

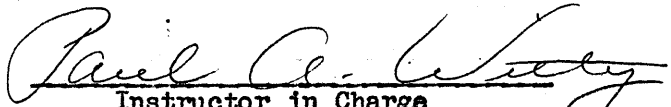
AN ANALYSIS OF FREQUENCY OF ERROR
IN GRAMMAR AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE
AMONG SELECTED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
PUPILS

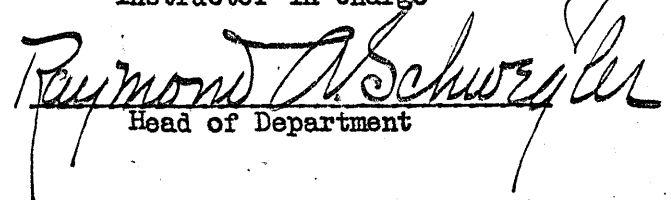
by

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and the Faculty of the Graduate School
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CHAPTER I

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

For several years the writer of this study, as a teacher of commercial English and Secretarial Practice, has been deeply interested in the kinds of errors in grammar and sentence structure which have been made by the members of her classes. The frequency with which certain errors such as "stringy and run-on sentences" and loose sentences containing many dangling modifiers have occurred has likewise been forced upon her attention. The frequency with which certain types of errors occur and recur has led to the question: Are these types of errors ones which are characteristic of high school pupils in general? These questions then arise. Cannot these errors be diagnosed? Will not this diagnosis eliminate the element of guessing and furnish specific objectives toward which to strive? Cannot remedial work be so planned and directed that teachers of English may concentrate upon the correction or elimination of errors which by scientific analysis have been found to be common? In other words, cannot grammar become, in fact, functional? Of equal interest have been recent educational trends such as the use of scientific methods in an attempt to discover essentials in effective teaching of English composition and grammar and the development of standardized

tests which are given for diagnostic and remedial purposes and for objective measurement of what has been taught. There has been an attempt to do these things. Standardized scales have been used and frequency of error as measured by them has been found. There is, however, a lack of reliability in results and a lack of utility of effort.

Although studies have been made in developing standardized tests there have been few made in analyzing frequency and types of errors in free writing.¹ The writer was unable to find any dealing with the work of junior high school children.

The present study was largely actuated by the desire of the writer to ascertain the status of junior high school pupils in the types and frequency of error in grammar and sentence structure.

1. By free writing is meant English compositions.

CHAPTER II

RELATED STUDIES

So far as the writer has been able to discover only two studies similar to the one proposed by her have been made. The Journal of Administration and Supervision for January, 1928 gave an announcement of a somewhat similar study, a language experiment, which was being carried on in the research department of the Winnetka, Illinois school system. The study has been discontinued for the present,¹ however, because of the inadequacy of the test employed.

Roberta LaBrant Green has recently completed a similar study which deals with types and frequency of error made in free writing by selected superior high school boys (I. Q. 110 - 137) of the Country Day High School, St. Louis, Missouri, and by certain students in the University of Kansas. The following is a brief summary of Mrs. Green's findings.

I

Predominating errors made by both groups, boys of the Country Day High School, St. Louis, Missouri, and certain students of the University of Kansas, in their free writing

1. Information was obtained through correspondence with Mabel Vogel Morphett, Director of Research, Winnetka Public Schools, Winnetka, Illinois.

were:

- (1) Faulty connectives.
- (2) Obscure reference of pronoun
- (3) Misplaced modifiers.

Divisions 1 and 2 comprise 34 to 44 per cent of errors made by superior students in grades 9 - 12, and from 32 to 40 per cent of those made by the university students.

II

There was no marked variation from year to year in the relative frequency of appearance of types of errors in the writing of college freshmen, college juniors and seniors, or the Country Day School group.

III

Percentage of unclassified errors for superior students (I. Q. 119 - 137) is markedly higher than for unselected University students. Unclassified errors for superior students (I. Q. 122 - 137) comprise from 11 to 22 per cent of all errors made, for university students from 4. 2 to 4. 8 per cent.

IV

Would or should plus the infinitive for simple past, occurred more frequently in the free writing of the university

students than in the free writing of the superior group.

V

Errors which occurred with least frequency in the writing of all three groups were:

- (1) Double negatives.
- (2) Use of adjective for adverb.
- (3) Wrong case of pronoun.
- (4) Omission of pronouns or prepositions.

VI

Unselected university freshmen and upperclassmen make practically the same number of errors in composition as do ninth grade students of I. Q. 110 - 122 and twice as many as do twelfth grade students of I. Q. 110 - 122, and 123 - 137, if those whose writing here studied may be considered typical.

VII

Upperclassmen in college write little better than do college freshmen if those whose writing is here considered are typical.

CHAPTER III

THE PROBLEM

The purposes of this study are:

- (1) To discover the frequency of error in grammar and sentence structure in the free composition work of junior high school pupils of Holton, Kansas, and of Lawrence, Kansas.
- (2) To analyze and classify these errors according to a list¹ assembled from a detailed analysis of minimum essentials stated in various standardized tests² in English composition.
- (3) To ascertain the frequency of errors made in the two tests, the Pressey-Conkling Diagnostic Tests, Form 3, and the Ginsberg and Inglis English Essentials Tests, Eighth Grade, Beta.
- (4) To compare frequency of error in free writing with frequency on tests to ascertain the correspondence between them.
- (5) To compare the results of this study with the results of Mrs. Green's study of superior high school boys of the Country Day School and certain students of the University of Kansas.

1. See Page 10.

2. Pressey-Conkling Diagnostic Tests, Form 3
Ginsberg and Inglis English Essentials Tests, Eighth Grade,
Beta

CHAPTER IV

METHOD OF SECURING DATA

The data for this study were secured during the second semester of school between February 23 and March 3, 1928, from grades seven, eight and nine of the Holton, Kansas Public Schools and from the same grades of the Lawrence, Kansas Public Schools.

Compositions which had been written as class projects in English were secured. In the Lawrence Junior High School, the pupils had been given a choice of the following subjects: How I should Like to Spend My Vacation, An Interesting Relative, and A Childhood Experience. In the Holton Junior High School, the subject was, How I spent My Vacation. The motivation of the composition was a discussion of the advisability of a year-round school term.

Records from standardized English tests were also obtained from both schools. In the Holton Schools, Form 3, Grades 7 - 12 of the Pressey-Conkling Diagnostic English Composition Tests - Grammar and Sentence Structure, had been given on February 23, 1928. In the Lawrence Schools, the Ginsberg and Inglis English Essentials Tests, Eighth Grade - Beta, had been given near the middle of January, 1928.

For the study compositions from all pupils who had taken one or the other of the two tests were used. The total number remaining after necessary eliminations because of any incomplete results from the tests was 348, of which 123 were seventh grade students, 132 were eighth grade, and 93 were ninth grade.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF BOYS AND GIRLS BY GRADES IN THE
 JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS OF HOLTON, KANSAS,
 LAWRENCE, KANSAS, AND OF THE TWO SCHOOLS
 COMBINED

Grades	Holton High School		Lawrence Junior High		Combined Junior High School
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Totals
Seventh	16	19	50	38	123
Eighth	22	19	37	54	132
Ninth	35	20	21	17	93
Totals	73	38	108	109	348

CHAPTER V

CLASSIFICATION OF ERROR

The following classification of error was used in this study. It was developed by Mrs. Green¹ from an analysis of the items included as minimum essentials in the Wisconsin Tests of Grammatical Correctness and the Pressey-Conkling Diagnostic Tests in English Composition, Grammar and Sentence Structure.

1. Faulty Connectives
2. Dependent Element Used Independently
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun
4. Misplaced Modifiers
5. Dangling Modifiers
6. Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject
7. Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent
8. Wrong case of Pronoun or Noun
9. Incorrect Tense Form
10. Incorrect Sequence of Tense
11. Would or Should Plus the Infinitive for the Simple Past
12. Use of Adjective for Adverb
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition
15. Double Negatives
16. Unclassified Errors

1. Mrs. Roberta Green: Master's Thesis, University of Kansas, 1928.

Errors made in the free writing of the 348 junior high school pupils of Holton and of Lawrence, Kansas were tabulated according to Table II. The total frequency of error for each grade was found. The number made by the boys and by the girls separately in each of the three grades was also determined. The percentages for each type of error were found and the rank for that type determined.

