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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

# **The Grammar dog Guide to Nature**

**by Ralph Waldo Emerson**

**All exercises use sentences from the essay.  
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

## About Grammartdog

Grammartdog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Grammartdog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Grammartdog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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*NATURE* by Ralph Waldo Emerson – Grammar and Style  
*All exercises use sentences from the essay.*

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**SAMPLE EXERCISES - NATURE** by Ralph Waldo Emerson

**EXERCISE 5            COMPLEMENTS**

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

*d.o.* = direct object

*i.o.* = indirect object

*p.n.* = predicate nominative

*o.p.* = object of preposition

*p.a.* = predicate adjective

- \_\_\_1.            The solitary places do not seem quite lonely.
- \_\_\_2.            We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty.
- \_\_\_3.            We dip our hands in this painted element.

**EXERCISE 6            PHRASES**

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

*par* = participial

*ger* = gerund

*inf* = infinitive

*appos* = appositive

*prep* = prepositional

- \_\_\_1.            How easily we might walk onward into the opening landscape, absorbed by new pictures, and by thoughts fast succeeding each other, until by degrees the recollection of home was crowded out of the mind, all memory obliterated by the tyranny of the present, and we were led in triumph by nature.
- \_\_\_2.            We go out daily and nightly to feed the eyes on the horizon, and require so much scope, just as we need water for our bath.
- \_\_\_3.            A holiday, a villeggiature, a royal revel, the proudest, most heart-rejoicing festival that valor and beauty, power and taste, ever decked and enjoyed, establishes itself on the instant.

**EXERCISE 9            STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

*p* = personification

*s* = simile

*m* = metaphor

*o* = onomatopoeia

*h* = hyperbole

- \_\_\_1.            The day, immeasurably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields.
- \_\_\_2.            The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he makes into these precincts.
- \_\_\_3.            The stems of pines, hemlocks, and oaks, almost gleam like iron on the excited eye.

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**EXERCISE 12      STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS**

Identify the type of allusion in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

*a. history   b. mythology   c. religion   d. literature   e. sanity/insanity   f. folklore/superstition*

- \_\_\_1.      The anciently reported spells of these places creep on us.
  
- \_\_\_2.      I think, if we should be rapt away into all that we dream of heaven, and should converse with Gabriel and Uriel, the upper sky would be all that would remain of our furniture.
  
- \_\_\_3.      In their soft glances, I see what men strove to realize in some Versailles, or Paphos, or Ctesiphon.

**EXERCISE 13      STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1**

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man. Only as far as masters of the world have called in nature to their aid, can they reach the height of magnificence. This is the meaning of their hanging gardens, villas, garden houses, islands, parks, and preserves, to back their faulty personality with these strong accessories. I do not wonder that the landed interest should be invincible in the state with these dangerous auxiliaries. These bribe and invite; not kings, not palaces, not men, not women, but these tender and poetic stars, eloquent of secret promises. We heard what the rich man said, we knew of his villa, his grove, his wine, and his company, but the provocation and point of the invitation came out of these beguiling stars. In their soft glances, I see what men strove to realize in some Versailles, or Paphos, or Ctesiphon. Indeed, it is the magical lights of the horizon, and the blue sky for the background, which save all our works of art, which were otherwise bawbles. When the rich tax the poor with servility and obsequiousness, they should consider the effect of men reputed to be the possessors of nature, on imaginative minds. Ah! if the rich were rich as the poor fancy riches! A boy hears a military band play on the field at night, and he has kings and queens, and famous chivalry palpably before him. He hears the echoes of a horn in a hill country, in the Notch Mountains, for example, which converts the mountains into an Aeolian harp, and this supernatural *tiralira* restores to him the Dorian mythology, Apollo, Diana, and all divine hunters and huntresses. Can a musical note be so lofty, so haughtily beautiful!

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters,
- 2 the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man.
- 3 Only as far as masters of the world have called in nature to their aid, can they reach the height
- 4 of magnificence. This is the meaning of their hanging gardens, villas, garden houses, islands,

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5 parks, and preserves, to back their faulty personality with these strong accessories. I do not wonder  
6 that the landed interest should be invincible in the state with these dangerous auxiliaries. These  
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18 the Dorian mythology, Apollo, Diana, and all divine hunters and huntresses. Can a musical note  
19 be so lofty, so haughtily beautiful!

- \_\_\_1. The phrase *He who knows* in Line 1 is an example of . . .  
a. anecdote b. anaphora c. antimetabole d. antiphrasis
- \_\_\_2. The underlined words in Line 5 are examples of . . .  
a. assonance b. consonance c. alliteration d. rhyme
- \_\_\_3. The author uses ALL of the following devices to develop tone EXCEPT . . .  
a. sensory imagery  
b. rhetorical question  
c. figurative language  
d. anecdote