

1. The eight parts of speech are the most general categories into which words fit. Every word in a sentence functions grammatically, and its basic grammatical function is explained by one of these eight categories. They are (1) nouns, (2) pronouns, (3) adjectives, (4) verbs, (5) adverbs, (6) prepositions, (7) conjunctions, and (8) interjections.

Nouns name things directly (person, place, or thing), whereas pronouns name things indirectly because they stand in place of nouns. Adjectives modify the meaning of nouns and pronouns, often answering the question *what kind of?* Verbs express action or a state of being (they are quite involved, and so we spend a good deal of time discussing them in our *Design of English* course). Adverbs modify the meaning of verbs, adjectives, and even other adverbs; they generally answer one of these five questions *where?*, *when?*, *how?*, *how much?*, and *why?* Prepositions express a relationship between a noun and another word in the sentence. Conjunctions join words or groups of words of equal grammatical rank. And, finally, interjections are the words we use to express emotion, words like *ouch!* and *huh?*

2. Are you stronger than *he*?

Do not rely on your ear! This exercise is related to what grammar calls *case*. English has three cases: *nominative*, *possessive*, and *objective*. For reasons explained in the *Design of English*, the word *you* in this sentence is in the nominative case. *Stronger* implies a comparison between two things, and traditional English grammar requires, for reasons of logic, that the two things being compared be in the same case; here, the two things being compared are the words *you* and the correct choice, *he* (not *him*). *He* is nominative, *him* is objective; hence *he*, not *him*. The complete thoughts (not entirely stated) are *are you stronger than he is strong?*

3. This is related to knowing the tenses of verbs and their corresponding forms. The full conjugation of the verb *to give* in the present perfect tense is as follows:

I have given;
You have given;
He, she, it has given;

We have given;
You have given;
They have given.

4. That group of students *was tailgating* in the parking lot before the game.

This is an exercise in syntax (the arrangement of words), more specifically, subject-verb agreement. The proper form is *was tailgating* because the subject of this sentence is *group*, a singular noun, and not *students*, a plural noun; therefore, *that group was...*, not *students were...*. As for *aspect*, a grammatical term related to verb tenses, English has, again, three: *simple*, *progressive*, and *emphatic*. The progressive aspect is the form used to express the action as ongoing, so a verb in the simple past tense progressive aspect states that the action was ongoing for some duration in past time.

5. The correct answer is either *my* or *mine*.

This question deals with the idea of case mentioned in the explanation of number 2. *I* is a personal pronoun (first person, singular) in the nominative case. In the objective it is *me*. In the possessive there are actually two forms, *my* and *mine*, but *my* is properly called the possessive adjective because it will always modify a noun (or, theoretically, a pronoun). *Mine* is the pronoun proper. For example, in the sentence *your car is red, mine is blue*, the word *mine* stands in place of *my car*.

6. As with any craft, writing has its elements and instruments which need to be identified and whose use must be understood. Both clause and phrase are elements of the craft of writing, and each serves a specific purpose. Logically, a clause is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. Grammatically, a clause is a group of words with a subject and a predicate. A subject is the thing being talked about, and the predicate is the thing being said about the subject. A simple example of a clause is this: *a cat ran up the tree*. What is the thing being talked about? A cat. The subject, therefore, is *cat*. What is being said of the cat? That it ran up the tree. The predicate then is *ran up the tree*. The entire group of words *a cat ran up the tree* is a clause because it expresses a thought; on the other hand, the group of words *up the tree* certainly signify something, more specifically *where*, but not as a complete thought. *Up the tree* is a phrase, a group of words without a subject and a predicate that expresses an idea.
7. The articles are *a*, *an*, and *the*, and they are adjectives because they modify nouns and pronouns: *the book*, *an elephant*, *a three-story red brick building*.
8. Person, number, tense, voice, and mood.

The two largest categories that verb forms fall into are *finite* and *infinite*. Verbs in finite form are specific to both who and when, and have the following five properties (each with its own subcategories): person (first, second, or third); number (singular or plural); tense (simple past, simple present, simple future, past perfect, present perfect, or future perfect); voice (active or passive); and mood (indicative, imperative, or subjunctive).

9. Person and number.

Like the verb in finite form, nouns (and pronouns) also have properties. In fact case, mentioned in the explanations of both numbers 2 and 5, is one of the four properties of the noun. The other three are person, number, and gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter). Both person and number are the same for both nouns and verbs: first person, second person, or third person; singular number or plural number. This is the heart of the concept subject-verb agreement. The subject and verb agree when they both have the same person and number.

10. Who, which, and that.

The relative pronoun is one of five classes of pronouns. The other four are personal, interrogative, demonstrative, and indefinite. Relative pronouns generally refer back to a word already stated in the sentence, and introduce what are called relative clauses. For example, in the sentence *the employee whom you introduced to us seems very nice*, the relative clause is *whom you introduced to us* and is introduced by the relative pronoun *whom*, which stands in place of the word *employee*.

Bonus:

The correct answer will entirely depend upon what you mean to say. You would choose the nominative, *I*, if you mean to say that *she works with Jane more often than I work with Jane*, but you would choose the objective, *me*, if you mean to say that *she works with Jane more often than she works with me*. The phrase *more often* implies here a comparison (as discussed in number 2), a condition which requires that the two things being compared be in the same grammatical case; hence, with the nominative, *she* and *I* are being compared, whereas with the objective, *Jane* and *me* are being compared because, in this sentence, *Jane* is in the objective case.