CHAPTER VI

PRESENTATION OF DATA

TABLE II

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES OF ERRORS MADE
IN COMPOSITIONS OF 123 SEVENTH GRADE PUPILS
OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Type of Errors	Frequency		Percentages
	Rank		
1. Faulty Connectives	2	173	23.5
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	8	29	3.9
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	1	178	24.2
4. Misplaced Modifiers	9	27	3.7
5. Dangling Modifiers	7	39	5.3
6. Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject	13	7	.9
7. Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	14	6	.8
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	15.5	2	.3
9. Incorrect Tense Form	4	50	6.8
10. Incorrect Sequence of Tense	5.5	45	6.1
11. Would - Should for Simple Past	10	22	3.0
12. Use Adjective for Adverb	12	10	1.3
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	3	81	11.0
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	5.5	45	6.1
15. Double Negatives	15.5	2	.3
16. Unclassified	11	20	2.7
Total	16	736	99.9

TABLE III

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES OF ERROR MADE
IN COMPOSITIONS OF 66 SEVENTH GRADE
GIRLS OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Type of Error	Rank	Frequency	Percentages
1. Faulty Connectives	2	89	22.6
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	8	11	2.8
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	1	104	26.4
4. Misplaced Modifiers	6	17	4.3
5. Dangling Modifiers	5	19	4.8
6. Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject	9	6	1.5
7. Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	11	4	1.0
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	12	2	.5
9. Incorrect Tense Form	4	27	6.9
10. Incorrect Sequence of Tense	4	27	6.9
11. Would - Should for Simple Past	10	5	1.3
12. Use Adjective for Adverb	11	4	1.0
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	3	35	8.8
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	4	27	6.9
15. Double Negatives	13	1	.3
16. Unclassified	7	16	4.1
Total	16	394	100.1

TABLE IV

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES OF ERRORS
MADE IN COMPOSITIONS OF 57 SEVENTH
GRADE BOYS OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE,
KANSAS

Type of Error	Rank	Frequency	Percentage
1. Faulty Connectives	1	84	24.6
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	7	18	5.2
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	2	74	21.6
4. Misplaced Modifiers	10	10	2.9
5. Dangling Modifiers	5	20	5.8
6. Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject	14.5	1	.3
7. Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	13	2	.6
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	16	0	0
9. Incorrect Tense Form	4	23	6.7
10. Incorrect Sequence of Tense	7	18	5.2
11. Would - Should for Simple Past	9	17	4.9
12. Use Adjective for Adverb	11	6	1.7
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	3	46	13.5
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	7	18	5.2
15. Double Negatives	14.5	1	.3
16. Unclassified	12	4	1.2
Total	16	342	99.7

TABLE V

RANKING OF THE SIXTEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF ERRORS
MADE BY SEVENTH GRADE PUPILS. SEPARATE RANKING
IS GIVEN FOR THE TOTAL GROUP AND FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Type of Errors	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Faulty Connectives	1	2	2
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	7	8	8
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	2	1	1
4. Misplaced Modifiers	10	6	9
5. Dangling Modifiers	5	5	7
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	14.5	9	13
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	13	11	14
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	16	12	15.5
9. Tense Form	4	4	4
10. Sequence of Tense	7	4	5.5
11. Would- Should for Simple Past	9	10	10
12. Adjective for Adverb	11	11	12
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	3	3	3
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	7	4	5.5
15. Double Negatives	14.5	13	15.5
16. Unclassified	12	7	11
Total	16	16	16

Table II shows that the total frequency of errors made by the 123 seventh grade pupils was 736. The largest frequency of error occurred in the item, obscure reference of pronouns. Of these there were 178, which is 24.2 per cent of the complete number of errors made by the entire grade. The most common fault resulted from a seeming carelessness in the use of the word it. Words, phrases, and clauses were referred to indiscriminately. The personal pronouns he and she caused most of the other errors in this group, (obscure reference of pronoun.)

Next in frequency, were errors classified under faulty connectives. These totaled 173, just five less than the number of errors in type 3, obscure reference of pronouns. This percentage is 23.5. The tendency to write stringy and run-on sentences which resulted in errors classified as faulty connectives was conspicuous. Two of the shorter seventh grade compositions were each composed entirely of a single long, involved sentence. Clause after clause with little or no thought connection and separated only by commas followed one another. Thus the composition consisted of a number of independent and dependent clauses incorrectly suffixed to each other into a one sentence whole.

The third most frequent type of error was in confusion of form from similarity of sound and meaning. Of these there were 81, or 11 per cent of the total number of errors. The most common

confusions were in the use of there and their; two, too and to; and lot with the meaning of many. On many of the papers these mistakes occurred again and again.

Mistakes in tense form totaled 50, which constituted 6.8 per cent of the entire number of errors.

Lack of agreement between pronoun and antecedent and lack of agreement between subject and predicate was infrequent. Of the former only 6 errors, amounting to .8 per cent, occurred. Of the latter only 7 errors, amounting to .9 per cent occurred. Errors due to double negatives and to incorrect case of pronoun were almost negligible. Only two mistakes of each type were made, giving each a frequency of .3 per cent.

In the division termed unclassified, the errors which were most frequent are illustrated by the following quotations:

We collected up our crowd. We met up with trouble. It looked like rain so we started home. I and my parents started out for the country early in the morning. These three kinds of errors, the superfluous use of the adverb in such expressions as collected up, like for as if, and the position of I in a compound subject, predominated in the group listed as unclassified.

Table III gives the frequency and percentage of error made by the 66 seventh grade girls of Holton and Lawrence. Table IV shows the frequency and percentage of error made by the 57 seventh grade boys of the two junior high schools. Of the 736 errors made,

394 of them were made by the girls, 5.98 error per girl; and 342 were made by the boys, 6 error per boy.

In Table V the ranking of the types of error made by the whole seventh grade, the girls of that grade, and the boys of the grade are given. Type 3, obscure reference of pronoun, ranked first for both the girls and the total group, but second for the boys. Type 1, faulty connections, which ranked first for the boys, was of second rank for the other groups. Item 13, confusion of form, ranked third and item 9, incorrect tense form, ranked fourth for all three groups. The boys made no errors of the eighth type, wrong case of pronoun and noun; the girls made two. The use of double negatives once (rank 13) for the girls and once (rank 12) for boys showed that this type of error occurred seldom. Two girls wrote compositions in which none of the tabulated errors occurred. The total number of words written by the girls, as shown in Table VIII which follows was 9145 and by the boys 6959. The average number of words written by the former was 138.57 and by the latter 122.08. This shows 16.49 more words used by the girls. The errors per hundred words written are about the same, 4.17 for the girls and 4.9 for the boys.

TABLE VI

TYPES OF ERRORS MEASURED BY THE PRESSEY-CONKLING
 ENGLISH COMPOSITION TEST, FORM 3, GRADE 7-12,
 GRAMMAR AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND THE GINSBERG
 AND INGLIS ENGLISH ESSENTIALS TEST, GRADE 8 - BETA.
 POSSIBLE FREQUENCY OF ERRORS FOR EACH TYPE AND
 WEIGHTED FREQUENCY.

Types of Error	Possible No. of Error	Amt. of Weighting	Weighted Errors
1. Faulty Connectives	12	.53	6.36
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	6	1.06	6.36
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	4	1.56	6.24
4. Misplaced Modifiers	4	1.56	6.24
5. Dangling Modifiers	5	1.27	6.35
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	8	.79	6.32
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	4	1.56	6.24
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	7	.91	6.37
9. Tense Form	17	.37	6.29
10. Sequence of Tense	-	-	-
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	-	-	-
12. Adjective for Adverb	3	2.12	6.36
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	9	.71	6.39
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	1	6.36	6.36
15. Double Negatives	3	2.12	6.36
16. Unclassified	6	1.06	6.36

Total

89

88.61

89 divided by 14 = 6.36 Index of Pos. for any certain type of error to occur.

TABLE VII

RANK, FREQUENCY, WEIGHTED FREQUENCY, AND PERCENTAGE
OF ERROR MADE IN TESTS OF 123 SEVENTH GRADE PUPILS
OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Types of Error	Rank	Frequency	Weighted Frequency	Percentage
1. Faulty Connectives	5	249	132	8.27
2. Dependent Element Used Independ- ently	3	134	142	8.69
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	6	83	129	8.08
4. Misplaced Modifiers	11	60	94	5.69
5. Dangling Modifiers	8	94	119	7.46
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	9	134	106	6.64
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Ante- cedent	4	88	137	8.58
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	1	207	188	11.78
9. Tense Form	7	324	120	7.51
10. Sequence of Tense	-	-	-	-
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	-	-	-	-
12. Adjective for Adverb	2	76	161	10.08
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	10	141	100	6.26
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposi- tion	13	11	70	4.32
15. Double Negatives	14	11	23	1.44
16. Unclassified	12	71	75	4.70
Total	14	1683	1596	99.90

TABLE VIII

RANKING OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ERROR MADE IN FREE WRITING AND ON TESTS. RANKING IN FREE WRITING BASED ON FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE. TEST RANKING IS BASED ON WEIGHTED FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE (SEE TABLES VI AND VII.)

Types of Error	Free Writing Rank	Test Rank
1. Faulty Connectives	2	5
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	8	3
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	1	6
4. Misplaced Modifiers	9	11
5. Dangling Modifiers	7	8
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	13	9
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	14	4
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	15.5	1
9. Tense Form	4	7
10. Sequence of Tense	5.5	-
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	10	-
12. Adjective for Adverb	12	2
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	3	10
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	5.5	13
15. Double Negatives	15.5	14
16. Unclassified	11	12
Total	16	14

Tables VI and VII show the combined results from the Pressey-Conkling Diagnostic English Composition Test - Grammar and Sentence Structure - Form 3, Grades 7 - 12, given to the Holton Junior High School pupils and the Ginsberg - Inglis English Essentials Test, Eighth Grade - Beta, given to the Lawrence Junior High School pupils. Test items were analyzed and each item, on a basis of possible occurrence, was tabulated according to the classification used in the analysis of error in free writing.¹ Column 2 (Possible Number of Error) in Table VI gives the results of the tabulation. In type 1, faulty connectives, twelve opportunities for response were offered. In type 2, dependent elements used independently, six opportunities were possible; for type 3, obscure reference of pronoun, four opportunities were possible, etc., for the different items in column 2 of table VI. Types 10 and 11 were not measured by the tests. The greatest opportunity for error occurred in type 9, incorrect tense form and the least possibility for error occurred in type 14, omission of pronoun or preposition. In the first case there were seventeen opportunities: in the second there was only one. In order to make the frequency of error on the tests comparable to those in free writing, a weighting of the types of error was made upon the basis of possibility of occurrence. The total possible errors in the 14 types found in the tests were 89. An index of possibility (6.36) for the occurrence of any certain type of error in the classi-

1. See Classification, Column 1, Tables VI and VII.

fication was found by dividing 14 into 89. Column 3, Table VI, gives the amount of weighting necessary for re-evaluation of the 14 types appearing in the tests. Column 4, Table VI, gives the weighted values for each type of error.

