Student name: _____

Date: ____

Compare the advantages and disadvantages of unions and other employee organizations

Objectives:

- A. Describe the conditions that brought about unions.
- B. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of membership in a union.
- C. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of other employee organizations.

MODULE 4E: INFORMATION SHEET

<u>TO THE STUDENT</u>: Read and study this information sheet and complete the activities at the end.

Terms and definitions

<u>Labor union</u>: An organization of wage earners formed to negotiate wages and working conditions.

<u>Industrial revolution:</u> Changes brought about by mechanization of production, which shifted manufacturing from home to factory.

Strike: To stop work.

Negotiate: To arrange or settle by conferring or discussing.

Bargain: To negotiate the terms of an agreement.

Establish: To cause to be recognized without question.

<u>Organization:</u> A number of persons or groups having specific responsibilities and united for some purpose or work.

Discrimination: An act based on prejudice.

<u>Contract</u>: An agreement between two or more parties that is written and enforceable by law.

<u>Collective:</u> Made by a number of individuals acting as a group.



Labor Union History

From colonial times until the early 1800's, most citizens of the United States lived and worked on family farms. As the industrial revolution began to influence the nation's economy, many left what they saw as the hard life of a farmer to take jobs in mining, factories, and the railroads. Many of these workers found that they had left one set of hardships for another. Those who worked in mills and factories found the working hours just as long, 10 to 12 hours per day, but they were now forced to live in cities that offered crowded, unsanitary conditions. Miners, mill and factory workers and their families lived in company-provided houses. They bought all their supplies at the company store.

There was no minimum wage, medical coverage, insurance, or worker's compensation. A worker could have wages cut, be laid off or fired without warning or explanation. Children were often forced to work to help pay off a family's debt. Men faced twelve hour days and dangerous, even life threatening, conditions, in mines, the steel industry, and on the railroads. Women workers faced the same conditions in textile mills and factories, but were paid less. Those individuals, who dared to ask employers to improve conditions, were at best told that any changes would be unprofitable. At worst, a worker who complained, was labeled a trouble maker and was dismissed with little chance of finding work elsewhere.

In answer to these conditions, workers in the late 1800's began to organize into groups or unions to make their voices heard. When a company refused to hear the union's concerns, the union would call a strike. All the workers would refuse to report to work. This effectively stopped all production and would face the employer with lost business and mounting costs. Some employers met this action with violence, which resulted in the loss of life at certain coal mines, the McCormick Farm Implement Company and Carnegie Steel. These incidents, and a strike against Pullman Palace Car Company that spread to 27 states, caught the attention of the public and, therefore, the government.

At first, government action was directed against unions. Then, in the early 20th century, after a lengthy coal miners strike in Pennsylvania, President Theodore Roosevelt threatened to take over the mines, if the coal company did not negotiate with the miners' union. By 1932, the hardships of the great depression saw Franklin D. Roosevelt elected with the support of organized labor. Under FDR's New Deal, the National Labor Relations Act passed in 1933. This law established the rights of workers to join trade unions and bargain collectively with their employers through representatives of their own choosing. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 established the 40 hour work week, set the minimum wage, and prohibited child labor. The Fair Employment Practices Committee of 1941 prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, or nationality in regards to employment by businesses contracted to perform national defense work. Finally, business interests lobbied for the passage of the Taft Hartley Act in 1947. This law barred unions from contributing to political campaigns,



established the National Labor Relations Board, and gave the U.S. Attorney General the power to obtain an 80-day injunction when a strike threatened the national health and safety.

Like many other organizations, unions vary. The best are democratically organized, encourage the participation of all members, and represent their views. Some unions can be run by a small group of individuals with ties to organized crime, whose motivation is greed and power. Corrupt unions can actually put employees out of work, when their unreasonable demands force employers to close or move production to another country.

