

# AVOIDING REPETITION

## 9 UNIT

When we speak or write, we very often want to make some connection with other things that we are saying or writing. This results in some amount of repetition. When do you think such repetition is annoying and when it is not?

In this unit you will learn how to avoid unnecessary repetition.

**A. Notice the element of repetition in the following sentences and decide whether it is acceptable or not. Give reasons in support of your opinion.**

1. Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people.
2. "I want to scale Mt. Everest, I want to do scuba diving and I want to fly an aeroplane. Actually, I want to do a lot of things before I die."
3. New Delhi has many big, big malls.
4. In this article first I have tried to discuss the various causes of air-pollution. Then I have tried to discuss the various effects of air-pollution and finally I have tried to discuss various ways to reduce the amount of air-pollution.
5. "I've failed."  
"You've failed? I can't believe this!"
6. The incident took place today at around 6 a.m. in the morning.
7. Could you repeat that again, please?
8. I am very, very sorry.
9. I have planned a plan.
10. When I heard that she was staying at the Hotel Park View, I decided to go to the Hotel Park View to meet her there.

**B. Read the following passages that describe a Herbal Doctor Mr. Ved Prakash Goel.**


**a. How many words have been used in each paragraph?**

A	B
Mr Ved Prakash Goel is a self-taught practitioner of herbal medicine. The other day (Mr Ved Prakash Goel) met two patients suffering from respiratory diseases. They had difficulty in breathing. Mr Ved Prakash Goel prescribed to these patients his latest herbal medicine for respiratory diseases. At first the patients refused to take the medicine prescribed by Mr Ved Prakash Goel but when Mr Ved Prakash Goel assured the patients of respiratory diseases that his herbal medicine was purely herbal, the patients of respiratory diseases agreed to try that medicine. That medicine must have been very effective, for the patients of the respiratory diseases were cured of their diseases and thanked Mr Ved Prakash Goel for his wonderful herbal medicine.	Mr Ved Prakash Goel is a self-taught practitioner of herbal medicine. The other day (he) met two patients suffering from some breathing problem and prescribed to them his latest invention. At first they refused to take the medicine but on being assured by him that it was purely herbal and safe, they agreed to try it. Indeed, the prescription must have been very effective, for the patients were cured in a matter of days. They thanked the herbal doctor for the wonderful cure.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

**b. Circle the words or phrases in paragraph B that replace words or phrases in**



paragraph A. Then join the corresponding circles with a line as shown in the example.

- c. Which of the two paragraphs makes better reading? Why? (Discuss in pairs and write your answer below)

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- C. Read the passage below. Underline the words that have been used to avoid repetition. Mark the words that have not been replaced or deleted with '?'.**

It was yet another escapade of Gopi and Gargi into the forest. The two were playing in the courtyard of the ruined castle when they heard strange sounds, as if someone was ringing tiny bells in a temple. But there was none in the vicinity. They knew it. Then who was making those sounds? Nothing of that sort had happened during any of their earlier visits. Was the castle haunted? Were there any ghosts in it? Suddenly, this thought had a vice like grip on their minds. Naturally enough, both were terrified but neither wanted to admit it. Presently the sounds became louder and louder and the duo would have fled had Gargi's sharp eyes not caught a glimpse of a herd of goats grazing behind the thickets nearby. 'So, those are the ghosts!' said Gargi and both burst into laughter. They rushed to the spot to have a closer look and found that there were thirteen goats in all and each had a tiny brass bell dangling from its neck. Four goats were black and the rest were brown.

- D. Read Passage 1 below and then fill in the blanks in Passage 2 with one word each. You may choose words from the ones you underlined in the exercise C. Which makes a better reading-Passage 1 or Passage 2? Why?**

**Passage 1**

Moina and Debi are students of class IX. Moina and Debi are great friends although Moina and Debi don't study at the same school. Moina has never



played cricket and Debi has never played cricket too but Moina and Debi are crazy about cricket. So far Moina and Debi have together watched ten international matches played by their country, India. Four of these matches were played in different foreign countries and six of these matches were played in their country, India. Surprisingly, India has lost no match where Moina and Debi were present in the stands. Moina claims that she is more passionate about the game of cricket than Debi. Debi says she is more passionate about the game than Moina.