Table VII, Column 2, gives the actual occurrence of error on the tests of the seventh grade pupils. In item 1, faulty connectives, there was an actual frequency of 249 made on the twelve possibilities of error. On item 14, there was a frequency of eleven errors made on a basis of one possible error. Applying the weighting technique use in Table VI, weighted frequencies were obtained and the percentages of error for each type were found on this weighted frequency. These percentages were then comparable to those found in the free writing. For type 1, the actual frequency, 249 was multiplied by .35 (amount of weighting - column 3, Table VI.) The weighted frequency obtained was 132. The same process was used for each type in the classification and the actual frequency was converted into a weighted frequency.

The total weighted frequency of error for the seventh grade was 1596. Types 10 and 11 of Table VI and VII are not measured by these two tests. Of the other types, wrong case of pronoun ranked first in order of frequency of error; 11.78 per cent of the errors which occurred in the tests were of this type. Adjectives used for adverbs with a total of 161 errors or 10.03 per cent, came second in rank of frequency. In item 2, dependent elements

used independently, 142 errors were made. This is 8.89 per cent of the total frequency. Lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent and faulty connectives each furnished respectively 8.58 and 8.27 per cent of all errors measured by the test. Fewest errors made on the tests belong to items fifteen, fourteen and sixteen, double negatives (1.44 per cent), omission of pronoun or preposition (4.32 per cent) and unclassified errors (4.70 per cent). The percentage of error included in these items was 10.46. There was one perfect test score and two other test papers had just one error each. All three high scores were made by girls.

TABLE IX

NUMBER OF PUPILS, FREQUENCY OF ERROR IN FREE WRITING,
 TOTAL WORDS WRITTEN, ERRORS PER PUPIL, WORDS PER
 PUPIL AND ERROR PER HUNDRED WORDS WRITTEN BY THE
 SEVENTH GRADE PUPILS OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE,
 KANSAS

	Girls	Boys
Number of Pupils	66	57
Frequency of Errors	394	342
Total Number of Words in Composition	9145	6959
Errors Made per Pupil	5.98	6
Words Written per Pupil	138.57	122.08
Errors per Hundred Words Written	4.17	4.9

TABLE X

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS MADE IN
COMPOSITIONS OF 132 EIGHTH GRADE PUPILS OF
HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL

Errors	Rank	Frequency	Per Cent
1. Faulty Connectives	1	328	32.6
2. Dependent Elements Used Independently	5.5	65	6.4
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	2	148	14.7
4. Misplaced Modifiers	10	34	3.4
5. Dangling Modifiers	5.5	65	6.4
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	14.5	3	.3
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	14.5	3	.3
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	12	9	.9
9. Tense Form	8	46	4.6
10. Sequence of Tense	3	116	11.6
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	9	37	3.7
12. Adjectives for Adverbs	13	8	.8
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	4	72	7.1
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	7	46	4.6
15. Double Negatives	16	2	.2
16. Unclassified	11	25	2.5
Total	16	1005	100.1

TABLE XI

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS MADE IN COMPOSITION
OF 59 EIGHTH GRADE GIRLS OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Types of Error	Rank	Frequency	Per Cent
1. Faulty Connectives	1	124	29.8
2. Dependent Elements Used Independently	4	34	8.1
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	2	63	10.2
4. Misplaced Modifiers	10	13	3.1
5. Dangling Modifiers	5.5	30	7.2
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	16	0	0
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	14.5	2	.5
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	12	4	1.0
9. Tense Form	9	15	3.6
10. Sequence of Tense	3	44	10.5
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	7	25	6.0
12. Adjectives for Adverbs	12	4	1.0
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	5.5	30	10.2
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	8	21	5.0
15. Double Negatives	14.5	2	.5
16. Unclassified	12	8	2.0
Total	16	419	98.7

TABLE XII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS MADE IN COMPOSITION
OF 73 EIGHTH GRADE BOYS OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS
OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Types of Error	Rank	Frequency	Per Cent
1. Faulty Connectives	1	204	24.7
2. Dependent Elements Used Independently	6.5	31	5.3
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	2	85	14.5
4. Misplaced Modifiers	9	21	3.6
5. Dangling Modifiers	5	35	5.9
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	14	3	.5
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	15	1	.2
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	12	5	.9
9. Tense Form	6.5	31	5.2
10. Sequence of Tense	3	72	12.2
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	11	12	2.0
12. Adjectives for Adverbs	13	4	.7
13. Confusion of form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	4	42	7.1
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	8	25	4.3
15. Double Negatives	16	0	0
16. Unclassified	10	17	2.9
Total		588	100.0

TABLE XIII

RANKING OF THE SIXTEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF ERROR
MADE BY THE EIGHTH GRADE PUPILS. SEPARATE RANKING
IS GIVEN FOR THE TOTAL GROUP AND FOR BOYS AND
FOR GIRLS.

Types of Error	Total	Girls	Boys
1. Faulty Connectives	1	1	1
2. Dependent Elements Used Independently	5.5	4	6.5
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	2	2	2
4. Misplaced Modifiers	10	10	9
5. Dangling Modifiers	5.5	5.5	5
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	14.5	16	14
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	14.5	14.5	15
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	12	12.5	12
9. Tense Form	8	9	6.5
10. Sequence of Tense	3	3	3
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	9	7	11
12. Adjectives for Adverbs	13	12.5	13
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	4	5.5	4
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	7	8	8
15. Double Negatives	16	14.5	16
16. Unclassified	11	11	10
Total	16	16	16

Table X shows the frequency and percentages of error made in the compositions of the eighth grade pupils of the two junior high schools studies. The total number of errors made was 1005. Of these 328 or 32.6 per cent were made in the use of faulty connectives. The second greatest frequency of error fell in type 3, obscure reference of pronouns. There were 148 of these, amounting to 14.7 per cent of the total. In type 10, incorrect sequence of tense, 11.6 per cent of the errors fell. Fewest difficulties were offered by divisions 6, 7, and 15. These totaled respectively .3 per cent for lack of agreement of verb and subject, .3 per cent for lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent, and .2 per cent for double negatives.

In Tables XI and XII, the respective frequency and percentage of error are given for the 59 eighth grade girls of the two junior high schools and of the 73 eighth grade boys. Of the 1005 errors occurring, 419 were made by the girls, 7.1 error per girl, and 586 by the boys, 8.05 per boy.

Table XIII gives the number of mistakes made by eighth grade pupils of both junior high schools according to rank. Faulty connectives were the greatest source of difficulty and ranked first. Obscure reference of pronoun was second in rank. Incorrect sequence of tense was third. For the boys, confusion of form from similarity of sound or meaning was fourth and for the girls, dependent elements used independently.

Dangling modifiers ranked fifth for the boys, and ranked five and a half for the girls. Omission of pronoun and preposition was eighth in rank for both. Double negatives caused no errors for the boys and just two for the girls, while agreement of verb and subject caused none for the girls and three for the boys. There were no eighth grade compositions entirely free from the mistakes considered. The total number of words written was 24,479. Of these 14,462 were used by the 59 girls and 14,017 by the 73 boys. This gives an average of 177.32 words per girl and 192 per boy with four errors per hundred words for the latter. The boys each used 14.68 more words than the girls with practically the same number of mistakes.

TABLE XIV

RANKING, FREQUENCY, AND PERCENTAGE OF ERROR
MADE ON THE TESTS OF 132 EIGHTH GRADE PUPILS
OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS OF HOLTON AND
OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Types of Error	Rank	Weighted	
		Frequency	Percentage
1. Faulty Connectives	7.5	112	7.24
2. Dependent Elements Used Independently	11	98	6.33
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	5	136	8.79
4. Misplaced Modifiers	9	109	7.04
5. Dangling Modifiers	4	140	9.05
6. Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject	6	126	8.14
7. Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	2	157	10.14
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	3	155	10.01
9. Incorrect Tense Form	10	105	6.78
10. Incorrect Sequence of Tense		-	-
11. Would-Should for Simple Past		-	-
12. Use of Adjective for Adverb	1	174	11.24
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound or Meaning	7.5	112	7.25
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	13	38	2.45
15. Double Negatives	14	17	1.10
16. Unclassified Errors	12	68	4.39
Totals	14	1547	99.95

TABLE XV

TYPES OF ERROR OF GREATEST FREQUENCY: THE TYPES RANKING FROM 1 TO 4 ARE GIVEN FOR THE SEVENTH GRADE IN FREE WRITING AND ON TESTS AND FOR THE EIGHTH GRADE IN FREE WRITING AND ON TESTS.