Advantages of Union Membership

The following list identifies some of the major advantages of union membership:

- Wages and other compensation are part of a binding legal contract between the employer and employees, bargained for by their union representatives.
- Raises are bargained for all employees.
- The union will defend an employee faced with discipline or dismissal.
- Problems on the job can be addressed, through a grievance process, so every employee's voice will be heard.
- Senior employees are recognized for their time of service, as part of the contract.
- Company policies, such as; work rules, vacations, or sick leave, remain constant for the term of the contract.
- Unions lobby legislators to pass laws that protect employees and their families.
- Many unions provide training or apprenticeship programs that train beginning workers and update the skills of experienced workers.

Disadvantages of Union Membership

While there are many advantages of union membership, there are also some disadvantages you should be aware of.

• An employer can legally replace striking workers with permanent replacement workers. The striking workers will only be recalled if a job for which they are qualified becomes vacant.



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- Collective bargaining benefits the majority of union members, but may not meet the specific needs of some individual employees. Individual agreements between the employer and an employee are not allowed, since the union is the sole bargaining agent for all the members.
- Members must pay union dues, which may amount to hundreds of dollars each year.
- Unions can fine members who engage in activities such as crossing a picket line during a strike.

Other Employee Organizations

Employees may choose to belong to other organizations, such as Master Builder's Association or Automotive Service Excellence.

Advantages

- These organizations may provide voluntary skill certification of the members. This makes the holder of the certification more attractive to a potential employer.
- These organizations often hold training seminars and publish journals that help their members to keep up with changes in their trades.
- These organizations hold meetings that allow members from many parts of the country to share ideas and solutions to problems.

Disadvantages

- Members are required to pay dues, which can be expensive.
- Some organizations require members to pass tests to gain skill certification.
- Members may be required to donate their time to help run the organization.



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MODULE 4E: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

<u>TO THE STUDENT</u>: Read and study the information sheet above and complete the following activities.

Activity 1: Fill in the blanks.

Union History

- 1. The ______ caused many workers to leave the family farm for work in mines, factories, or railroads.
- 2. Coal miners and their families often lived in _____ owned houses.
- 3. The towns and cities where workers lived were often _____ and
- 4. Coal miners and their families bought their supplies at the ______ store.
- 5. _____ were often forced to work at an early age.
- 6. Before unions, there was no _____ wage.
- 7. An employee could be ______ without warning or explanation.
- Workers who complained about conditions were labeled ______, fired, and often could not find another job in the area.
- Individual workers formed groups called ______ to obtain better working conditions.
- 10. When an employer refused to bargain, the unions would call a ______ to put economic pressure on the employer.



- 11. Extended strikes and violence against union members forced the ______to take action.
- 12.
 The ______
 Act of 1938 established

the 40 hour work week and prohibited child labor.

13. The ______ Act gave U.S. Attorney General the power to obtain an 80 day injunction, when a strike threatened the national health and safety.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Union Membership

- 1. _____ and _____ are part of a legal contract negotiated between the employer and the union that represents the employees.
- 2. Raises are _____ for all employees.
- 3. The union will ______ an employee faced with discipline or dismissal.
- An employee's work-related problems can be heard through a ______ process.
- 5. Employee seniority is protected as part of the _____.
- Unions lobby ______ to pass laws that protect employees and their families.
- 7. Unions can provide ______ and _____ programs that train

beginning workers and update the skills of experienced workers.

- 8. A striking worker may ______ his/her job after a strike.
- 9. Collective bargaining may not meet the needs of some ______ workers.



- 10. _____ may cost a union member hundreds of dollars each year.
- Unions can _____ members, who engage in anti-union activities, such as;
 crossing a picket line.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Membership in Other Employee Organizations

- 1. These organizations may provide voluntary skill ______ to the members.
- 2. Members of these organizations can attend ______ seminars.
- 3. Yearly meetings bring together members from across the country to share

_____ and _____ to common problems.

- 4. Members are required to pay _____, which can be expensive.
- 5. Skill certifications require members to pass ______.

