

Preparation For University of Ibadan

Proficiency in English language test (MECHANICS)

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MECHANICS

Mechanics is an aspect of grammar that includes : capitalization , spellings and punctuation.

CAPITALIZATION

Situations affected by the rules of capitalization

Rule 1.

- The first word in a sentence. (E.g. Wait am coming.)
- names of people, places and things (e.g. Samuel, Biodun etc.)
- Titles ,but not all the words (e.g. Tales by moon light)
- days and months but not season. (e.g. January, February etc.)

Rule 2.

- Capitalize proper nouns. These include people's names, names of specific places an thing.
Example :George Washington, New York State

Rule 3.

- Capitalize titles of Books, Magazines, Articles, Movies, and so on. For example : Alice's Adventure in Wonderland. *But why wasn't "in" capitalized?*

This Brings us to the three rules for capitalizing titles

1. Do capitalize first and last words.
2. Do capitalize main words.
3. Don't capitalize articles with fewer than four letters and prepositions.

Rule 4

- Capitalize Days and Months e.g. Monday and January.
- Don't capitalize seasons unless: they are part of a proper name (e.g. The Fall Festival.) or They begin a sentence (e.g. Winter is beautiful).

In general,

Do not capitalize the words north, south, east and north when they refer to directions.

Don't capitalize commonly used words ,e.g. biblical

Do not Capitalize the names of elements e.g. nitrogen .

Capitalize the names of specific courses and the names of language.

SPELLINGS

Some spelling rules are worth learning; others are too complicated or have too many exceptions. Instead of learning ALL the rules, focus on learning rules which address your particular spelling problems. Following is some helpful information on the rules for building new words:

Rule 1.

'ie' or 'ei' Write 'I' before 'e', except after 'c' Write 'ie' after 'c' for words with a shen sound.

Write 'ei' when the vowels sounds like an 'a' as in 'weigh'

Examples

- achieve, believe, friend receive, receipt, perceive
- ancient, efficient, sufficient, conscience, neighbor, vein, reign.

Memorize:

Exceptions: Words like counterfeit, either, neither, height, leisure, forfeit , foreign, science, species, seize, weird.

Following rule 1 , it says letter 'I' as to come before letter e in words, except after c, Examples are words like friend achieve, believe, Thief, chief, mischievous etc.

Rule 2

's' or 'es', Add 'es' if a word ends in 'ch', 'sh', 'ss', 'x' or 'z'

- Add 'es' for most words ending in 'o'

Examples: arch > arches, clash > clashes, class > classes, box > boxes, quiz > quizzes

tomato > tomatoes, hero > heroes, go > goes, do > does, echo > echoes

Exceptions: Words like altos, duos, pianos, radios, solos sopranos, studios, videos, typos
Shield, Zoo is also an exception.

Rule 3.

3. 'y' to 'i' or not For words ending in y preceded by a vowel, retain the y when adding s or a suffix.

- For words ending in y, retain the y when adding 'ing'.
- For words ending in y, preceded by a consonant, change the y to i before any other suffix.
- Examples convey > conveys, employ > employer
- try > trying, justify > justifying, certify > certifying, study > studying
- try > tried, justify > justifies, certify > certifiable, mystify > mystified, laboratory > laboratories.

Exceptions: Words like dryness, shyness.

If the word as a vowel before y, retain the y, example employ-employs-employer-employing.

Shy is an exception to this rule, Dry is also an exception.

Rule 4.

4. drop the final 'e' DROP the e when the suffix starts with a vowel.

- DROP the e when the word ends in 'dge'.
- DROP the final e when adding -'ing'
- Examples save > savable, use > usable judge > judgment
- save > saving, manage > managing, trace > tracing, emerge > emerging.

When we have words that ends with e drop the letter e, if the suffix is start with a vowel

Exceptions: DO NOT DROP the e if the word ends in 'ce' or 'ge' (e.g. manage > manageable, trace > traceable).

Rule 5

5. 'l' or 'll' when adding -ing, -ed and some suffixes to verbs DOUBLE the l when it is preceded by a single vowel.

Examples cancel > cancelling, cancelled, cancellation enroll > enrolling, enrolled (but enrolment) fulfil > fulfilling, fulfilled, fulfillment level > levelling, levelled travel > travelling, travelled, traveler.

Exceptions: DO NOT DOUBLE the l when it is preceded by a double vowel (e.g. conceal > concealing, concealed).

Rule 6

Rule 6 Dropping letters Many words drop a letter when adding a suffix, but it is not always the final letter

Examples argue > argument; proceed > procedure; humor > humorous; disaster > disastrous; repeat > repetition; administer > administration.

Practice questions

1. **a)** Vice - chancellor **b)** Vice Chancellor **c)** Vice -Chancellor **d)** Vice - Chancellor
2. **a)** Michevious **b)** mischievous **c)** mischeivious **d)** mischievious
3. **a)** grievous **b)** grevus **c)** greivious **d)** grievous.

According to British usage, if d abbreviation end with the same letter that ends d word, no full stop is necessary:

Mr Mister

Mrs Mistress

Dr Doctor

If the abbreviation ends with a letter other than the one that ends the whole word, a period (full stop) s called for:

Prof. (Professor)

Capt. (Captain)

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