High Frequency Rank	Seventh Grade		Eighth Grade	
	Free Writing	Test	Free Writing	Test
1	3	8	1	12
2	1	12	3	7
3	13	2	10	8
4	9	7	13	5

TABLE XVI

TYPES OF ERROR OF LEAST FREQUENCY : THE THREE LOWEST RANKS ARE GIVEN FOR SEVENTH GRADE IN FREE WRITING AND TESTS AND FOR THE EIGHTH GRADE IN FREE WRITING AND TESTS.

Low Frequency Rank	Seventh Grade		Eighth Grade	
	Free Writing	Test	Free Writing	Test
Lowest	15	15	15	15
Second Lowest	8	14	6	14
Third Lowest	7	16	7	12

<u>Number</u>	<u>Types of Error</u>
1.	Faulty Connectives
2.	Dependent Elements Used Independently
3.	Obscure Reference of Pronouns
4.	Dangling Modifiers
6.	Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject
7.	Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent
8.	Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun
9.	Incorrect Tense Form
10.	Incorrect Sequence of Tense

<u>Number</u>	<u>Types of Error</u>
12.	Use of Adjective for Adverb
13.	Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound or Meaning
14.	Omission of Pronoun or Preposition
15.	Double Negatives
16.	Unclassified Errors

In Table XIV, the analysis of test results for the eighth grade is given. The total weighted frequency of error was 1547. The greatest number of errors, 174, was made in type 12, adjectives used for adverbs. This amounted to 11.24 per cent of the total frequency made by the 132 eighth grade pupils on the tests. Next in order of rank were: type 7, lack of agreement between pronoun and antecedent, 157 errors, 10.14 per cent; type 8, wrong case of pronoun or noun, 155 errors, 10.01 per cent; type 5, dangling modifiers, 140 errors, 9.05 per cent. The fewest mistakes were made in item 15, double negatives and in type 14, the omission of pronouns or prepositions. These two types of error occurred only 55 times. The percentage for type 15, double negatives was 1.10 and for type 14, omission of pronoun or preposition was 2.45. One girl and three boys had perfect test scores and one girl and three boys made one error each on their tests.

TABLE XVII

NUMBER OF PUPILS, FREQUENCY OF ERROR IN FREE
 WRITING , TOTAL WORDS WRITTEN, ERROR PER PUPIL,
 WORDS PER PUPIL AND ERROR PER HUNDRED WORDS
 WRITTEN BY THE EIGHTH GRADE PUPILS OF HILTON,
 AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

	Girls	Boys
Number of Pupils	59	73
Frequency of Errors	419	588
Total Words in Composition	10462	14017
Errors Per Pupil	7.1	8.5
Words Written per Pupil	177.32	192
Errors per Hundred Words Written	4	4.19

TABLE XVIII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERROR MADE IN
COMPOSITIONS OF 93 NINTH GRADE PUPILS

Types of Error	Frequency		Per Cent
1. Faulty Connectives	1	114	29.2
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	4	27	7.0
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	3	48	12.3
4. Misplaced Modifier	9	16	4.1
5. Dangling Modifier	6	23	5.9
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	11	9	2.3
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	12	7	1.8
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	16	2	.5
9. Tense Form	5	26	6.7
10. Sequence of Tense	8	17	4.3
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	10	10	2.6
12. Adjective for Adverb	13.5	4	1.0
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	2	60	15.4
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	7	20	5.1
15. Double Negatives	15	3	.8
16. Unclassified	13.5	4	1.0
Total	390		100.0

TABLE XIX
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERROR MADE
IN COMPOSITIONS OF 56 NINTH GRADE GIRLS

Types of Error	Frequency		Per Cent
1. Faulty Connectives	1	84	31.7
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	5	17	6.4
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	3	31	11.6
4. Misplaced Modifier	7.5	12	4.5
5. Dangling Modifier	4	18	6.8
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	12.5	2	.8
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	10	6	2.2
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	14.5	1	.4
9. Tense Form	7.5	12	4.5
10. Sequence of Tense	6.5	13	4.9
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	9	8	3.0
12. Adjective for Adverb	12.5	2	.8
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	2	42	15.8
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	6.5	13	4.9
15. Double Negatives	14.5	1	.4
16. Unclassified	7.1	3	1.1
Total	16	265	99.8

TABLE XX
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERROR MADE
 IN COMPOSITIONS OF 37 NINTH GRADE BOYS

Types of Error	Frequency		Per Cent
1. Faulty Connectives	1	30	24.0
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	5	10	8.0
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	3	17	13.6
4. Misplaced Modifier	9.5	4	3.2
5. Dangling Modifier	8	5	4.0
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	6.5	7	5.6
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	15	1	.8
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	15	1	.8
9. Tense Form	4	14	11.2
10. Sequence of Tense	9.5	4	3.2
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	12	2	1.6
12. Adjective for Adverb	12	2	1.6
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	2	18	14.4
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	6.5	7	5.6
15. Double Negatives	12	2	1.6
16. Unclassified	15	1	.8
Total	16	125	100.0

TABLE XXI

THE RANKING OF THE SIXTEEN DIFFERENT TYPES
OF ERROR MADE IN FREE WRITING BY SEVENTH
GRADE PUPILS. SEPARATE RANKING IS GIVEN
FOR THE TOTAL GROUP AND FOR BOYS AND FOR
GIRLS.

Types of Error	Both	Girls	Boys
1. Faulty Connectives	1	1	1
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	4	5	5
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	3	3	3
4. Misplaced Modifier	9	7.5	9.5
5. Dangling Modifier	6	4	8
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	11	12.5	6.5
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	12	10	15
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	16	14.5	15
9. Tense Form	5	7.5	4
10. Sequence of Tense	8	6.5	9.5
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	10	9	12
12. Adjective for Adverb	13.5	12.5	12
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	2	2	2
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	7	6.5	6.5
15. Double Negatives	13	12.5	12
16. Unclassified	13.5	11	15
Total	16	16	16

Table XVI gives the frequency and percentage of error made in the compositions of the 93 ninth grade pupils. Of the total, which amounted to 390, type 1, faulty connectives caused 114 errors. This number was 29.2 per cent of all errors made. Type 12, confusion of form from similarity of sound or meaning was responsible for 60 errors, or 15.4 per cent. Next highest in frequency was obscure reference of pronoun. The number of errors was 48 and the per cent was 12.3. Fewest errors occurred in type 8, wrong case of pronouns or nouns. There were only two of these. Item 15, double negatives came next with only three errors. The adjective for adverb group and the unclassified group tied with a total of four errors each or only one per cent.

Table XVII gives the data for the 56 ninth grade girls and Table XVIII gives them for the 37 ninth grade boys. The girls made 265 mistakes and the boys made 125. Item 1, faulty connectives ranked first in frequency of occurrence. Second in rank was item 13, confusion of form from similarity of form and meaning, and third in rank was item 3, obscure reference of pronoun. Dangling modifiers, item 5, which ranked fourth for the girls was of eighth rank for the boys; and item 10, incorrect sequence of tense which ranked four for the boys was of rank seven and one-half for the girls. Item 2, dependent element used independently was of fifth rank for each. The types occurring least often in the free writing of the girls

were items 6 and 12, lack of agreement of verb and subject and adjectives used for adverbs, twice each, and items 8 and 15, wrong case of pronoun or noun and double negatives, once each. In the boys' compositions, the double negatives appeared twice. Two times an adjective was used for an adverb and twice the type 11, would-should plus the infinitive took the place of the simple past. Only one case of the unclassified group appeared. This was the like for as if error. Only once each did items 8 and 7, wrong case of pronoun and lack of agreement of pronoun with the antecedent occur. One ninth grade girl and one boy each had no errors in compositions and four girls and two boys had just one error each.

The total number of words written by the 93 members of the class was divided as follows: 9,581 by the 56 girls and 5, 141 by the 37 boys. The girls averaged 171 words and 4.7 errors per pupil. The boys made 3.4 error per boy and wrote 139 words each. The girls though averaging 32 more words each made only .3 more error per hundred words.

TABLE XXII

AVERAGE NUMBER OF ERRORS PER PUPIL AND AVERAGE NUMBER
OF WORDS IN COMPOSITION PER PUPIL AND NUMBER OF ERRORS
PER HUNDRED WORDS WRITTEN - NINTH GRADE

	Girls	Boys
Number of Pupils	56	37
Frequency of Errors	265	125
Total Number of Words in Composition	9581	5141
Average Number of Errors Per Pupil	4.7	3.4
Average Number of Words in Composition Per Pupil	171	139
Number of Errors per Hundred Words Written	2.75	2.45

TABLE XXIII

RANK AND PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS MADE IN FREE WRITING
 BY THIRTY NINTH GRADE BOYS OF I. Q. 110-137 IN ST. LOUIS
 COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL AND NINETY THREE UNSELECTED NINTH GRADE
 PUPILS OF HOLTON AND LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Type of Error	Superior 9th		Unselected	
	Rank	Rank	Per Cent	Per Cent
1. Faulty Connectives	1	1	32.41	29.2
2. Dependent Elements Used for Independent	10.5	4	2.75	7.0
3. Obscure reference of pronouns	2	3	12.41	12.3
4. Misplaced Modifier	6	9	6.87	4.1
5. Dangling Modifier	5	6	8.27	5.9
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	10.5	11	2.75	2.3
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	8.5	12	3.44	1.8
8. Wrong Case Pronoun	14	16	0	.5
9. Tense Form	8.5	5	3.44	6.7
10. Sequence of Tense	7	8	5.51	4.3
11. Would-Should Used for Simple Past	12.5	10	1.37	2.6
12. Adjective for Adverb	14	13.5	0	1.0
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound or Meaning	3	2	10.34	15.4
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	12.5	7	1.37	5.1
15. Double Negative	14	15	0	.8
16. Unclassified	4	13.5	8.96	1.0
Totals	16	16	99.71	100.0