Activity 2: Write a brief essay to persuade the reader to join...or not to join...a union.



MODULE 4E: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

<u>Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening</u> (RWSL)

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.4.11. Types of Writing

- C. Write persuasive pieces.
 - Include a clearly stated position or opinion.
 - Include convincing, elaborated and properly cited evidence.
 - Develop reader interest.
 - Anticipate and counter reader concerns and arguments.
 - Include a variety of methods to advance the argument or position.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- A. Write with a sharp, distinct focus.
 - Identify topic, task and audience.
 - Establish and maintain a single point of view.
- B. Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic.
 - Gather, determine validity and reliability of, analyze and organize information.
 - Employ the most effective format for purpose and audience.
 - Write fully developed paragraphs that have details and information specific to the topic and relevant to the focus.
- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
 - Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).



Student name: ___

Date: _

Describe work ethics.*

Objectives:

- A. Define the "work ethic."
- B. Define "work ethics."
- C. Distinguish between ethical and unethical work behavior.
- D. Evaluate your own commitment to the "work ethic."
- E. Prepare a list of ethical standards for the performance of your job.

MODULE 4F: INFORMATION SHEET

<u>TO THE STUDENT</u>: Read and study this information sheet and then complete the student activity at the end of this section.

What is ethics when used with or without an "S"?

Have you ever heard of "work ethics" before? If you look the term "ethic" up in the dictionary, you will see that it has to do with what is good and bad; that is, it has to do with moral issues.

There are two ways the term "work ethic" is used today: with and without an "s." The singular form, "the work ethic," means something slightly different than the plural form, "work ethics."

What is ethics without an "S"?

"The work ethic" is a phrase that describes actions and beliefs of certain people. If a person works very hard and exhibits a great deal of pride in that work, that person is said to have a good "work ethic." These people tend to be loyal, dependable, self-motivated, and satisfied workers. They believe that they have an obligation to work hard in order to provide for their families, contribute to the economic health of their community, and achieve a level of success for their own self-esteem.

*(This is also CAPS Module 2, used with permission.)



The "work ethic" concept originated back in the early Protestant church, as part of the Reformation movement in Europe. People believed that God had given them each a talent, gift, or skill (or maybe several skills) that they were expected to use to the best of their ability. To not use their God-given abilities in service to their fellow citizens was a form of sin, and the "Reformationalists" dedicated their entire lives to avoiding sin. They wanted to serve God and their fellow citizens with all their heart, thus fulfilling their purposes in life.

As you may see, some aspects of this "work ethic" concept remain in our society today. The moral obligation that many people feel to engage in productive, demanding, and appropriate work comes from these religious roots. In fact, our society sees this desire as a very good one. Employers are pleased when their employees exhibit qualities of this "work ethic." The more of these qualities the worker exhibits, the better worker he or she is considered to be.

So the "work ethic" could be defined as the belief that one should work diligently, beyond minimum expectations, striving for excellence in every aspect of the labor. This belief, along with resulting similar actions by a worker, makes for an employee that any supervisor would be pleased to have.

What is ethics with an "S"?

With an "s" on the end, "work ethics" means something slightly different. With roots in the same religious belief system, the "ethics of the workplace" are usually thought of today as a set of moral standards for each trade, profession, or job classification. For example, psychologists would never disclose information about their clients outside of their professional duties. To do so would be a violation of their workplace ethics (or their moral/professional standards). A good mechanic would never repair one item in a car while sabotaging another part to malfunction later. It would be unethical. In the same way, it is considered unethical to advertise a certain product as having certain qualities if it really doesn't.

At times, fine lines are drawn between the ethical and the unethical. One salesperson might believe it is all right to say his/her product is the best, while another might say there are none better (implying that this is as good as they come, but no better than other fine models). The sales people may disagree; the first maintaining there is nothing wrong with his statement, and the second refusing to "lie" to the customer. These types of differences among standards can confuse younger workers and many people argue and debate such issues at length.

