

Writing Resources and Tipsheets

1. Writing Resources and Style Guides

-the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual *available in the Advancement Office*

-the Gregg Reference Manual *available in the Advancement Office*

Writing Resources and Tipsheets

2. Writing Tipsheet-compiled by multiple sources including the Gregg Reference Manual and AP Stylebook.

TITLES

*Capitalize titles ONLY if they precede a name.

- Examples: *IMSA President Dr. Max McGee presented the keynote address. The award will be presented to Dr. Max McGee, IMSA president.*

*Lowercase titles when used alone

- Example: *The IMSA vice president for teaching and learning attended the meeting.*

*Underline or italicize the titles of complete works such as books, magazines and newspapers. Use quotation marks around the titles that represent only part of a complete work such as book chapters and articles in newspapers and magazines.

PASSIVE VS. ACTIVE VOICE

*Use active voice. Avoid passive voice. Example:

- Active voice-a verb is in the active voice when its subject is the doer of the act. *About a dozen people **reviewed** the publication in draft form.*
- Passive voice-a verb is in the passive voice when its subject is acted upon. *The publication **was reviewed** in draft form by about a dozen people.*

COMMON MISTAKES

*Spell out the name Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy® on first reference. Do NOT use "&" to replace "and" and "Math" to replace "Mathematics."

Wrong: Illinois Math & Science Academy

Right: Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy®

*Spell out all **numerals** less than 10 EXCEPT when a number greater than ten begins a sentence.

- Examples: *Three hundred Illinois residents attended the IMSA event. The reporter interviewed 15 parents from Chicago and eight students from southern Illinois.*

***It's** is a contraction meaning *it is* or *it has*.

- Example: *It's up to you. It's been a long time.*

Its is the possessive form of the neutral pronoun.

- Example: The company lost *its* assets.

***Alumnus** (alumni as plural) refers to a man or a woman who has attended a school. **Alumna** (alumnae as plural) is a woman who has attended a school. **Alumni** refers to a group of men and women.

*Lowercase **a.m.** and **p.m.** and use punctuation

*Use **online** and not *on-line*

*Always capitalize **Internet** and the **World Wide Web**

***Web site** is two words

***E-mail** is lowercase except when it starts a sentence

*It's Ninety-ninth Congress not Ninety-Ninth Congress unless it's part of a Heading or Title. **Problem-Based Learning** (PBL) is capitalized because it is a formal title of an instructional program.

***That** is used to restrict meaning (an essential clause) and **which** is used to elaborate (a non-essential clause).

- Example: *The report that I sent you last week (describes the essential clause) will be helpful. The IMSA Kids Institute brochure, which I sent you last week, (non-essential clause) will be helpful.*

***That vs. Who** - Use *who* and *whom* in referring to persons and to animals with a name; use *that* and *which* in referring to inanimate objects.

- Example: The boy who ate the pie became sick. The pine tree that fell was removed from my front yard.

***Over** refers to spatial relationships.

- Example: *The plane flew over the IMSA campus.*

***More than** is used to explain quantity.

- Example: *More than 200 IMSA parents came to the game.*

*It's **toward**, not *towards*

*It's **try to**, not *try and*

- Example: Brenda Buschbacher will try to (not try and) implement the writing standards.

*It's **PROspective** not *perspective*.

- Example: There were 550 prospective students at Preview Day.

***I vs me**

Use I when this pronoun is the subject of the verb.

- Example: I wrote to Eileen Brown.

Use me when this pronoun is the direct or indirect object of the verb.

- Example: They invited Larry and me to the party. (**NOT**: Larry and I)

Use me when this pronoun is the object of a preposition

- Example: No one knows except you and me. (**NOT**: except you and I)
- Example: Between you and me, that decision is unfair. (**NOT**: between you and I)

COMMAS AND QUOTATIONS

*Use Commas when a day is referenced (July 16, 2003), Do Not use commas when a day is NOT referenced (July 2003).

*Commas and periods always go inside quotation marks.

- Example: She wrote the article, “Transforming Teaching and Learning.”

*Commas *should not* be used before the conjunction in a simple series.

- Example: *The IMSA alumni ate waffles, bacon and hash browns at the reunion breakfast.*

*Commas *should* be used before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction.

- Example: *The IMSA alumni ate waffles, bacon, and biscuits and gravy at the reunion breakfast.*

*Quotes within quotes –alternate between double quotations (“or”) and single quotations (‘or’)

- Example: Laurie said, “*I quote from Paul’s letter, ‘I agree with Kipling that “the female of the species is more deadly than the male,” but the phenomenon is not an unchangeable law of nature,’ a remark Paul did not explain.*”

Use three marks together if two quoted elements end at the same time: *She said, “He told me, ‘You should apply to IMSA.’”*

Brenda Buschbacher and Jane St. Pierre welcome any suggestions for additions to this Writing Tipsheet. Please forward them to

brenda@imsa.edu Or stpierre@imsa.edu.