

# Lesson 27

## Parallel Structure

- **Parallel structure** is using the same pattern of words, phrases, or clauses to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. Sentences with parallel structure sound rhythmic and balanced.
- Items in a list or series should be parallel in structure.

EXAMPLE: I am fond of books, music, and films. (three nouns) OR,  
I am fond of reading books, listening to music, and watching  
films. (three phrases) OR,  
I am fond of books, I am fond of music, and I am fond of  
films. (three clauses)

### A. Correct any errors in parallel structure in the following sentences.

1. To make the giant chicken on display in the art gallery, the artist used a kilogram of feathers, ten metres of wire mesh, and he moulded a beak out of plastic.

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2. Leonardo da Vinci was an artist, scientist, and an engineer.

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3. Wherever I go, whatever I do, and no matter whom I meet, I will always be thinking of you.

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4. This toy is indestructible: you can bend it, twist it, you can step on it...but you can't break it.

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5. We'll need sandwiches, I'll bring the juice, and some dessert would be nice.

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6. I'm taking only the bare essentials: my cellphone, my computer, and I'm also bringing a change of clothes.

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7. While in Paris, I plan to visit the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower, maybe I'll go to the Champs Élysée.

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- In sentences with **correlative conjunctions**, such as **not only...but also**, **either...or**, **neither...nor**, and **both...and**, the words that follow each of the two conjunctions must be parallel in structure.

EXAMPLE: Roberta Bondar was **not only** the first Canadian woman, **but also** the first neurologist to fly in the space shuttle.

**B. Fill in the blank in each sentence with a parallel construction.**

1. I will neither sign your petition \_\_\_\_\_
2. Savitsa is clever not only in math, \_\_\_\_\_
3. Shakespeare wrote both plays \_\_\_\_\_
4. Either help us move the couch, \_\_\_\_\_
5. It will either rain \_\_\_\_\_ today.
6. Not only do Canadians love watching hockey, \_\_\_\_\_
7. Both the lightbulb in my bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ have burned out.

- Use parallel sentence structures to link ideas or reinforce an important point in advertisements, persuasive writing, and oral presentations.

EXAMPLE: Vote for honesty. Vote for decency. Vote for me.

**C. Rewrite each of the following passages, using parallel sentence structure to reinforce the main point.**

1. Students are responsible. They are willing to work, and minimum wage for students makes hiring them very affordable. So hire a student today.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you value the democratic right to freedom of speech? Maybe you want to announce something. Or is there an issue you think others should pay attention to? If so, then come on out to the You Said It forum in Sandborn Park.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Canada needs a leader who is willing to listen, but also willing to fight for what is right. In addition, our next prime minister should be someone with broad experience; she or he also needs a common touch, though. The leader must be a self-starter—but also a team player.  
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