AVOIDING SHIFT IN PERSON

Change the pronouns (and verbs when necessary) so that there will be no shift in person. Cross out the incorrect words and write the correct ones above. Sometimes you may want to change a sentence from singular to plural to avoid using too many ones or the awkward he or she.

Exercise #1:

Example: I enjoy jogging because you feel so good when you quit.

1. In high school our English teacher wouldn’t give us more than a C.
2. I like going out with her because she really makes me feel important.
3. I used to think my parents were fussy, but as I grew older, they became more tolerant.
4. I’m finding I have to do a lot of memorizing if I want to be a good speller.
5. I like living in Oregon because it has good weather all year long.
6. As a rule a person can find work if he is willing to take what he can get.
7. It’s wise for a beginning driver to stay out of heavy traffic until he has more experience.
8. If I want to play the guitar well, I really need lessons.
9. All those who intend to graduate should get fitted for their gowns.

Exercise #2:

1. Anyone who doesn’t have a reservation is taking a chance unless he doesn’t really care whether he has a place to stay.
2. If you have done all the exercises in this book, you should be able to get a perfect score on the final grammar test.
3. At the Oriental Institute you can see the great Winged Bull from Iraq, and you can also see many other Middle East antiquities.
4. When we looked down, we could see the little farms growing smaller and smaller.
5. We were on the plane for six hours, and we got tired of sitting that long.
6. We tried to move around, but there was not too much we could do.
Avoiding Shifts Quiz Key

7. Our car was in the middle of a traffic jam, and we could see that we weren’t going to make our appointment.

8. When they opened the door that morning, they could see rabbit tracks in the snow.

**Exercise #3:**

When students write you in a paper, they usually don’t mean you, the reader. **Rewrite these sentences, eliminating the you and stating the sentences as simply as possible. Getting rid of the you will usually get rid of wordiness also. For ex. 3-4, corrected sentences will vary upon student.**

1. He should have seen the mess my room was in.
2. She can imagine how terrified I was.
3. Swimming is the best exercise she can take.
4. One doesn’t need to be a member of the Kiwanis Club to attend their breakfast.
5. My paper will always be more interesting if I put in specific details.
6. Her paper was excellent; I could tell she had spent time on it.
7. To succeed in college, one needs to have good vocabulary.
8. His vocabulary will improve if he reads widely.
9. I feel absolutely foolish after I have said such a thing.
10. One can imagine how I looked forward to that weekend.

**Exercise #4:**

1. Correct
2. Correct
3. I spent two days in Williamsburg, but I really need more time if I want to see everything.
4. Correct
5. Call this number for more information.
6. Correct
7. Correct
8. You can’t imagine how frustrating it is to be unable to get there on time.
9. Correct
10. After an escape like that, I feel pretty lucky to be alive.
AVOIDING SHIFTS IN TIME

Most of these sentences have shifts in time, either from past to present or from present to past. Change the verbs in each sentence to agree with the first verb used. Cross out the incorrect verb and write the correct one above it.

Exercise #5:

1. Only a few feet in front of me I saw a quail, and I walked quietly forward, hoping not to frighten it away.

2. Kent stopped me and said he’d see me later.

3. We were enjoying the game tremendously, and then it began to rain.

4. I tried to keep a study schedule, but sometimes I gave up.

5. I closed my book, had a snack, and then decided to call it a day.

6. I wanted to register for that course, but it was full, so I registered for this one.

7. He thought he wanted a job, but then he finally came back to college.

8. I added something to my knowledge of nature today; I learned the difference between cumulus and nimbostratus clouds.

9. When I was seven, I ran away and stayed away until dark; then I came home.

10. We walked along the shore hunting for shells, and finally we were lucky enough to find a perfect specimen of a helmet shell.
11. We found lots of limpets, and before we finally gave up for the day, we discovered a beautiful sea fan coral.

12. We took our specimens home, washed them, identified each one accurately, and wrote a label for it.

13. I worked all that summer boning up on my math, and then I was rewarded by passing the proficiency exam.

14. The book gives an account of Dickens’ life, but it doesn’t tell much about his novels.

15. After we had driven about 50 miles on the freeway, we discovered we were going the wrong direction.

16. Here we are minding our own business when a cop came along and asked to see my driver’s license.

17. The Two Solitudes is a novel by Hugh MacLennan which tells about the social conflict between the French- and English- speaking Canadians.

18. We drove to the top of the hill to watch the sunset, and then we came back in time for supper.

19. I locked the door and then realized I had left my keys inside.