

Aggie Grammar Guide: Apostrophes

Intermediate Practice

Circle the correct word form to complete the sentence. For some sentences, more than one answer may be correct.

*Example: Bigger bills are enough to make people realize that **their/they're** overspending their money, and **its/it's** time to start saving.*

*Answer: Bigger bills are enough to make people realize that **they're** overspending their money, and **it's** time to start saving.*

- 1) Rock climbing is important in **Travis'/Travis's** social activities and relationships.
- 2) Discrimination is present in **today's/today's** society, and **there's/they're** still a stereotype that prevents society as a whole from progressing.
- 3) Anarchism is a political philosophy which means that people believe that a stateless society will make **people's/peoples'** lives better.
- 4) The most important thing to enjoy **your/you're** life is to be thankful for everything.
- 5) My brother is a Mexican American in his late **30's/30s**, is covered with tattoos, and wears a muscle shirt.
- 6) I recommend fixing the uneven locks inside every stall of the **woman's/women's** bathroom in Giedt Hall.
- 7) The beach **cruisers/cruiser's** style looks stupid because **its/it's** wide and clunky.
- 8) After reading this article, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot relate to the **author's/authors'** main point, even though global warming is something that affects everyone worldwide.
- 9) To a country, the aerospace industry is very significant to **its/it's** development.

- 10) In **Bradley and Engelstein's/Bradley's and Engelstein's** articles, the authors each look at the same empirical data and information about Russia during the **1800s/1800's**.

Advanced Practice

In each set of sentences, one sentence is ungrammatical and three sentences are grammatical. Identify and explain which sentence is ungrammatical. For the remaining 3 sentences, describe their differences in terms of meaning or grammatical function.

Please note, there may be multiple ways to write your explanation although you will see only one option in the answer key. Compare your explanation to the one provided and determine if one is more effective.

Example (Identify which sentence is ungrammatical and explain the differences in the remaining 3 sentences in terms of grammatical function):

- A. She's bought snack.
- B. She could've bought a snack.
- C. She could have bought a snack.
- D. She could of bought a snack.

Answer:

- A. Grammatical. **She's** is the contracted form of **she has**.
- B. Grammatical. **Could've** is the contracted form of **could have**.
- C. Grammatical. No possessives or contractions.
- D. Ungrammatical in written English. **Could of** is a spoken version of **could have**.

- 1) Identify which sentence is ungrammatical and explain the differences in the remaining 3 sentences in terms of grammatical function:

- A. They're freshmen.
- B. Their freshmen.
- C. Their freshmen are in debt.
- D. They're in debt.

- 2) Identify which sentence is ungrammatical and explain the differences in the remaining 3 sentences in terms of meaning:

- A. My friend's apartment is nice.
- B. My friends' apartment is nice.

- C. My friends have a nice apartment.
D. My friend's have a nice apartment.
- 3) Identify which sentence is ungrammatical and explain the differences in the remaining 3 sentences in terms of grammatical function:
- A. John Brooks' family sent me a letter.
B. The Brooks family sent me a letter.
C. I received a letter from the Brookses'.
D. The Brookses' letter was sent to me.
- 4) Identify which sentence is ungrammatical and explain the differences in the remaining 3 sentences in terms of meaning:
- A. Lewis and Laurie's children are in college.
B. Lewis's and Laurie's children are in college.
C. Lewis' and Laurie's children are in college.
D. Lewis and Laurie's children's are in college.