Table XXI gives the rank and the percentage of error made in the free writing of thirty superior ninth grade boys (I. Q. 110 - 137) at St. Louis, Missouri, Country Day School¹ and 93 unselected pupils in the ninth grade at Holton and at Lawrence, Kansas. For both the superior boys and the unselected group, item 1, faulty connectives ranked first. The percentage for the first group was 32.4 and for the second, 29.2. Items 3 and 13, obscure reference of pronouns and confusion of form from similarity of sound or meaning were of second and third ranks for the two groups. The former ranked second for the superior group and third for the unselected group and the latter third for the superior group and second for the unselected. Fourth in rank for the superior boys was the type of error termed unclassified. For the unselected group, this type of error ranked 13.5. Of all errors made by the first group, superior boys, 8.96 per cent fell in this class, while only one per cent of errors made by the second group were of this type. In the compositions of the unselected group, the use of dependent elements for independent comprised seven per cent of all errors (with a rank of 4) while only 2.75 per cent of the errors (with a rank of 10.5) made by the superior boys belonged in this classification. Three types of error did not occur in the free writing of the superior group. These were items 8, 12, 15, (Table XX), wrong case of pronoun or noun, the use of adjectives for adverbs, and

1. See page 6.

double negatives. In the free writing of the unselected group there was a very negligible occurrence of these types; only the use of adjectives for adverbs equaled as much as one per cent.

It would seem that if these results may be considered typical for the two groups of ninth grade pupils, superior boys make fewer kinds of errors than do unselected ninth grade pupils but that the frequency of the error made is about the same for both. Faulty connectives, obscure reference of pronoun and confusion of form from similarity of sound and meaning which were high in frequency and ranked relatively the same for the two groups are types of error which are prevalent in the free writing of ninth grade children, superior and unselected. Stringy and run-on sentences and comma-splice characterize the free writing of both superior and unselected ninth grade children. Most of the faulty connectives seem to be due to a lack of sentence feeling or a recognition of clause unity. Loose, stringy sentences seem to result largely from careless mental habits. It would seem, therefore, that ninth grade pupils need encouragement and direction in the use of effective short simple sentences. Practice in the use of concise, forceful simple sentences might help in developing a feeling of clause unity and in overcoming a tendency toward loose thinking and writing. Type 13, confusion of form from a similarity of sound and meaning, which covers the use of

such words as sit and set, lie and lay, lay and laid, their and there, and the three words, to, two and too is another difficulty common to ninth grade pupils in free writing.

Again, if the results from the study of these superior boys and these unselected ninth grade children may be considered typical of such groups, the use of double negatives is not characteristic of the free writing of ninth grade children. Nor do ninth grade pupils to any extent use the adjective for the adverb. This type of error did not occur at all in the free writing of the superior group and was evident but to a slight degree in the compositions of the unselected group. The misuse of sure for surely was the only error of the kind which was common enough to be noticeable. The infrequency of error in the misuse of adjective for adverb might be explained in any one of several ways. First, ninth grade children may confine themselves in free writing to the use of only those adverbs whose correct form is familiar to them. Second, their free writing may be of such a nature that the need for any extensive use of adjectives and adverbs does not arise. Third, ninth grade children may not confuse the adverb form with that of the adjective. The third type of error which occurred infrequently in the free writing of ninth grade pupils, superior and unselected, is the wrong case of pronoun or noun. Difficulties with expressions such as "It is me," "He gave it to she and I" are not common in the free writing of ninth grade pupils, seemingly because there is no opportunity for such expressions in composition work.

TABLE XXIV

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS MADE ON
STANDARDIZED TESTS BY 93 NINTH GRADE PUPILS
OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Types of Error	Rank	Weighted Frequency	Per- centage
1. Faulty Connectives	11	68	4.57
2. Dependent Elements Used for Independent	9	80	5.37
3. Obscure Reference of Pronouns	8	108	7.25
4. Misplaced Modifier	6	119	7.99
5. Dangling Modifier	5	122	8.19
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	4	133	8.93
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	2	184	12.36
8. Wrong Case Pronoun	3	154	10.34
9. Tense Form	13	61	4.09
10. Sequence of Tense	-	-	-
11. Would-Should Used for Simple Past	-	-	-
12. Adjective for Adverb	1	204	13.71
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound or Meaning	7	111	7.45
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	10	76	5.10
15. Double Negative	14	2	.13
16. Unclassified	12	66	4.43
Total	14	1488	99.91

Table XXII shows that the ninety three ninth grade pupils made 1488 errors in the standardized tests. Of this total, 204, or 13.71 per cent, were made in type 12, the use of adjectives for adverbs. Second in rank of frequency came type 7, lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent. The percentage of error amounted to 12.36. Next came item 8, wrong case of pronoun or noun with a percentage of error of 10.34. The use of double negatives, item 14, caused only .13 per cent of the errors. Incorrect tense form, item 9, was low in frequency of occurrence, 4.09 per cent and item 16, unclassified was but little higher, 4.43 per cent. The total percentage of error for these three types was only 8.65. Five girls and five boys of this grade wrote perfect test papers, and one boy and one girl made only one error.

TABLE XXV

TYPES OF ERROR OF GREATEST FREQUENCY : TYPES RANKING
FROM 1 TO 4 ARE GIVEN IN FREE WRITING AND ON TESTS FOR
THE SEVENTH, EIGHTH AND NINTH GRADE OF THE JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

High Frequency Rank	Seventh Grade		Eighth Grade		Ninth Grade	
	Free Writing	Test	Free Writing	Test	Free Writing	Test
1	3	8	1	12	1	12
2	1	12	3	7	13	7
3	13	2	10	8	3	8
4	9	7	13	5	2	6

TABLE XXVI

TYPES OF ERROR OF LEAST FREQUENCY : THE THREE LOWEST RANKS
ARE GIVEN IN FREE WRITING AND IN TESTS FOR THE SEVENTH,
EIGHTH AND NINTH GRADES OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS OF HOLTON,
AND OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Low Frequency Rank	Seventh Grade		Eighth Grade		Ninth Grade	
	Free Writing	Test	Free Writing	Test	Free Writing	Test
Lowest	15	15	15	15	8	15
Second Lowest	8	14	6	14	15	9
Third Lowest	7	16	7	12	12, 16	16

NumberTypes of Error

- 1 Faulty Connectives
- 2 Dependent Element Used Independently
- 3 Obscure Reference of Pronoun

<u>Number</u>	<u>Types of Error</u>
4.	Misplaced Modifier
5.	Dangling Modifier
6.	Agreement of Verb and Subject
7.	Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent
8.	Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun
9.	Incorrect Tense Form
10.	Wrong Sequence of Tense
11.	Would-Should for Simple Past
12.	Adjective for Adverb
13.	Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning
14.	Omission of Pronoun or Preposition
15.	Double Negative
16.	Unclassified Errors

TABLE XXVII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF ERROR MADE IN COMPOSITIONS
OF 348 JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS OF HOLTON AND OF
LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Type of Error	Rank	Frequency	Percentage
1. Faulty Connectives	1	615	28.83
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	8	121	5.67
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	2	374	17.58
4. Misplaced Modifier	10	77	3.61
5. Dangling Modifier	6	127	5.95
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	14	19	.89
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	15	16	.75
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun or Noun	5	13	.61
9. Incorrect Tense Form	7	122	5.72
10. Wrong Sequence of Tense	4	178	8.34
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	11	69	3.23
12. Adjective for Adverb	13	22	1.03
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	3	213	9.98
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	9	111	5.20
15. Double Negative	16	7	.32
16. Unclassified Errors	12	49	2.25
Total	16	2133	99.96

TABLE XXVIII

RANK AND PERCENTAGE OF ERRORS MADE IN COMPOSITIONS
OF 348 JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS

Type of Error	Rank			Percentage		
	7th	8th	9th	7th	8th	9th
1. Faulty Connectives	2	1	1	23.5	32.6	29.2
2. Dependent Elements for Independent	8	5.5	4	3.9	6.4	7.0
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	1	2	3	24.2	14.7	12.3
4. Misplaced Modifiers	9	10	9	3.7	3.4	4.1
5. Dangling Modifiers	7	5.5	6	5.3	6.4	5.9
6. Agreement of Verb and Subject	13	13.5	11	.9	.3	2.3
7. Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	14	13.5	12	.8	.3	1.8
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun and Noun	15.5	11	16	.3	.9	.5
9. Tense Form	4	7.5	5	6.8	4.6	6.7
10. Sequence of Tense	5.5	3	8	6.1	11.6	4.3
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	10	9	10	3.0	3.7	2.6
12. Adjective for Adverb	12	12	13.5	1.3	.8	1.0
13. Confusion of Form from Similarity of Sound and Meaning	3	4	2	11.0	7.1	15.4
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	5.5	7.5	7	6.1	4.6	5.1
15. Double Negatives	15.5	15	15	.3	.2	.8
16. Unclassified	11	10	13.5	2.7	2.5	1.0
Total	16	16	16	99.9	100.1	100.0

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

I

The types of errors which predominated in the free writing of the junior high school pupils of Holton and of Lawrence, Kansas were:

- (1) Faulty connectives.
- (2) Obscure reference of pronoun.
- (3) Confusion of form from similarity of sound and meaning.

