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Homophones

The most commonly misspelled words are homophones: words with the same sound, but different meaning and spelling.

There/their/they're

- The word *there* is a word about place. For example, *We are going over there to revise.*
- *They're* is a shortened version (a **contraction**) of *they are*. For example, *They're hoping to revise together in the afternoon.*
- *Their* is a possessive word. For example, *Their revision was going well.*

Your/you're

- *You're* is a shorted version of *you are*. For example, *You're focusing well on your revision tasks.*
- *Your* is a possessive word. For example, *Remember to bring your revision timetable.*

Here/hear

- Remember this word within a word: the word *hear* contains an *ear* which you use to *hear* with. For example: *I hear he did well in his exam.*
- *Here* is a word about place. For example: *Have you come here to revise?*

To/too/two

- *To* means *towards* OR it can form part of a **verb**. For example: *it started to rain.*
- *Too* means *too much* or *also*. For example: *I've had too much cake/Would you like to come too?*
- *Two* means the number 2.

Its/it's

- *It's* is short for *it is* or *it has*. For example: *It's been a long term.*
- *Its* means *belonging to it*. For example: *The school celebrated its fifty-year anniversary.*

Practise/practice

- *Practise* is a verb. For example: *To be confident with spelling you must practise.*
- *Practice* is a **noun**. For example: *She works at a doctor's practice.*

Other words that are often confused

Other words sound *similar* and therefore are easily confused. For example:

were/where/wear

quite/quiet

effect/affect

are/our

advise/advice

accept/except

loose/lose

DO IT!

Write out a sentence for each of the following homophones:

break/brake

through/threw

whether/weather

passed/past.

Punctuation: Geography

Introduction and advice

Some uses of punctuation, specific to geography, will help you to be successful on the SPaG elements of your exams.

Capital letters and place names

Always use a capital letter when you're referring to the name of a place, such as a city, county, country or region. If the place name has two or three words, they all need a capital letter: Oxford Street or Central African Republic. A capital letter is not needed for city, island or street unless they form part of a name: Atlantic City, Fraser Island, Prince's Street.

Prepositions in place names do not need capitals, for example, Ashton-under-Lyne. If a country name starts with 'the', that will need a capital too, for example, The Bahamas.

Rewrite these examples to include any capital letters that might be missing. (Some might not need any capitals at all.)

bristol

kingston upon thames

the ocean

the park

new york city

the democratic
republic of congo

hollywood boulevard

a city

the river wye

mumbai

pacific ocean

DO IT!



Points of the compass and place names

What about north, south, east and west? If the place name includes points of the compass, they must be capitalised too. If you're using compass directions in another context such as navigation, no capital letters are needed. For example, to get to **North** Queensferry you need to drive **north** along the M90.



SUPPORT IT!

Use this rhyme to help you remember:

Compass in the name? Play the capital game.

Compass in the route? Little letters are more cute.

Colons

Any list can follow a colon. For example, you might be listing the social, economic and environmental impacts of a natural hazard.

- *The earthquake caused the following social impacts: 17 deaths; 42 homes to collapse; 400 homes to lose power and the loss of 15 small businesses...*

Semicolons have been used because the list includes some longer phrases.

A colon can also be used to present a valid conclusion.

- *Longshore drift was evident: a spit formed at the end of headland.*

DO IT!

Identify three other potential topics where a colon and a list would be a useful addition to an answer.

Grammar: English literature

NAIL IT!



Although some writers may start a sentence with the conjunction **and**, it is not considered to be appropriate for a formal written exam.

Introduction and advice

In your English literature exam, you are aiming to write a clear and well-developed essay. Using accurate grammar is important as it will enable you to make your meaning clear to the reader. You don't want the examiner to puzzle over your sentences in order to work out your meaning. Effective use of grammar will also give you more control over your analysis of texts and allow you to develop more complex and subtle ideas.

Conjunctions and linking words

In an English literature exam, conjunctions and other linking words can give your writing more control. They can help guide your argument and encourage you to move beyond a description of the text.



CONTEXTUALISE IT!

The following exam answer extract uses conjunctions and other linking words with *consistent accuracy* in order to give *effective control of meaning*. This answer would therefore be assessed as meeting the high performance criteria for the SPaG assessment.

Mrs Birling insists that the man involved should take responsibility for what happened to Eva Smith, whereas the audience realises the irony of this statement because they suspect that Eric is responsible. Eric's absence from the stage at this point in the play is essential for building the tension. Despite Sheila also realising that Eric is involved, Mrs Birling only slowly becomes aware of her son's involvement. Sheila tries to make her mother understand, '...but don't you see...' and then later '...now, Mother don't you see?'. Significantly, Mrs Birling does not fully understand until the end of Act Two, so the action ends on a dramatic moment.

