

The Parallelism Problem: most parallelism issues lie within the verb-subject-object relationship.

A Parallelism Problem

I practiced my sweet nunchuck skills, drawing talents, and kickball.

The trouble here is with “kickball.” Reference is made to “nunchuck skills” and “drawing talents,” so for “kickball” to be parallel, it must be referred to as “kickball abilities.”

Why Use Parallelism Anyway?

Writers use parallelism to make comparisons and connections between parts of their sentences.

This is evident from the example at the left. There, the writer wanted to make a connection between the three things she was practicing.

For the connection to be made correctly, each object in the sentence needs to agree.

Another Parallelism Problem

My papers for College Writing are longer than everyone.

Here, the writer wanted to make a comparison between his papers and everyone else’s papers.

However, the object (papers) is not parallel to the subject (everyone), so the reader can not clearly make the comparison.

Correction: *My papers for College Writing are longer than everyone else’s papers.*

Parallelism Without a Problem

When people fondue with chocolate and strawberries, they must first dip the strawberries in the chocolate, then put the chocolate-covered berries in their mouths, then, finally, they should savor the delicious morsels before reaching for seconds.

In this sentence, the author wants to make a connection between the progressive steps in enjoying a chocolate-covered strawberry. The connection is successfully made by assuring that the verbs and their objects remain parallel with each other and with the subject.