

## Parallel Structure

Put parallel items in similar grammatical form.

- We like running, swimming, and we bike, too.
- I've peeled potatoes, washed lettuce, and the beans are soaking.

Which is correct?

- a. Edison paid little attention to what he ate or his clothes.
- b. Edison paid little attention to what he ate or what he wore.

Correct the following sentence:

Ray's trouble is not that he doesn't earn enough money but spending it foolishly.

Are the italicized sentences parallel?

Miss Ross gets acquainted with her students by *talking to them* and *discovering what their interests are*.

No need to be slavish about the parallel structure; we can eliminate repeated words. In the following sentence, what three words could be eliminated?

I feared that he would change his mind or that he would raise the price.

What two words can be eliminated from the following sentence?

A tree can stand a strong wind because it is flexible and because it has deep roots.

Create parallel word groups.

Ruth's friends and relatives like her because she is generous and \_\_\_\_\_.

(her unselfishness)

Donald had the choice of making up his back payments or \_\_\_\_\_.

(he would lose the car)

Our biggest problem is to plan programs and \_\_\_\_\_.

(keeping up the members' interest)

Carlota Espinoza showed her artistry by looking at a subject and \_\_\_\_\_.

(she would draw it accurately) (Note: Do not repeat words unnecessarily.)

Being a good listener is just as important as \_\_\_\_\_.

(talking well)

The teacher can't tell whether an error is caused by ignorance or \_\_\_\_\_.

(whether you were careless) (Note: Do not repeat words unnecessarily.)

### **Exercises**

*These exercises include a review of correlative conjunctions (either ... or, etc.). One of the sentences is correct.*

1. Snow descended softly, it fell on the roads, and piled up against the curbs.
2. Tom knew he needed either to find someone who would paint the fence for him or he should trick kids into thinking that fence-painting was a marvelous opportunity.
3. Huck knew that Jim needed to make it back to the free Northern states but worried that he would be committing a crime by doing so.
4. Becky hoped that Tom would neither tell him about his fondness for dead rats he could swing from a string nor Tom would talk about his previous relationship with that detestable wretch, Amy Lawrence.

Answers

Ray's trouble is not that he doesn't earn enough money but THAT HE SPENDS it foolishly.

Miss Ross gets acquainted with her students by *talking to them* and *discovering what their interests are*.

YES, THEY ARE PARALLEL

I feared that he would change his mind or that he would raise the price.

ELIMINATE SECOND THAT HE WOULD

A tree can stand a strong wind because it is flexible and because it has deep roots.

ELIMINATE THE SECOND BECAUSE

Ruth's friends and relatives like her because she is generous and UNSELFISH.

Donald had the choice of making up his back payments or LOSING HIS CAR.

Our biggest problem is to plan programs and KEEP UP THE MEMBERS' INTEREST.

Carlota Espinoza showed her artistry by looking at a subject and DRAWING IT ACCURATELY.

Being a good listener is just as important as BEING A GOOD TALKER.

The teacher can't tell whether an error is caused by ignorance or CARELESSNESS.