In these classes, fell 56.39 per cent of all errors made by the entire junior high school group.

Of all errors made by the seventh grade 58.7 per cent belonged to these three groups. Of those made by the eighth grade 54.4 per cent occurred in the types of errors. Of those made by the ninth grade, 56.9 per cent belonged to these groups.

The percentage of these predominating errors made by the ninth grade was just about equal to the average for the three grades. That made by the eighth was slightly below and that by the seventh was slightly above.

1. This may be explained by the fact that in the particular schools studied there was in the ninth grade a high percentage of children who had not progressed through the two lower grades in the same school but who had come in from rural schools. Another factor that might have entered into the results is the type of composition used. All of the seventh grade compositions were written upon actual happenings or events in the lives of the individuals; many of the eighth and ninth grade papers were fictitious and had a facetious tone.

It would seem from the increase made by the ninth grade pupils over the seventh and eighth grades in the percentages of the three predominating types of error that instead of improving they grow more careless.

II

The types of errors which occurred least frequently in the free writing of the junior high school pupils of the two systems studied were:

- (1) Double negatives.
- (2) Wrong case of pronoun.
- (3) Lack of agreement of pronoun with antecedent.

Only 1.7 per cent of all errors made by the junior high school group fell in these three classes.

Of the total errors made by the seventh grade, only 1.4 per cent belonged to these three groups; of those made by the eighth grade, only 1.4 per cent were of these groups; and of those made by the ninth grade, only 3.1 per cent belonged to these groups. Both seventh and eighth grades fell below the average percentage of the entire junior high school but the ninth almost doubled the average number.

The error which brought up the average for the ninth grade was lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent.

1. The high percentage in the ninth grade may have been due to carelessness in writing rather than to a lack of knowledge.

III

The percentage of unclassified errors was relatively small for each grade separately and for the three grades¹ combined.

IV

There was no great variation in rank in frequency for the different types of error through the three years. The relative frequency remained rather consistent. The smaller the frequency the most consistent the ranking through the three years.

1. This seems to indicate that these junior high school pupils either do not use in their free writing the specific types of expression which cause the errors included in this classification or that they have little difficulty in the correct use. The errors which were included in the unclassified division were:
 - (1) The superfluous use of the adverb in such expressions as "collected up."
 - (2) Like for as if.
 - (3) The position of I in a compound subject.

TABLE XXIX

RANKING IN FREQUENCY FOR THE PREDOMINATING ERRORS
MADE IN THE FREE WRITING BY 348 SEVENTH, EIGHTH,
AND NINTH GRADE PUPILS OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE,
KANSAS

Rank in Frequency	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
First	Obscure Reference of pronoun	Faulty con- nections	Faulty con- nections
Second	Faulty connec- tions	Obscure Reference of pronoun	Confusion of form
Third	Confusion of form	Lack of sequence of tense	Obscure reference of pronoun
Fourth	Incorrect tense form	Confusion of form	Dependent elements used Indepen- dently

Obscure reference of pronoun, the highest ranking error in the seventh grade dropped to second place in the eighth and to third in the ninth.

Faulty connectives, the second ranking error in the seventh grade rose in the eighth grade to first rank and maintained the first rank in the ninth.

Confusion of form from similarity of sound and meaning, the third ranking error in the seventh grade dropped to fourth in the eighth grade and rose to second in the ninth.

V

The frequency of error per hundred words written in the ninth grade was 1.8 errors, in the eighth was 6.94, and in the seventh was 4.57. This seems to indicate that if the grades studied are representative, the frequency of error per hundred words written tends to increase slightly in the eighth grade and to decrease in the ninth.

VI

Two types of error which predominated in the free writing of unselected junior high school pupils of Holton, Kansas and of Lawrence, Kansas, also predominated in the free writing of certain selected

superior boys (110 - 137 I. Q.) of the Country Day High School, St. Louis, Missouri, and unselected freshmen and upper-classmen of the University of Kansas. The types of error were (1) faulty connectives, (2) obscure reference of pronoun. Between 34 and 44 per cent of the errors made by the superior high school boys were included in these types. Between 32 and 44 per cent of those made by university students were included in these types and between 41 and 48 per cent of those made by the unselected junior high school pupils of Lawrence, Kansas and of Holton, Kansas. The same kinds of error occurred but the percentages for the high school group were greater. Misplaced modifiers which ranked three in frequency in the compositions of the first two groups ranked ten in the third group compositions.

VII

The type of error which occurred with least frequency in the free writing of the superior boys (110 - 137 I. Q.), the university students, and the junior high school pupils was double negatives. Wrong case of pronoun also occurred a small number of times in the compositions of all the groups. The use of the adjective for adverb and the omission of pronouns or prepositions caused small percentages of error for all three groups.

VIII

The percentage of unclassified errors for superior boys is markedly higher than for either of the two unselected groups, university students, or junior high school pupils. Unclassified errors for superior students comprise from 11 to 22 per cent of all errors made, for university students from 4.2 to 4.8 per cent, and for junior high school pupils from 2.7 to 2.5 per cent.

IX

In frequency of error on the tests, seventh and eighth grades were similar. Upon six out of the fourteen points measured, the ranking was the same and on the remaining eight, the types either differed for the two grades by a half point or simply changed places in rank. The ninth grade results varied by as much as two or three points in rank.

TABLE XXX

THE POSSIBLE NUMBER OF MISTAKES FOR EACH TYPE
OF ERROR, THE FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE AND
WEIGHTED FREQUENCY IN STANDARDIZED TESTS OF
348 JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS OF HOLTON AND
OF LAWRENCE, KANSAS

Types of Error	No. of Possible Error	Frequency	Weighted Fre- quency
1. Faulty Connectives	12	588	312
2. Dependent Element Used Independently	6	302	302
3. Obscure reference of Pronoun	4	239	373
4. Misplaced Modifiers	4	206	322
5. Dangling Modifiers	5	300	381
6. Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject	8	462	365
7. Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	4	307	499
8. Wrong Case Pronoun or Noun	7	546	497
9. Incorrect Tense Form	17	773	286
10. Lack of Sequence of Tense	-	-	-
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	-	-	-
12. Adjective for Adverb	3	254	538
13. Confusion of Form	9	456	324
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	1	29	184
15. Double Negatives	3	20	42
16. Unclassified	6	197	209
Total	89	4679	4614

TABLE XXXI

PERCENTAGE OF EACH TYPE OF ERROR MADE BY 348 JUNIOR
HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS OF LAWRENCE AND OF HOLTON, KANSAS
ON FREE WRITING AND IN STANDARDIZED TESTS

Types of Error	Test Rank	Free Writing Rank	Test Percentage	Free Writing Percentage
1. Faulty Connectives	9	1	6.76	28.83
2. Dependent Element Used for Independent	10	8	6.54	5.67
3. Obscure Reference of Pronoun	5	2	8.08	17.58
4. Misplaced Modifier	8	10	6.97	3.61
5. Dangling Modifier	4	6	8.25	5.95
6. Lack of Agreement of Verb and Subject	6	14	7.91	.89
7. Lack of Agreement of Pronoun and Antecedent	3	15	10.38	.75
8. Wrong Case of Pronoun	2	5	10.77	.61
9. Incorrect Tense Form	11	7	6.19	5.72
10. Lack of Sequence of Tense	-	4	-	8.34
11. Would-Should for Simple Past	-	11	-	3.23
12. Adjective for Adverb	1	13	11.66	1.03
13. Confusion of Form	7	3	7.02	9.98
14. Omission of Pronoun or Preposition	13	9	3.98	5.20
15. Double Negatives	14	16	.91	.32
16. Unclassified	12	12	4.26	2.25
Totals	14	16	99.68	99.96

X

The predominating types in frequency of error on the tests were not identical with those predominating in free writing. On the tests, the types most frequent in occurrence were: (Table XXVII)

- (1) Adjectives for adverbs - 11.66 per cent
- (2) Wrong case of pronoun or noun - 10.77 per cent
- (3) Lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent - 10.38 per cent
- (4) Dangling modifiers - 8.25 per cent

Of the total frequency of errors made on the tests by the junior high school group, 41.06 per cent was included in these four types.

The following are the percentages which occurred in the free writing for the four types which predominated on the tests: (Table XXVII)

- (1) Adjectives for adverbs - 1.03 per cent
- (2) Wrong case of pronoun or noun - .61 per cent
- (3) Lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent - .75 per cent
- (4) Dangling modifiers - 5.95 per cent

Of the total frequency of error made in the free writing of the junior high school group only 8.34 per cent was in these four types.

XI

The types of error occurring with least frequency on the tests were:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| (1) Double negatives | .91 per cent |
| (2) Omission of pronoun or preposition | 3.98 per cent |
| (3) Unclassified errors | 4.25 per cent |
| (4) Incorrect tense form | 6.19 per cent |

The total percentages of these four types of error amounted to 15.34.

The following are the percentages which occurred in the free writing for the four types of error occurring with least frequency on the tests: (Table XXVII)

(1)	Double negatives	.32 per cent
(2)	Omission of pronoun or preposition	5.20 per cent
(3)	Unclassified errors	2.25 per cent
(4)	Incorrect tense	5.72 per cent

The total percentages of these four types of error amounted to 13.49.

