

Exercise: Identify the faulty connections.

1. Since dealings with the custodian bank are usually in writing, whether local or out of town, the only difference is a lag of a few days.

2. The superintendent of the Ossining Correctional Facility found the community's desire to preserve part of the prison amusing.

3. To properly assess the situation, you have to weigh planned improvements against anticipated results carefully.

4. Critics have raised doubts about attempts to interpret Kleist's response precisely because his skeptical statements obscure his thoughts.

5. Their willingness to work constantly amazes me.

6. All stories cannot end happily.

7. We have often seen celebrities waiting in line to buy tickets.

8. The law was formulated in 1662 on the basis of Boyle's measurements by his disciple, Richard Townley.

9. As associate editor, my responsibilities included correcting manuscripts and laying out pages.

10. A key point in the studies that many have overlooked is the effect of turnover on efficiency.

11. Both witnesses substantiated the defendant's alibi that he was helping his mother move the day of the killings to Ringwood, N.J., from their Sloatsburg home.

12. A lazy writer will let the misplacement stand and argue that no one can misunderstand the meaning.

13. Most adjectives modify the nouns they precede or follow linking verbs.

14. Please read and let me have your department's views on the attached marketing proposal.

15. His experience makes him the best person to tackle and succeed in this difficult task.

Suggested revisions:

1. Since dealings with the custodian bank, whether local or out of town, are usually in writing, the only difference is a lag of a few days. (*misplaced adjectives*)

2. The superintendent of the Ossining Correctional Facility was amused by the community's desire to preserve part of the prison. *Or:* The superintendent ... found it amusing that the community wanted to preserve part of the prison. (*misplaced adjective*)

3. To assess the situation properly, you have to carefully weigh planned improvements against anticipated results. (*misplaced adverbs*)

4. *This statement is ambiguous. The revision depends on what the word "precisely" modifies:* Because Kleist's skeptical statements obscure his thoughts, critics have raised doubts about attempts to interpret his response precisely. *Or:* It is precisely because Kleist's skeptical statements obscure his thoughts that critics have raised doubts about attempts to interpret his response. (*misplaced adverb*)

5. *This statement is ambiguous. The revision depends on what the word "constantly" modifies:* I constantly marvel at their willingness to work. *Or:* Their willing and constant labor amazes me. (*misplaced adverb*)

6. Not all stories can end happily. (*misplaced adverb "not"*)

7. We have often seen celebrities when we were waiting in line to buy tickets. *or:* When waiting in line to buy tickets, we have often seen celebrities. *Or, if the sentences is really supposed to say what it says, you might want to emphasize this fact:* We have often seen celebrities who were waiting in line to buy tickets. (*misplaced verbal phrase*)

8. Using Boyle's measurements, his disciple, Richard Townley, formulated the law in 1662. *Or:* Boyle's disciple, Richard Townley, formulated the law in 1662 on the basis of Boyle's measurements. (*misplaced prepositional phrase*)

9. As associate editor, I was responsible for correcting manuscripts and laying out pages, among other tasks. (*misplaced prepositional phrase*)

10. A key point in the studies, one that many have overlooked, is the effect of turnover on efficiency. (*misplaced relative clause*)

11. Both witnesses substantiated the defendant's alibi that on the day of the killings he was helping his mother move from Sloatsburg, N.Y., to Ringwood, N.J. (*multiple problems in prepositional phrases*)

12. A lazy writer will let the misplacement stand and will argue that no one can misunderstand the meaning. *Or*: A lazy writer will keep the misplacement and argue that no one can misunderstand the meaning. (*poor subject-verb connection*)

13. Most adjectives either modify the nouns they precede or follow linking verbs. *Or better*: Most adjectives either precede the nouns they modify or follow linking verbs. (*poor subject-verb connection*)

14. Please read the attached marketing proposal and let me have your department's views [on it]. (*poor verb-object connection*)

15. His experience makes him the person best qualified to tackle this difficult task, and the most likely to succeed. *Or*: His experience makes him the person most likely to tackle this difficult task successfully. (*poor verb-object connection*)

(*All examples from Cook. Line by Line. Houghton Mifflin, 1985.*)