**Passage 2**

Moina and Debi are students of class IX. .... are great friends although they don't study at the same school. ....has ever played any cricket but .... are crazy about.... especially one day matches. So far the....have watched 10 matches together, all involving India. Surprisingly, India has lost....of them. Four of these matches were played in different foreign countries and the....in India. ... girl claims that she is more passionate about the game than the other.

- E.** Ratna and Rajshree are two sisters. Ratna teaches English in a college and her sister Rajshree works in a bank. Rajshree is younger than Ratna. Ratna and Rajshree wear their hair long. Ratna likes eating ice-cream while Rajshree likes eating pastries. Ratna is not interested in sports. Rajshree is also not interested in sports. Rajshree is married to Utlam. Utlam is an engineer. Ratna is married to Sujit. Sujit is a businessman. Ratna has a daughter and a son. Rajshree has a daughter and a son too.

**Rewrite the passage above such that there is no unnecessary repetition in it.**

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- F. **What do you think of repetition in the following passage? Do you think all of it is bad? Can you improve the passage by removing instances of unnecessary repetition?**

#### **Chores!**

Chores! Chores! Chores! Chores are boring! Scrubbing toilets, cleaning sinks, and washing bathtubs take up a lot of my time and are not fun at all.

Toilets! When you're scrubbing toilets, make sure they are not stinky. I've scrubbed one before and I was lucky it didn't stink. I think toilets are one of the hardest things to scrub in the bathroom because it is hard to get up around the rim.

Sinks are one of the easiest things to clean in the bathroom because they have no rims and they are small. I have cleaned one before and it was pretty easy.

Bathtubs, ever washed one? They are big, they are deep, and it is hard to get up around the sides. The bathtub is the hardest, I think, to wash in the bathroom.

All chores are boring, especially making my bed. Cleaning my room is OK because I have to organize, and I like organizing. Dusting is the worst: dust, set down, pick up, dust, set down.

There are so many things to dust, and it's no fun.

Chores aren't the worst but they're definitely not the best!

Source: Teaching that Makes Sense

([http://www.ttms.org/writing\\_quality/writing\\_quality.htm](http://www.ttms.org/writing_quality/writing_quality.htm))

## G. Substitution

### G.1 We often use pronouns to make links between sentences and to avoid repetition.

Meena went to the grove with her aunt. She found it full of mangoes.

**Read the following extract from the story 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona'.**

"Of course, everything is so difficult now, food so scarce and dear, we could not keep going unless we charged a fee. But every week, Lucia's brothers have made their payment." She added simply, "I do not know what they do, I do not ask. Work is scarce in Verona. But whatever it is, I know they do it well."

**Work with your partner and answer these questions.**

1. In the first line 'everything' refers to?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. The phrase 'their payment' (line 3) refers to?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. 'They' in the third line refers to?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. The speaker says, 'I do not ask'. What does the speaker not ask? Whom?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. 'Whatever it is.' (line 4) Here 'it' refers to?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Who do the pronouns 'I' and 'She' refer to?

\_\_\_\_\_

## G.2 Substitution in formal writing

### Look at this piece of formal writing

The Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner of Police were the Chief Guest and the Guest of Honour respectively. The former delivered the key note address and the latter gave away the prizes to the winners.

### Complete the following table using information from the text above.

The Deputy Commissioner= the Chief Guest

The Commissioner of Police= \_\_\_\_\_

The former= \_\_\_\_\_

The latter= \_\_\_\_\_

Study the use of the words underlined in the text.

- a. Why are they used?

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. Why do you think they are not commonly used in spoken English?

\_\_\_\_\_

Rewrite the following texts. Use the former, the latter, and respectively to avoid repetition.

1. Anand likes History and Joel likes Mathematics. It is interesting to note that Anand is the son of a Mathematics teacher while Joel's father is a teacher of History.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Seema, the monitor of class IX and Ramesh, the monitor of class X were asked to meet the Principal before they went home.