The results on the tests indicate as do those in the free writing that the use of double negatives is not of frequent occurrence with junior high school children. Lack of agreement of pronoun and antecedent ranked much higher in the tests than in free writing which might indicate that junior high school children cannot easily detect the lack of agreement between pronoun and antecedent in the tests but that in free writing this error does not naturally occur. Wrong case of pronoun ranked higher in frequency on the tests than it did in the compositions but was not very significant.

XII

The same lack of marked variation in relative frequency for the different types of error was as evident on the tests as it was in the free writing of the junior high school groups of Holton and of Lawrence, Kansas.

XIII

The results of this study show that the correlation between the frequency with which certain types of error occur in free writing of Holton, and of Lawrence, Kansas Junior high school pupils and the accuracy with which the same types of error are recognized on standardized tests - Pressey-Conkling Diagnostic Tests in English Composition, Grammar and Sentence Structure and The Ginsberg and Inglis English Essentials Test - is very slight.

TABLE XXXII

NUMBER OF PUPILS, FREQUENCY OF ERROR IN FREE WRITING,
 TOTAL NUMBER OF WORDS WRITTEN, ERROR PER PUPIL, WORDS
 PER PUPIL AND ERROR PER HUNDRED WORDS WRITTEN BY THE
 JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS OF HOLTON AND OF LAWRENCE,
 KANSAS

	9th	8th	7th
Pupils	93	132	123
Errors (Composition)	265	1005	736
Words	14722	14479	16104
Errors (Test)	1393	1603	1683
Average Error (Composition)	2.85	7.61	5.98
Average Words	158.28	109.69	130.92
Error per Hundred Words	1.80	6.94	4.57
Average Error (Test)	13.90	12.14	13.68

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APPENDIX

Samples of Standard Tests Used.

Pupil's Score.....

ENGLISH ESSENTIALS TEST

Eighth Grade—Beta

Name

School..... Grade.....

Home..... State.....

Age..... Date.....

PART I. SPELLING, 25 POINTS

In the following spaces, write the sentences which your teacher will dictate:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

RT II. PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION, 25 POINTS

READ THIS: Write the necessary capital letters and punctuation marks in sentences, but make no change in wording.

I wouldnt put all those pins needles buttons, and hooks in one box.

Did they arrive in Minneapolis Minnesota, on December 17 1927
Harrys father liked to sing *my old kentucky home*.

Mrs Andrews counted the womens votes.

I have read Sewells story called *black beauty*.

Mr higgins spoke in soft clear tones.

The american indignantly shouted leave that flag alone!

I m going to visit some old spanish castles.

Thomas quickly said let me go too.

Do you like these german toys

PART III. SENTENCE RECOGNITION, 15 POINTS

READ THIS: Some of these sentences are run together; others are incomplete. the words following a number ought to be written as one sentence, put 1 in the theses. If the words ought to be written as two sentences, write 2. If they t to be written as three sentences, write 3. If all the words following a number o make a complete sentence, write 0. THEN SEPARATE THOSE SENTENCES CH SHOULD BE DIVIDED, BY A PERIOD AND A CAPITAL LETTER. JOIN SE SENTENCES WHICH SHOULD BE WRITTEN TOGETHER. MAKE NO NGE IN WORDING.

() Taking a short-cut through the fields, Ralph reached the station in time the train had just pulled in.

() Mary appeared greatly excited she carried many queer-looking bundles these she placed on the table.

() Anxiously they started to search for Tim they found him asleep under a tree, but unharmed.

() Sending a message early in the morning to his employer.

() The children shouted with joy their gifts were just what they wanted.

() Gaily waved the flags sweetly sounded the strains of music all were waiting to welcome the hero.

() Finding no one at home. He slowly turned back.

PART IV. GRAMMAR, 35 POINTS

Section 1. Commonly Confused Forms (24 Points). Fill the blanks with correct expression of the two which appear in parentheses.

1. You (was, were).....told to sweep the floor.
2. I am taller than Bobby, (ain't I, am I not).....?
3. When he (came, come).....in, he didn't see (no one, any one).....
4. Grace had (run, ran).....to do the errand.
5. They would (have, of).....(given, gave).....the books if they had asked for them.
6. The teacher has (began, begun).....to praise Dick and (I, me).....
7. The housekeeper had (went, gone).....to see if the (was, were).....clean towels for the guests.
8. (Us, We).....boys (done, did).....our job well.
9. Carl has (broken, broke).....the glass and cut (hissself, himself).....badly.
10. One of the books (was, were).....on the shelf.
11. I'm not going to have (anything, nothing).....to do with (them, those).....boys.
12. Bess has (wrote, written).....to Eunice and (him, her).....often.
13. My coat is here, but I (saw, seen).....(yours, your).....in the closet.
14. You (ought not, hadn't ought).....to (set, sit).....that tiny chair.

Section 2. Parts of Speech (11 Points). What part of speech is each underlined word?

1. He called his mother loudly.
He.....mother.....loudly.....
2. Those fragrant flowers came from our garden.
fragrant.....came.....from.....
3. Their spelling is good, but their grammar is poor.
spelling.....good.....but.....
4. The baby screams when he sees their large dog.
screams.....their.....

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION:
(C) GRAMMAR

Name..... Age.....

Grade or Class..... School.....

City..... State..... Date.....

Directions—Read Carefully!

Notice the four statements below:

- ☐ They were here.
- ☒ We was going.
- ☐ Where were you yesterday?
- ☐ It was time to go.

One of these four sentences—"We was going"—contains something which is not good English; the sentence should read "We were going." A cross has been put before this sentence, to show that it is wrong.

On the following pages there are some more groups of four sentences. In each group one sentence, and only one, is incorrect—contains something which is not good English. You are to find the wrong sentence in each group and to put a cross in the square before it, just as there is a cross before "We was going" in the group above. If you are not certain which sentence is incorrect, mark the one which seems to you least satisfactory; be sure to mark one, and only one, sentence in every group. Remember also to mark in the square; do not put a cross half way between two sentences. Any doubtful marks will be counted against you.

As soon as you are told to do so, open the blank and begin at once. Before you finish all three pages; do not stop at the bottom of the first or second pages. Work rapidly.

**DO NOT OPEN THE BLANK UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.
AS SOON AS THE WORD IS GIVEN BEGIN AT ONCE!**

1. ☐ Were they informed of his arrival?
☐ Can you tell me why he doesn't write?
☐ The girls is here now, Miss Johnson.
☐ The melons were sold yesterday.
2. ☐ Was Mary and her grandmother there?
☐ Either Martha or Betty is to blame.
☐ The hat and coat are presents from my father.
☐ The meeting was begun, and the report and new rule were read.
3. ☐ There was nothing said about the visitors.
☐ In this valley there has been two floods this year.
☐ When we arrived, there was a line at the ticket window.
☐ Here come the Smith twins.
4. ☐ Days so hot that they try one's patience come in August.
☐ The circus, which delighted the children, has gone now.
☐ Not all women who eat rich candy are fat.
☐ Tenants who insist on keeping a dog has to move.
5. ☐ The hen, with all her chickens, was crossing the road.
☐ The players, together with their coach, were on the train.
☐ Mary and John are waiting for you.
☐ All the boys, with the exception of John, is ill.
6. ☐ The supply of sandwiches is rapidly decreasing.
☐ Eggs fresh from the country are sold here.
☐ That set of books have been moved since yesterday.
☐ The owner of the vacant lots wants to build a house.
7. ☐ All the children are at home with their parents.
☐ Each woman talked about their own troubles.
☐ Everybody wanted his particular plan carried out.
☐ Who wants to try his luck first?
8. ☐ No girl or woman here knows their neighbors well.
☐ Neither Jimmy nor Buddy keeps himself clean ten minutes.
☐ Either John or Henry will get his name on the list of players.
☐ Both Mary and Lucy will take their flowers home.
9. ☐ If one has the will, he will find the way.
☐ Many passengers were getting into their life-belts.
☐ When anybody has plenty, he should share with others.
☐ No one should complain so much that people dislike them.
10. ☐ When a baby becomes cross, the nurse puts him to bed.
☐ If a boy cannot climb fences he should not go with me.
☐ When a new pupil comes to school they often are very shy.
☐ If dogs become sick it is hard to cure them.

Do not stop; GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE!

11. ☐ The poor man asked for some water.
☐ The Mexicans were used to hot weather.
☐ We opened the door and walk in.
☐ Anna seemed to be happy yesterday.
12. ☐ He was nearly drowned when he fell through the ice.
☐ The boys drug the sleds up the hill.
☐ Sally climbed the cherry tree in the yard.
☐ The Indians usually attacked a village just before sunrise.
13. ☐ The path has always run through this field.
☐ He came to the party in a new suit.
☐ Robert saw the first robin yesterday.
☐ I done more work than you did.
14. ☐ Did you hear what I heard?
☐ He went after you had gone.
☐ Danny cried when his balloon burst.
☐ She has grown more this year than she grew last.
15. ☐ He was given a thrashing for breaking the window.
☐ Were you born on Sunday?
☐ Have you ever drank sulphur water?
☐ Ruth had never ridden a horse before.
16. ☐ The boys might have come home earlier.
☐ Could you of been mistaken?
☐ That must have been a terrible accident.
☐ If he did that he ought to have been spanked.
17. ☐ The audience sat very still during the play.
☐ The sun will have set by six o'clock.
☐ Set the alarm for half past five.
☐ During the storm Mary set and shivered.
18. ☐ He lay in bed reading a magazine.
☐ The dog lied down in the middle of the rug.
☐ Please lay your flashlight where you can reach it easily.
☐ Has that hen ever laid an egg?
19. ☐ The boat leaves tomorrow morning.
☐ Has the cook left?
☐ Let the boy have another chance.
☐ Can't you leave the child play while?
20. ☐ Do you think I can run as fast as Jack?
☐ May we lift that rock if we can?
☐ Can I have another piece of cake?
☐ I might do what you ask if I thought I could succeed.