NAIL IT!



Don't overuse connectives in your English literature essay. Starting **every** sentence with a connective can make your writing sound unnatural.

Tense

English literature essays are usually written in the present tense. For example:

- *Mr Birling gives a speech to his family about the Titanic being unsinkable. This speech shows the audience that Mr. Birling is not to be trusted.*

Spellcheckers

① Look carefully at the following signs. All of them contain spelling mistakes that would be missed by a spellchecker. Circle the mistake and write the correct spelling next to the image.

a **Quite please.**
Exams in progress. _____

b *Please don't stand on
the chairs as this will
brake them.* _____

c **Polite Notice.**
Know parking in front of
this drive. _____

d *You're kids will have so much
fun, they won't even know
their learning!* _____

DO IT!

Keep a record of any public spelling mistakes that you spot. Take a photo with your phone and share the funniest mistakes with friends.

Homophones

① Add the correct word to the gaps in these sentences.

there

they're

their

_____ are many different characters in Shakespeare's plays and everyone in the audience will have _____ favourite. The main character in a play is very important as _____ often on stage for more time and develop a closer relationship with _____ audience. Sometimes _____ is a character who shares many of _____ thoughts with the audience.



SUPPORT IT!

Don't forget that capital letters always come at the start of new sentences.

WORK IT!

A student has confused the following homophones in their work. This type of mistake would mean this student is unlikely to be marked above the Threshold performance for their spelling (see page 84).

its

it's

to

too

two

Lady Macbeth feels guilt at the end of the play, but its to late to save herself. There are too witnesses to her sleepwalking confessions: the Doctor and the Gentlewoman. Its obvious that they fear her words and suspect that she to is linked to the evil affecting Scotland. Its interesting that she does not go too her husband with her feelings, instead she is driven too distraction.

Punctuation: Geography

Capital letters and place names

- ① Rewrite these examples to include any capital letters that are missing. (Some might not need any capitals at all.)

frampton on severn

kingston upon hull

river thames

the oil spill impacted on the river and beach of the island.

the river

saudi arabia

african plain

united states of america



STRETCH IT!

Try thinking of three more place names for each of these:

- Place names with prepositions in them.
- Place names with two or three words in them.
- Common noun places.

Points of the compass and place names

- ② Rewrite these examples to include any capital letters that are missing.

a dharavi is found in western mumbai.

b the outer hebrides are north west of the isle of skye.

c peru is the most easterly country in south america.

d south africa is the most southerly country in sub-saharan Africa.

Colons

- ① Which of these sentences introduces a list and which presents a valid conclusion?

- a The UN's response included: sending emergency relief aid, identifying areas worst hit and evacuating the most vulnerable using helicopters.
- b The UN responded immediately: the death toll was low.

Using brackets to enhance detail

- ① Answer these questions using data in brackets to enhance your response. The first one has been done for you.

a Describe the climate of a rainforest

Rainforests are hot (generally above 25°C in the daytime) and wet (up to 300mm of rain per month).

b Consider an example of migration that you have studied. Explain the main causes of this migration.

c What determines the location of primary economic activities?

Conjunctions and linking words

Conjunctions and linking words can be used to give you more control over the structure of your sentences. They are also a useful way to link paragraphs together.

DO IT!

Which of the following conjunctions and linking words do you use regularly in your English literature essays? Look through a sample of your essays and keep a tally next to each word in the table.

If you notice that you are using a few words very regularly, it would be a good idea to think about which other conjunctions and linking words you could use to make your writing more effective.

Sequencing	Comparing	Qualifying
next	equally	however
then	similarly	although
meanwhile	likewise	despite
after	in comparison	except
finally		unless
Contrasting	Cause and effect	Emphasising
whereas	consequently	especially
In contrast	so	notably
alternatively	therefore	significantly
otherwise	because	

NAIL IT!

The linking words that compare and contrast (see table to the right) are invaluable when you are writing a comparative essay, for example, when you must compare two unseen poems. Before you begin your comparative essay, note down a few useful linking words in your essay plan.

Using the correct tense

- ① Which of the following need to be written in the present tense?
Tick your choices.

Sentences about writers who are no longer alive.	
Sentences about writers who are still alive.	
Sentences about the characters and themes in the text.	
Sentences about the historical context of a text.	

There are ten mistakes in this passage. Remember that English literature essays are usually written in the present tense.

- ② Underline the mistakes in the following exam answer and write the corrections in the margins.

Macbeth could of standed up to Lady Macbeth, but he let her controlled him. There is lots of example from the start of the play that show Lady Macbeth dominate her husband. For example, when Macbeth bring the daggers from the murder scene and Lady Macbeth had to take control. Also, in the banquet scene Lady Macbeth tried to manages the situation and controls her husband's behaviour.