses when they are joined by conjunctions, as in, “Mr. White likes chemistry, but many of his students find it boring.”

Use commas after introductory clauses, phrases, or words that come before a main clause, as in, “After learning about history, I felt like I could conquer the world.”

Semicolons, on the other hand, are used to separate two clauses that relate to each other and could potentially be written as two separate sentences. Example: “I woke up early today to study history; I’m really tired, but very intellectually fulfilled.”

## 5.  Using passive voice

Passive voice is not an inherently incorrect use of grammar; it just lacks pizzazz and weakens an otherwise clear and direct sentence. It occurs when the subject and verb relationship is not as clear as it would be in active voice.

For example, in the sentence, “We are reading Sigmund Freud,” we is clearly the subject and reading is the verb. In passive voice, however, the subject/verb agreement becomes convoluted, as if some unknown force swooped in and did the reading, such as, “Sigmund Freud was being read.”

Adapted from Grammarlyblog,com