Do not stop; GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE!

21. ☐ That is their new secretary.
☐ We are going their for lunch.
☐ They're very sure they have never been there.
☐ There's their train at the station now.
22. ☐ He expects to bring the package to the store.
☐ Did he sell that bicycle to you?
☐ James ordered too three-minute eggs.
☐ I think he wants too much.
23. ☐ An eager student is a great inspiration to his teacher.
☐ The circus manager has bought an elephant and a tiger.
☐ Henry has been gone more than an hour.
☐ It is a long time before a express train is due.
24. ☐ That dinner looks good.
☐ He does not write so well as he did.
☐ She works well and gets along good with the manager.
☐ It's good to see you so well again.
25. ☐ Your proposal sounds very interesting.
☐ The bell rang furiously for ten minutes.
☐ That lion acts dangerous.
☐ He looks intelligent, but he doesn't talk sensible.
26. ☐ She dances unusually gracefully.
☐ Will he limp very noticeable?
☐ Those Japanese lanterns look decidedly attractive.
☐ The old fellow can't move as rapidly as he did.
27. ☐ The employer could not decide who to choose.
☐ Whom did he injure, in the accident?
☐ Who did you tell me is running for mayor?
☐ I have told you who your best friend is.
28. ☐ Have Ruth and her seen this room?
☐ The policeman ordered either them or us to leave.
☐ We gave his mother and him the best seats.
☐ The baby threw kisses to her and me.
29. ☐ We Republicans must hold together.
☐ He caught us when we children were climbing the fence.
☐ They are sending us teachers sample copies of the book.
☐ The lawyer asked if us two would enter a complaint.
30. ☐ My brother is much heavier than I.
☐ His father is as musical as he.
☐ Except for David and she, I have seen no one.
☐ For years there has been a feud between them and us.

GO BACK OVER YOUR WORK TO BE CERTAIN THAT
YOU HAVE MADE NO MISTAKES.

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION:
(D) SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Name..... Age.....

Grade..... School.....

City or town..... State..... Date.....

Directions—Read Carefully!

Notice the four statements below:

- ☐ He finished school last June. Since that time he has done nothing.
- ☐ We spent the afternoon in the park; it is very pleasant there.
- ☒ John had a position in a store. Which he left.
- ☐ He found a dollar bill which some one had dropped in the aisle.

One of the four—"John had a position in a store. Which he left"—includes something which is not a good sentence. A cross has been put before this line, to show that it is wrong.

On the following pages there are other groups, each of four statements. And in each group one statement is not well expressed—has in it something which is not a good sentence. You are to find the wrong line in each group and to put a cross in the square before it, just as there is a cross before "John had a position in a store. Which he left" in the group above. If you are not certain which line has the poor sentence, mark the one which seems to you least satisfactory; be sure to mark one, and only one, statement in every group. Remember also to mark in the square; do not put any cross half way between two lines. Any doubtful marks will be counted against you.

As soon as you are told to do so, turn to the next page and begin at once. Be sure you finish all three pages; do not stop at the bottom of the first or second page. Work rapidly.

DO NOT OPEN THE BLANK UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.
AS SOON AS THE WORD IS GIVEN BEGIN AT ONCE!

1. ☐ He has three brothers, John, James, and Arthur.
☐ They own two pieces of property. A farm and a city flat.
☐ He plays two instruments, piano and violin.
☐ He spent his evenings reading or listening to the radio.
2. ☐ She was much pleased when the prize was given to her.
☐ At last the train arrived. We climbed wearily aboard.
☐ His home was small. But very attractive.
☐ It was a long walk, almost eight miles.
3. ☐ Some people like olives, while others will not touch them.
☐ When they did come, they did not stay long.
☐ While in the water they spent much time splashing each other.
☐ After he had gone, with the stolen car and the money.
4. ☐ The house where he was born, which has since been torn down.
☐ His latest play was certainly a great success.
☐ Tim, who just ran past, was almost drowned last summer.
☐ He was a fine musician; his skill brought crowds to hear him.
5. ☐ I sent a telegram asking him to come immediately, but he was out of town and the message never reached him.
☐ This is the road to the lake. It was here that the fatal accident occurred last week.
☐ Smith is a man who was once very wealthy; recently he became acquainted with a promoter, invested his money in oil stock, and lost every cent he had.
☐ In playing the last round of golf I lost the ball, and it was the last ball I had, but I borrowed one and finished, but I played badly.
6. ☐ The whistle blew and the men went to work.
☐ In a car on its side in a ditch was found the stolen clothing.
☐ She sings well and last night she sang at a convention.
☐ The dog barked and ran out into the yard.
7. ☐ Howard is very fond of tennis, he plays every pleasant afternoon.
☐ She stumbled over a brick which some one had left in the path.
☐ The ship sailed at noon. We were all out to see it leave.
☐ Not a breath of wind was stirring; the heat was almost unbearable.
8. ☐ The water was so clear that we could easily see the bottom.
☐ There was a severe storm last night, so we couldn't come home, and so we stayed at the farm.
☐ As the game could not be played because of the rain, we went home.
☐ He failed in all his work and consequently left school.

Do not stop; GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE!

9. ☐ He is fond of setting fires, although he has often been burned.
☐ He likes to ride on trains, and says he is going to be an engineer.
☐ This newsboy delivers them to all the people in the neighborhood.
☐ The man from Austin's Garage will fix your car.
10. ☐ He practiced every day, and as a result became very skillful.
☐ He dropped an egg and broke it.
☐ He spilled the water, which splashed all over the floor.
☐ He had lost the key, which caused his trouble in opening the trunk.
11. ☐ There stands Smith's new car, of which he is very proud.
☐ This is Mary's hat, who came to visit us last week.
☐ My father's watch was stolen. He bought it abroad in 1885.
☐ That club belongs to Fred, who is an excellent golf player.
12. ☐ When Charles saw him he returned the money he had borrowed.
☐ Smith declared that, while he was away, his accounts had been falsified by his clerk.
☐ When Aunt Ruth came in, she saw Dorothy in the pantry.
☐ Tom told what had happened, but the thief called him a liar.
13. ☐ While looking for the lost knife, we found a diamond stick pin.
☐ When he called the cat, the dog also came.
☐ Having given the pass word, he entered without any trouble.
☐ Having upset the paint, the picture was ruined.
14. ☐ Having bought the table, she gave the clerk her address.
☐ Having eaten our dinner, the waiter brought us the bill.
☐ Having repaired our car, the man drove it around the block.
☐ After Rover had buried the bone, the butcher gave him some meat.
15. ☐ He is happy because his home team won the game.
☐ They became lost as a result of the storm.
☐ He is slow, caused by his lameness.
☐ The accident was due to the fog.
16. ☐ While still in her 'teens she wrote beautiful poetry.
☐ While in the house the horse ran away.
☐ When he was but a child his mother left him.
☐ While we were gathering up the leaves, the fire started.

Do not stop; GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE!

17. ☐ His car, breaking through the fence, started down the bank.
☐ The book was finely illustrated and was expected to be very popular.
☐ The horse, harnessed to a light carriage, ran swiftly down the street.
☐ His singing was much enjoyed by the old people, accompanied on a piano.
18. ☐ They watched the robin building the nest in that tree.
☐ Sitting at this window, she can see all the neighbors.
☐ A boy on a bicycle hurried down the street after the organ-grinder.
☐ In the kitchen was a woman frying potatoes in a calico dress.
19. ☐ The boys watched the puppy playing in the yard, which was a collie.
☐ They threw to the old man the ball with which they were playing.
☐ I put in the ice box the fish which you sent.
☐ They all stopped and smiled as the little rabbit hopped by.
20. ☐ He invited both Fred and Dick to go with him.
☐ They are looking for either a dog or a cat, as a pet.
☐ They will neither take the box nor the table.
☐ She took not only the geranium, but also the vase of roses.
21. ☐ Last night I met up with my old friend John.
☐ Do you know who took my book off the desk?
☐ I know where he is.
☐ She told me where Edith had gone, but I have forgotten.
22. ☐ I know nothing about the loss of the overcoat.
☐ Then the teacher she kept me after school.
☐ As he walked along he dropped seed in the furrow.
☐ The woman who fell was not badly injured.
23. ☐ I am sure I can go tomorrow.
☐ They were working very hard and were in a hurry to finish.
☐ Here is the fence which is being repaired.
☐ There is the man was drunk last night.
24. ☐ He swam through the waves as easily as through still water.
☐ On one hill we had to get out and walk.
☐ I think the music of a violin sweeter than any other instrument.
☐ He was a player about whose skill they knew little.

GO BACK OVER YOUR WORK TO BE CERTAIN YOU HAVE
MADE NO MISTAKES.