### G.3 Other types of substitution

#### Study the following sentences

- The Bunsen burner broke last week. So we ordered a new one.  
(One=Bunsen burner)
- He eats a lot less than he once did.  
(Did=ate)
- The mother asked the daughter to tidy her room and she did so.  
(Did so=tidied her bed room)
- A: I don't think it'll rain tomorrow.  
B: I hope not  
(Not=that it will not rain tomorrow)
- There are a number of books in the library. You should use some of these.  
(These=books)
- Unconventional sources of energy are becoming popular. Such sources help us to preserve our environment.  
(Such= unconventional sources of energy)
- 'Who ate all the rice?'  
'I did.'  
(Did= ate all the rice)
- Govind was delighted with the exam results. So was Gafur.  
(So=delighted with the exam results)



**G.4 Use any of the above types of substitution to improve the following sentences.**

1. Flendian Whalers killed more minkes in 2010 than they killed in 2000.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. The fishermen were condemned for catching so many small fish. They said they caught so many small fish because they had to earn a living.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The light racquet was ineffective but the heavy racquet was difficult to handle.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The rains are very unpredictable in Shillong. We were advised to come prepared for rainy weather conditions.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Mr. Chopra entertained the guests very well. Mrs. Chopra also entertained the guests very well.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is lying outside in the garden?  
It's one of the two umbrellas we bought yesterday. Didn't you see the umbrella in the lobby?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. A: "I won't stay away from school tomorrow."  
B: "I should hope you will not stay away from school tomorrow."  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## G.5 Omission

**Sometimes we can avoid repetition by omitting certain words and phrases. Which words or phrases have been left out in the following examples? Is the meaning in all of them clear in spite of the omission?**

Oil is not found in the north but copper is.

is = is found in the north

**What has been omitted in the following sentences?**

A: "Did she find out who had stolen her purse?"

B: "No, she didn't."

didn't = \_\_\_\_\_

2. You take my book and I'll take Indu's when she gets back.

Indu's = \_\_\_\_\_

3. If I don't get it to you tomorrow, I'll send it the day after.

The day after = \_\_\_\_\_

4. Firstly, add four grams, then another four, then another four until the mixture has solidified.

Another four / another = \_\_\_\_\_

5. There were a number of graduates who were earning more than I was.

was = \_\_\_\_\_

6. I think we need coaching more than they do.

do = \_\_\_\_\_

7. A: "I can tell you what I know."

B: "You needn't. I'm not asking you to."

needn't = \_\_\_\_\_

to = \_\_\_\_\_

8. A: "Do you visit the doctor regularly?"

B: "No, I can't afford to."

to = \_\_\_\_\_

**G.6 Complete the following conversation between two sisters with suitable substitute words.**

Mitali: Did you buy the dress you had seen in the shop?

Chetali: No, I \_\_\_\_\_

Mitali: But why? You liked\_\_\_\_, didn't you?

Chetali: I had second thoughts about it. Well, I thought I would wear one of \_\_\_\_\_ instead. You have so many of them in your wardrobe.

Mitali: I \_\_\_ but\_\_\_\_\_ are all designer dresses unlike the cheap stuff you wear and I am not going to let you touch \_\_\_\_\_ of them. Do you understand?

Chetali: That's not fair!

Mitali: It\_\_\_\_. Everyone should wear their own dresses. So you'd better go and buy that dress before someone else\_\_\_\_\_.

**Go back to the Unit 8 on Comparisons. Where can you find examples of substitution and omission in it?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**H. (a) Match the sentences in A and B and write them together in the spaces below.**

A	B
1. Both Ajay and Sahir are good players.	a. Few reach their destination.
2. Thousands of baby turtles set out on the long journey.	b. Either would be suitable as a captain.
3. Some like to eat fish raw.	c. Those who do have to study hard.
4. No one knows who did it.	d. Others prefer it cooked.
5. Not many people get to university.	e. It could be anyone.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**(b) Now underline the substitution word in each of the sentences written above and decide what each of the words refers to.**

Substitution Word	What does it refer to?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	