



How to Speak and Write Correctly

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The examples of these men are incentives to action. Poverty thrust them forward instead of keeping them back. Therefore, if you are poor make your circumstances a means to an end. Have ambition, keep a goal in sight and bend every energy to reach that goal. A story is told of Thomas Carlyle the day he attained the highest honor the literary world could confer upon him when he was elected Lord Rector of Edinburgh University. After his installation speech, in going through the halls, he met a student seemingly deep in study.

How to Speak and Write Correctly Details

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From Reader Review How to Speak and Write Correctly for online ebook

Annie says

Concise and thorough guide, quips of which I've heard repeatedly in my undergrad course.

Can be linked to Orwell's rules of writing, particularly his own work "Why I Write". Gives a list of books one ought to have in a personal library and recommends Cervantes, Homer, Goethe, Shakespeare, and Dante as having the best works, followed closely by Virgil and Milton.

Chandra Prakash says

It's a wonderful book to have, which interrelates topics of English grammar, like how noun and adjectives are related and how parts of speech and subject verb agreement is used to make good sentences. It's wonderful. I hope, I read more books like this, in future to boost my English

Lissa Smith Reads'~Bookaholics Bookshelf Reviews says

4 Star Educational tool

I purchased this simply because I have to take public speaking and writing to graduate from my Social Work Program. I needed this as an educational tool to aide my writing and speech. Being a 43 year college student is daunting having been 25 years since school. I need all the help I can get.

I just wish we could still put out books in groups on our kindle like I was able in 2011. I would love to mark one "Education" and keep this in it on hand at any time.

marc ivan manalac says

I read this on kindle's public domain books and really enjoyed it besides the fact that paragraphs would sometimes repeat when I went to the next page. I recommend this book to those interested in bettering your understanding of speech!

Srivardhan says

Good but traditional.

The book is good to learn English language.

It is small, concise and to the point. The author has given many examples where people generally make

mistakes. This is very useful. You can relate and many times see yourself in those. But, sometimes it becomes boring. The explanation seems very technical. It becomes hard to keep the pace. Still a good one. I would recommend this as a reference book. Keep referring to this from time to time to keep your English skill polished.

Slightly says

If you merely read chapter 10 of this book, that alone will give reason for why I gave it 5 stars. The first three or four chapters are forgettable and can be skipped. It only tells of the grammar lessons everyone learned in elementary school.

Letter writing was so much more dignified back when Devlin wrote this book. He gives great example sentences and lots of tips that I find useful today. A lot of the suggestions are outdated, but instead of being useless they just show how far the craft has fallen in the last century.

Skyler Myers says

"Every person of intelligence should be able to use his mother tongue correctly. It only requires a little pains, a little care, a little study to enable one to do so, and the recompense is great."

PROs:

- * Lots of good information without wasted words
- * Contains more than just grammar, such as the history of the English language
- * Huge list of the best authors, poets, and books

CONs:

- * Some outdated usage of words, such as "thou" and "thee" (was written in 1917)
- * Entire sections are now almost irrelevant, such as the letter writing section
- * Not enough examples to solidify definitions and usage
- * Becomes tedious and hard to concentrate on towards the middle of the book
- * Much of the advice is common sense, such as "read the masters"

"In employing the long sentence the inexperienced writer should not strain after the heavy, ponderous type. Johnson and Carlyle used such a type, but remember, an ordinary mortal cannot wield the sledge hammer of a giant. Johnson and Carlyle were intellectual giants and few can hope to stand on the same literary pedestal.."

The book starts out as a nice refresher on the parts of speech, something almost all of us learn but few remember. The usage of these words, such as adverbs and prepositions, came back to me with relative ease after reading the short definitions provided. The problems arose when the book got into more technical detail, such as instead of simply "verbs", there are "transitive/intransitive verbs" + the tenses, etc. One example to describe what a noun is is fine, but only one example for the more tedious parts of speech simply isn't enough. It got to the point where I was lost because he was using terms that he didn't solidify into the reader's mind, making me skim large portions of the book.