As confusing as it can become, each type of job has certain ethical standards that most workers agree on for that occupation. Medical care workers agree that they should do everything they can to save a patient in danger of dying. Most workers agree that misrepresenting information to a customer or client is unethical. There are many, many other standards that workers within each occupation or profession try to live up to. These are workplace ethics (plural, with an "s").



There are also many general ethical principles, applicable to any occupational area. Honesty, loyalty, confidentiality, accuracy, and open-mindedness are qualities that most employers hope their workers will possess. You could probably think of many others as well.

Every worker, including you, practices workplace ethics. Some workers practice them more conscientiously than others. Unfortunately, some workers are unethical in their performance of duties. At times, they break laws and are prosecuted, but more often they simply fail to live up to accepted standards of doing the job well. Perhaps they "juggle figures" to make their books balance (fraud/embezzlement). Perhaps they copy someone else's work and call it their own (plagiarism). Maybe they hire a relative or a friend for a job rather than the most qualified applicant (nepotism). Although these practices could be challenged if discovered or uncovered, they often go unnoticed to all but the guilty party.

What about you?

How good is your understanding of the "work ethic" and "workplace ethics"? Do you exhibit qualities of a strong work ethic? Do you practice good workplace ethics? Do you do your job in a way that would earn respect from your employer? If every one of your actions and attitudes could be seen on videotape and played back in front of your employer, would you be pleased or embarrassed? Would your boss be proud or disappointed? Or worse yet, would you be fired for some unethical act?

The following activities will help you to be able to describe work ethics (both with and without an "s") and to evaluate how ethical your own actions are. Most workers are reasonably ethical and exhibit at least some qualities of the "work ethic." But many employers complain that they only have a few "really good workers." It would undoubtedly please the bosses of America if we workers would launch an "old-fashioned work ethic" campaign, improving the work ethic (and ethics) in each of our organizations. Will it start with you and me?



MODULE 4F: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

<u>TO THE STUDENT</u>: After reading and studying the above information sheet, complete these activities to demonstrate your understanding.

1. Defining the terms:

In the space below, contrast the meanings of the terms "the work ethic" and "work ethics."

2a. Using the terms

Next to each item below, write the term "ethical" or "unethical," indicating how each action should be viewed by workers. If there is some doubt, or the item is unclear, write "depends," and state what additional information would be helpful.

1	A Dairy Queen worker weighs each cone before serving it to customers.
2	The mechanic lets his brother use the garage bay for fixing his brakes after the shop has closed.
3	The carpentry co-op student enters 5:00 on the time card after his co-worker urges him to do so, even though she is going home at 4:20 p.m.



4	_A nurse aide works past the end of the shift in order to finish assigned work. The aide was asked to be certain to finish the work during the shift because there would be no overtime paid.
5	A machinist co-op student scraps forty pieces and decides not to tell anyone because of the trouble it would cause.
6	An assembler slows down the production rate at his station, even though he could work faster because workers at other stations seem unable to keep up.

2b. Check which of the following worker characteristics would reflect a worker with a good "work ethic."

punctual	sociable
respectful	uncooperative
independent	critical
conscientious self-centered works when ill satisfied takes on no extras	loyal reports off when ill seeks improvement interdependent disinterested

<u>*Note to instructor</u>: The above exercises may have some ambiguous or unclear responses because many issues relating to work ethics are ambiguous. Please discuss the activities with students and help them draw conclusions based on your additional input and experience. Students should be able to justify their responses.



