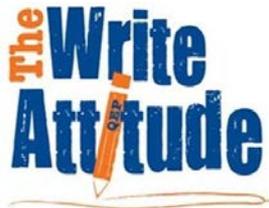


QEP Grammar Extravaganza: “Writing Numbers”



Today, we'll discuss writing numbers in the form of words and figures, and how to use numbers in the professions.



Rule 1: Writing numbers

- When writing numbers, write out single digit numbers.
 - I want seven copies.
 - The paper has to be at least five pages.
- When writing 10 or more, use numerals.
 - I want 15 pages typed and double spaced.
 - The final draft has to be at least 25 pages.

Rule 2: Be consistent with categories

- For *different categories*, use numerals for one category and write out the other category.
 - Given the budget, if all 30 history students attend the four plays, then the 7 math students will be able to attend only two plays.
 - Students are represented with figures; plays are represented with words.
 - We will need three pies to feed 15 students and twelve pies to feed 60 students.
 - Since three represents pies, we will also write out twelve since it, too, represents pies. Since the number of students is above nine, we will use digits to represent 15 and 60.

Rule 3: Writing Fractions

Simple Fractions

- With simple fractions, use words:
 - One-half of the pies have been eaten.
 - A two-thirds majority is required for that bill to pass in Congress.

Mixed Fractions

- With mixed fractions, use numerals, unless it's the first word of the sentence:
 - We expect a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ percent wage increase.
 - Five and one-half percent was the maximum allowable interest.

Let's practice:

1. I would guess that there are at least _____ students that attend SSU.
2. There are _____ days in a week.
3. There are _____ days in a month.
4. _(mixed fraction)_ of the SSU student body are freshmen.
5. (Correct this sentence) There are nine chairs here, but twenty-five people are showing up; we need 16 more chairs to accompany the additional 16 people.

Rule 4: Expressing large numbers

- The simplest way to express large numbers is best.
- Round numbers are usually spelled out.
- Be careful to be consistent within a sentence.
 - You can earn from one million to five million dollars.
 - You can earn from five hundred to five million dollars.
 - You can earn from \$5 hundred to \$5 million.

Rule 5: Writing decimals

- Write decimals in figures.
- Put a zero in front of a decimal unless the decimal itself begins with a zero.
 - The plant grew 0.79 of a foot in one year.
 - The plant grew only .07 of a foot this year because of the drought.

Rule 6: Writing numbers with four or more digits

- With numbers of four or more digits, use commas.
- Count three spaces to the left of the ones column to place the first comma.
- If the number contains seven or more digits, continue placing commas after every three places.
 - \$1,054.21
 - 2,417,592

Rule 7: Decades

- When expressing decades, you may spell them out and lowercase them.
 - During the eighties and nineties, the U.S. economy grew.
- If you wish to express decades using incomplete numerals, put an apostrophe before the incomplete numeral but not between the year and the s.
 - During the '80s and '90s, the U.S. economy grew.
- When expressing decades with complete numerals no apostrophe between the year and s.
 - During the 1980s and 1990s, the U.S. economy grew.

Let's practice!

1. If I had to guess, I would say that Oprah nets anywhere between _____ and _____.
2. If the decimal is less than 1, write it in words. If it is more than 1, write it in figures. (True or false)
3. Since I was born in 1991, that would make me a ___(decade)___ baby.
4. When expressing decades with complete numerals, there is no apostrophe between the year and s. (True or false)

Rule 8: Time of day

- Spell out the time of day in text even with half and quarter hours.
 - She gets up at four-thirty before the baby wakes up.
- With o'clock, the number is always spelled out.
 - The baby wakes up at five o'clock in the morning.
- Use numerals with the time of day when exact times are being emphasized or when using A.M. or P.M.
 - Mark's flight leaves at 6:22 A.M.
 - Please arrive by 12:30 sharp.
 - She had a 7:00 P.M. deadline.
- Use noon and midnight rather than 12:00 P.M. and 12:00 A.M.

Rules 9 and 10: Compound numbers and beginning a sentence

- Hyphenate all compound numbers from twenty-one through ninety-nine.
 - Forty-three persons were injured in the train wreck.
 - Twenty-three of them were hospitalized.
- Write out a number if it begins a sentence.
 - Twenty-nine people won an award for helping their communities.
 - The fact that 29 people won an award for helping their communities was fantastic!
 - Twenty-nine people won an award for helping their communities.
 - The fact that 29 people won an award for helping their communities was fantastic!

Rule 11: Combinations

- **Unclear:** The club celebrated the birthdays of 6 90-year-olds who were born in the city.
 - May cause the reader to read '690' as one number.
- **Clear:** The club celebrated the birthdays of six 90-year-olds who were born in the city.

Let's Practice!

- The earliest college course that you have ever taken began at what time?
- Should you use words or figures with this time?
- _____ is the product of six multiplied by six.
- (Correct this sentence for clarity.) The field trip to the museum consisted of 90 6-year-olds.

Writing Numbers in the Professions

Session II

Rule 1: Beginning a sentence

- The same rule applies.
- When a number begins a sentence, spell it out.
 - Thirteen people called to report the accident.
 - Nineteen media outlets were forwarded our press release.
 - Seven workshops are being conducted this week.

Rule 2: Technical significance

- Use figures (even when the numbers are less than 10) for numbers of technical significance: percentages, pages, sizes, money, measurements, clock time, coordinates, etc.
 - See page 8 for further details.
 - Since 2008, turnover has been approximately 7 percent.
 - Tickets for the 2 p.m. webcast are almost sold out.
 - Less than 6% of the attendees are males.

Rule 3: Dates

- For dates, use figures and cardinal (1, 2, 3)—not ordinal (1st, 2nd, 3rd) numbers.
 - The March 17 meeting has been rescheduled.
 - On April 4, 2001, we opened this branch office.

Rule 4: Commercial writing

- Repeat numbers in commercial writing.
 - The bill will not exceed one hundred (100) dollars.
- Use numerals in legal writing.
 - The cost of damage is \$1,365.42.

Rule 5: Same category

- When numbers apply to the same thing, render them the same way.
 - These three conference rooms hold groups of up to 8, 16, and 24 people. [not eight]
- Sometimes a number needs to stand out, even when it is less than 10. For example, in resumes our years of experience should catch the reader's eye.
 - . . . including 7 years as a program manager.

Let's Practice!