

## Grammar can be a *Piece of Cake*

(Just follow these simple, **Hot Tips** for Immediate Language Arts Success!)

- ❖ **Lose *like* from your vocabulary.** That is unless you are using *like* to describe the special fondness you feel for something or someone or to describe similarities.
- ❖ Worried about whether to choose *should of*, *would of*, or *could of*? **Don't be!** What about *might of*? **Forget it!** Feel like running with scissors because you don't know whether to choose *hissel* or *theirselves*? **Don't! Why? None of them are correct in any situation.** (We mean would've, could've, himself, themselves...)
  - ❖ Fine, but what do you do when faced with the choice between *fewer* and *less*? Okay, now you can run with scissors, **or** you could just remember that ***fewer is always used for plural amounts while less is only used for a quantity of one thing. Less has only a singular application:***
    - ❖ Fewer books, less knowledge \* Fewer hours, less time
    - ❖ Fewer drips, less water \* Fewer challenges, less courage
    - ❖ Fewer apples, less applesauce \* Fewer people, less love
- ❖ Remember that **ALL subjects and verbs must agree and that the subject of a sentence will never be found in a prepositional phrase, so: plural with plural and singular with singular.** That's why being able to identify a subject is so important. Remember: The subject of a sentence will never be found in a prepositional phrase. (Example: Each of a million students wants to win. Each is the subject, not students.)
- ❖ **Never capitalize a family relationship such as aunt, uncle, mom, dad, grandma, or grandfather if the word follows a possessive pronoun such as my, your, his, her, their, or our. Do capitalize the relationship word if it stands alone and is taking the place of the person's name.**
  - I think your grandmother is going to be late.
  - I think Grandmother is going to be late.

**NO SENTENCE EVER, EVER, EVER STARTS WITH ME or HIM!!!** **HER** will only be correct to start a sentence if it's being used as a possessive (Her car, Her purse, Her house...), but **never** as a stand alone subject. It's **He and I** or **She and I** or **My brother and I**. Using **Me and Him** to start a sentence is so wrong that we won't even go there.

Want to be a better speller? Then follow these better speller rules:

- Adding a prefix never, ever changes the spelling of the root word:  
***mis + spell = misspell and un + necessary = unnecessary***
- When adding full to a word, drop the second l: ***hope + full = hopeful and care + full = careful***
- When a word ends with a hard **c**, as in picn**ic** or pan**ic**, keep it hard. Add a **k** with any suffix except **s**: picn**ic**ked and pan**ic**ked. **i** before **e** except after **c** or when sounding like **a** as in n**ei**ghor and w**ei**gh
  - **generally**: believe, ch**ief**, br**ief**, retr**ie**ve, ach**ie**ve
  - **sounds like the long a**: re**in**deer, re**ig**n, n**ei**ghor, w**ei**ght, **ei**ght
  - **after c**: rece**ei**ve, dece**ei**ve, conce**ei**ve
- Remember this nonsense sentence for basic exceptions: ***At your leisure, please seize either the protein or the caffeine from the weird foreigner.***