3. Evaluate your commitment to the work ethic

Rate yourself on a scale of 1-5 on each of the following items using this scale:

- 5 A leader; consistently act this way and encourage others to do so as well.
- 4 A role model; usually act this way and try to be an example.
- 3 A good worker; can be depended upon to act this way most of the time.
- 2 Could improve; not always the best at this, and should try to do better.
- 1 Negligent; never gave it much thought.
- 1._____ I attend every day, arrive on time, begin my tasks promptly, and work continually except for scheduled breaks.
- 2._____ I realize my own errors quickly, admit when I have made a mistake, try to solve errorcaused problems, and avoid making the same mistake again.
- 3._____ I wear clean, well-fitting clothing, keep my body clean, and dress appropriately for my assigned duties.
- 4._____I complete tasks in the expected time, combine tasks for greatest efficiency, and refrain from nonproductive time wasting (unscheduled breaks, etc.).
- 5._____ I conform to all safety rules and exhibit extra concern for the safety of others.
- 6._____ I get enough rest, work enthusiastically, and avoid destructive health habits (smoking, substance abuse, drinking, and overeating).
- 7._____ I work 60 minutes every hour and seek alternative tasks when assigned work is complete.
- 8._____ I avoid complaining and criticizing, maintain a productive pace, and am committed to the company's goals.
- 9.____ I make sure I achieve only the highest quality workmanship and I refuse to be represented by second-rate work or products.
- 10.____I work cooperatively to achieve group goals, compliment others' work, and participate in group efforts.

Add up your score and see where you could improve:

40-50-what a worker!30-40-not bad, most employers would be happy20-30-you could stand to improve your work ethicbelow 20 -you may soon be unemployed



4. List ethical standards for your job

Prepare a list of ethical standards for workers in your occupation. List at least five GENERAL ethical standards (applicable to any job), and at least five ethical standards that apply specifically to YOUR job.

General Standards:

Your job title: _____

Your occupational ethical standards:



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MODULE 4F: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Career Education and Work

13.1.11. Career Awareness and Planning

A. Analyze career options based on student interests, abilities, aptitudes and accomplishments.

13.3.11. Career Retention (Keeping a Job)

A. Evaluate personal attitudes and work habits that support career retention and advancement.

<u>Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking</u> <u>and Listening (RWSL)</u>

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.6.11 Speaking and Listening

- A. Listen to others.
 - Ask clarifying questions.
 - Synthesize information, ideas and opinions to determine relevancy.
 - Take notes.



Student name: _____

Date: _

Describe the importance of quality customer service.

Objectives:

- A. Define customer.
- B. Define customer service.
- C. Describe the importance of quality customer service.
- D. Define the guidelines for quality customer service.

MODULE 4G: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study the following information sheet and complete the student activities at the end of this module.

What is a customer?

A customer is a person who buys goods and services from a shop or business.

What is customer service?

Customer service is the process of assisting another person or persons who buys goods and services from a shop or business.

Quality customer service is almost always identified as one of the keys to success for business and organizational enterprises in the United States and the world.

Developing a Customer Service Attitude

All workers need to develop a positive service attitude in order to be effective. The goal of quality customer service is to send a positive message with a good attitude to customers. This message must focus on addressing the needs of customers and helping them solve their problems.

Having a positive customer service attitude requires that you:

- Be approachable
- Remain positive
- Be patient with people
- Maintain a good sense of humor
- Make the customer feel welcome



- Remember the importance of the customer
- Be sincere in helping solve the customer's problem
- Always put the customer first

Customer Service "Facts"

Are these statistics really true? Perhaps not for every business; nevertheless, they offer a thought-provoking insight into the importance of every customer as an individual.

- Dissatisfied customers tell an average of 10 other people about their bad experience; 12 percent tell up to 20 people.
- Satisfied customers will tell and average of five people about their positive experience.
- It costs five times more money to attract a new customer than to keep an existing one.
- Up to 90 percent of dissatisfied customers will not buy from you again, and they won't tell you why.
- 96 percent of dissatisfied customers do not complain of poor service.
- 95 percent of dissatisfied customers will become loyal customers again if their complaints are handled well and quickly.
- The first 30 seconds of a phone call or meeting sets the tone for the remainder of the contact. The last 30 seconds are critical to establishing lasting rapport.
- In many industries quality of service is one of the few variables that can distinguish a business from its competition.
- Providing high-quality service can save your business money. The same skills that lead to increased customer satisfaction also lead to increased employee productivity.
- Customers are willing to pay more to receive better service.
- Good service leads to increased sales.



