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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

The Grammar Dog Guide to Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens

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

About Grammartog

Grammartog 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 Grammartog.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.

Grammartog'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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OLIVER TWIST by Charles Dickens – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the novel

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - OLIVER TWIST by Charles Dickens

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

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

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

o.p. = object of preposition

p.n. = predicate nominative

p.a. = predicate adjective

- ___ 1. Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the tortures of slow starvation for three months.
- ___ 2. Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery.
- ___ 3. Oliver was awakened in the morning by a loud kicking at the outside of the shop-door.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

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

par = participle

ger = gerund

infin = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = preposition

- ___ 1. For a week after the commission of the impious and profane offence of asking for more, Oliver remained a close prisoner in the dark and solitary room to which he had been consigned by the wisdom and mercy of the board.
- ___ 2. Having completed these arrangements, he walked up to the gate, to read the bill.
- ___ 3. The undertaker offered no reply to this raving; but producing a tape from his pocket, knelt down for a moment by the side of the body.

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. Mrs. Mann gave him a thousand embraces, and, what Oliver wanted a great deal more, a piece of bread and butter, lest he should seem hungry when he got to the workhouse.
- ___ 2. I wish some well-fed philosopher, whose meat and drink turn to gall within him; whose blood is ice, whose heart is iron; could have seen Oliver Twist clutching at the dainty viands that the dog had neglected.
- ___ 3. Against the wall were ranged, in regular array, a long row of elm boards cut into the same shape: looking in the dim light, like high-shouldered ghosts with their hands in their breeches-pockets.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - OLIVER TWIST by Charles Dickens

EXERCISE 12

STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

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

a. mythology b. religion c. physical abuse d. folklore/superstition

- ___ 1. It would have been very like a Christian, and a marvelously good Christian, too, if Oliver had prayed for the people who fed and took care of him.

- ___ 2. . . . he was kicked into the same apartment every evening at prayer-time, and there permitted to listen to, and console his mind with, a general supplication of the boys . . . to be guarded from the sins and vices of Oliver Twist.

- ___ 3. “Yes, I think it is rather pretty,” said the beadle, glancing proudly downwards at the large brass buttons . . . “The die is the same as the parochial seal – the Good Samaritan healing the sick and bruised man.”

EXERCISE 13

STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

“Stop thief! Stop! thief!” There is a magic in the sound. The tradesman leaves his counter, and the car-man his wagon; the butcher throws down his tray; the baker his basket; the milkman his pail; the errand-boy his parcels; the school-boy his marbles; the paviour his pickaxe; the child his battledore. Away they run, pell-mell, helter-skelter, slap-dash: tearing, yelling, screaming, knocking down the passengers as they turn the corners, rousing up the dogs, and astonishing the fowls: and streets, squares, and courts, re-echo with the sound.

“Stop thief! Stop thief!” The cry is taken up by a hundred voices, and the crowd accumulate at every turning. Away they fly, splashing through the mud, and rattling along the pavements: up go the windows, out run the people, onward bear the mob, a whole audience desert Punch in the very thickest of the plot, and, joining the rushing throng, swell the shout, and lend fresh vigour to the cry, “Stop thief! Stop thief!”

“Stop thief! Stop thief!” There is a passion for hunting something deeply implanted in the human breast. One wretched breathless child, panting with exhaustion; terror in his looks; agony in his eyes; large drops of perspiration streaming down his face; strains every nerve to make head upon his pursuers; and as they follow on his track, and gain upon him every instant, they hail his decreasing strength with still louder shout, and whoop and scream with joy. “Stop thief!” Ay, stop him for God’s sake, were it only in mercy! (From Chapter 10)

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 “Stop thief! Stop! thief!” There is a magic in the sound. The tradesman leaves his counter,
- 2 and the car-man his wagon; the butcher throws down his tray; the baker his basket; the
- 3 milkman his pail; the errand-boy his parcels; the school-boy his marbles; the paviour his pickaxe;

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4 the child his battledore. Away they run, pell-mell, helter-skelter, slap-dash: tearing, yelling,
5 screaming, knocking down the passengers as they turn the corners, rousing up the dogs, and
6 astonishing the fowls: and streets, squares, and courts, re-echo with the sound.
7 “Stop thief! Stop thief!” The cry is taken up by a hundred voices, and the crowd accumulate at
8 every turning. Away they fly, splashing through the mud, and rattling along the pavements:
9 up go the windows, out run the people, onward bear the mob, a whole audience desert Punch in
10 the very thickest of the plot, and, joining the rushing throng, swell the shout, and lend fresh vigour
11 to the cry, “Stop thief! Stop thief!”
12 “Stop thief! Stop thief!” There is a passion for hunting something deeply implanted in the human
13 breast. One wretched breathless child, panting with exhaustion; terror in his looks; agony in his
14 eyes; large drops of perspiration streaming down his face; strains every nerve to make head upon
15 his pursuers; and as they follow on his track, and gain upon him every instant, they hail his
16 decreasing strength with still louder shout, and whoop and scream with joy. “Stop thief!” Ay,
17 stop him for God’s sake, were it only in mercy!

- ___1. The PREDOMINANT sensory imagery in the passage is . . .
a. sight and touch
b. sight and sound
c. touch and smell
d. sound and touch
- ___2. In addition to verbs, the PREDOMINANT grammatical devices used to convey action are . . .
a. adverbs and participles
b. nouns and adjectives
c. gerunds and infinitives
d. nouns and conjunctions
- ___3. “*Stop thief! Stop thief!*” in Lines 1, 7 and 12 is an example of . . .
a. assonance b. irony c. anaphora d. asyndeton