The first half of the book is pretty much grammar review, then it goes into letter writing, which is almost completely useless today. The most interesting part of the book was actually the end where it went over the history of the English language and how it developed. There is also a very large section where he goes through the works of literary giants such as Shakespeare and Milton and shows that they are surprisingly filled with mistakes that the average person wouldn't notice. This part, although slightly interesting, was much too pedantic for me.

My favorite part of the book was actually the short list of greatest authors, poets, and books. The problem is, he merely listed names instead of explaining why they were included. It would have been nice to hear his reasoning on why he chose who he chose, such as what makes each writer uniquely great, or what makes certain books stand above the rest.

Overall, I would not recommend this book unless you absolutely don't want to spend any money. There are probably far better and more updated books for less than \$3. The book does a lot of things, but none of them particularly well, and too much of it is useless for the modern reader.

"In the works of Shakespeare, the most wonderful genius the world has ever known, there is the enormous number of 15,000 different words, but almost 10,000 of them are obsolete or meaningless today.."

Lindsay says

Definitely got me thinking more about how I use language, although I was proud to recognise a lot of the errors mentioned. It was dated in some parts, and seemed to repeatedly talk about speaking and writing simply, with an excess of long words.

Some of my favourite quotes:

'You can be joyful, playful, jocose, give vent to your feelings, but never stoop to low language and, above all, to language savouring in the slightest degree of moral impropriety.'

'Describe what you saw yesterday-a fire, a runaway horse, a dog-fight on the street.'

'If you are a woman throw aside the pen, sit down and darn your brother's, your father's, or your husband's socks, or put on a calico apron, take soap and water and scrub the floor.' (on what to do if you fail at your desired journalistic career).

Francis Berger says

Yes, some of the advice is archaic and obsolete; on the other hand, some of Devlin's insights and suggestions are as valid and pertinent as they were a hundred years ago. To be honest, I like the archaic bits as well; they demonstrate how the language has evolved (or, in some cases, devolved). It was interesting to see that even the greats sometimes struggled with grammar and style. The last chapter, "Masters and Masterpieces of Literature" was particularly enjoyable.

Gonzalo Fernández-Victorio says

It's an interesting book. But it was published in 1910 and it hasn't gotten old well quite well. As a non-native, living in the UK speaker, sometimes it is difficult which parts still remain relevant. Yes, part of speech, yes, general advice on how to write and how not to write, on the value of simplicity and correctness. But the specific examples, and all the Thou, thee stuff, seems archaic to me except for when I read things in religious services.

If you're a non-native speaker, or even a native speaker trying to improve, I don't think this a relevant book.

Adrian says

A fantastic book that will help anybody who wants to improve their English and its usage.

Milton says

Must read for any who loves English language

Andrew says

I have no idea why I ended up having this book on my shelf to read...but I decided to take a look at it. It really is a great book about how the English language is constructed and how to properly use the correct forms of words in your writing and speaking.

The first part of the book was fairly interesting to me, but it very quickly becomes an in-depth analysis of verb conjugations and sentence structure. It would be a fantastic reference book, and one that I think a lot of people would benefit from reading; however, it is basically just a text book and not one you should just sit down and read for enjoyment.

Asha Seth says

I hope to now speak and write correctly by eliminating errors I have been making!):

Review to follow.

James says

Having ordery and structured sentences are indicative of an orderly and structured mind. I don't know about you, but I have a hard time remembering all the rules of written and spoken English taught in high school. This little book is a great tool to keep many of those rules at the forefront.

Yes, some of the rules seem rather dated, the use of which would make you sound more like a Victorian-era English teacher thn an educated middle American. None the less, the theories and principles found in these pages are priceless, and if used properly, are sure to reward the reader with a confident presence and an attentive audience.