What Infuriates Customers?

There are many little things that irritate customers. The 10 items below are the most common. Be sure they do not appear in your day-to-day operation.

Rude and unempowered service workers Make sure people have the authority to do their job.

Missing deadlines Don't promise what you can't deliver.

Being put on hold Challenge yourself to eliminate or minimize this.

Customer service lines being busy Add more lines or more people.

Promises that are not kept If you can't keep them, don't make them.



Faulty products Quality is the foundation of Customer satisfaction.

Difficulty with exchanges Make your company easy to do business with.

Unqualified or untrained staff Train, train, train.

Cliches Be real. Talk in a conversational manner.

Pushy sales people Don't hire them, don't keep them.



Check Yourself...

J	I try to brighten the customer's day by doing or saying something that brings a
	little sunshine into their life.

- I "go the extra mile" when dealing with customers. I do just a little more than the customer expects.
- When approached by a customer, I convey by my actions that the customer is not an interruption.
- I convey the idea that I am the company, and refer to the company as "we" and "us" rather than "they" and "them."
- I make it a point to greet customers with a smile. I create a friendly atmosphere when dealing with customers.
- I take the time to learn and remember customers' names, calling them by name during our conversation and upon their return to my place of business.
- I allow the customer to be "right" whenever I can, and never argue with customers.
 - I refrain from answering customers' questions with "I don't know."
 - I keep in mind the idea that every customer pays part of my salary.
 - I choose positive words rather than negative words when speaking to customers.



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MODULE 4G: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

<u>TO THE STUDENT</u>: After reading and reviewing the above information sheet, complete these activities to demonstrate your understanding.

Activity 1 – Case scenarios

Read the customer service case scenarios and describe how you would handle the situation. Please use complete sentences and proper English and spelling.

1. Tom is a sales clerk for a retail store. Joe, a customer, is buying a sweater for himself. When the sale is rung up on the cash register, the price of the sweater is \$25. Joe questions that he said the sign above where the sweater was being sold said it was on sale for 25% off. Tom said the sweater must have been on the wrong rack. Joe said he doesn't want the sweater if he has to pay \$25. How would you handle this situation?

2. Sam works for a fast food restaurant. It is approaching the lunch hour and the lines out front for orders are getting very long. The manager asks Sam to open a register out front and start taking orders. When he opens the register, a customer who has just walked in the door comes into his line. Please remember there are other customers who have been waiting in the other lines for a long time. What should Sam do?



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- 3. Susan works for a catalog retail store that sells men's clothing and is responsible for calling customers and letting them know their order is ready to be picked up at the store. When she calls the customer, Carol Brown, she gets an answering machine, so she leaves the information on the machine.

The next day Carol calls Susan's manager and complains why that information was left on the answering machine that she had given instructions when she placed the order that it was a gift for her husband and she didn't want him to know about it. Apparently he got home and listened to the message, and questioned her about her order. How should Susan handle this situation?

4. Jane is starting her first day working at the customer service department of a retail store. So far the day is going well when a customer calls. She is angry about a can opener that did not work when she got it home. She is yelling at Jane on the phone. How should Jane handle this?



Activity 2 – Customer Service Representative Interview

After you are done with these case scenarios, you should either call or go to a retail store or customer service department and explain to them your assignment is to find out a good and bad situation with a customer. Be sure to tell them your name and the name of your school. If they are busy and can not help you with the assignment at that time ask them when would be a more convenient time. You should talk to at least two people and give both good and bad situations for each person you talk to. After you are done talking with them, write a brief summary of the conversation.



MODULE 4G: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

<u>Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening</u> (RWSL)

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- D. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
 - Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

