GRAMMAR PRACTICE 3

As I was backing out of my driveway, being careful not to go too fast. It was going to rain in fact it was raining. A flash of lightning slapped the sky and thunder chased the electric streak with deafening, deadly exuberance. The resulting adrenaline rush did more for me then my coffee and I was now awake.

T  F    1. There are six clauses.

T  F    2. The first clause is a fragment.

T  F    3. The second and third clauses create a run-on.

T  F    4. The introductory phrase for the third clause is also an infinitive phrase.

T  F    5. There needs to be a semicolon or a period between rain and in.

T  F    6. The subject of the fourth clause is lightning.

T  F    7. The word then in the second to the last clause should be than.

T  F    8. The passage contains personification, alliteration and an oxymoron.

T  F    9. There should be a comma between coffee and and in the last clause.

## Scroll down for answers and explanations.

GRAMMAR PRACTICE 3 – ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

## As I was backing out of my driveway, being careful not to go too fast. It was going to rain in fact it was raining. A flash of lightning slapped the sky and thunder chased the electric streak with deafening, deadly exuberance. The resulting adrenaline rush did more for me then my coffee and I was now awake.

F  1. There are six clauses.

There are seven:

As I was backing out of my driveway, being careful not to go too fast.

It was going to rain

in fact it was raining.

A flash of lightning slapped the sky

and thunder chased the electric streak with deafening, deadly exuberance.

The resulting adrenaline rush did more for me then my coffee

and I was now awake.

T 2. The first clause is a fragment.

*As I was backing out of my driveway, being careful not to go too fast.*

There is a subject and verb combination but the word as is a condition word, so we have a dependent clause. A dependent clause without an independent clause either before or after it (and connected to it) is a fragment.

The phrase beginning with the word being is a participial phrase, so it’s just part of the

predicate; it is not another clause.

T  3. The second and third clauses create a run-on.

S  V V infinitive S V V

*It was going to rain in fact it was raining.*

There are two independent clauses, so there needs to be a period, semicolon or comma with a coordinating conjunction (and, or, nor, for, so, but, yet) between them. Where such punctuation is missing between two independent clauses, you have a run-on.

Often when writers mistakenly use a comma or omit punctuation where stronger punctuation is needed, this should suggest that the two sentences feel closer in content than other sentences; therefore, this would be a great place for a semicolon.

The sentence correctly punctuated would look like this:

*It was going to rain; in fact, it was raining.*

Here is another option:

*It was going to rain. In fact, it was raining.*

F  4. The introductory phrase for the third clause is also an infinitive phrase.

*in fact it was raining.*

The phrase in fact is a prepositional phrase because it begins with the word *in* and an airplane

can be inside a cloud.

An infinitive phrase begins with an infinitive: **To be** perfectly honest, I am pleased with my

grade.  Infinitives are not conjugated, and they begin with the word *to*: *to go*, *to run*, *to play*.

T  5. There must be a semicolon or a period between rain and in.

*It was going to rain in fact it was raining.*

There are two independent clauses, so a period or semicolon is needed. The sentence correctly punctuated would look like one of these options:

*It was going to rain; in fact, it was raining.*

*It was going to rain. In fact, it was raining.*

F  6. The subject of the fourth clause is lightning.

*A flash of lightning slapped the sky.*

The words of lightning create a prepositional phrase. You will not find your subject in a prepositional phrase. The subject is flash.

T  7. The word then in the second to the last clause should be than.

The word then refers to time sequence; the word than sets up comparison. I’m comparing the

adrenaline rush to my coffee high, so I need to use the word *than*.

The mnemonic is as follows: I would rather have an A than a B; the word than has an A in it.

T  8. The passage contains personification, alliteration and an oxymoron.

PERSONIFICATION: *A flash of lightning slapped the sky and thunder chased the electric*

*streak with deafening, deadly exuberance.*

The flash of lightning slapped the sky, which is personification. A *flash of* *Lightning* cannot

literally slap anything.  Slapping is a person-like characteristic.

PERSONIFICATION: The expression thunder chased gives thunder the person-like ability to

chase something, also a person-like characteristic.

ALLITERATION: The words deafening and deadly create alliteration: a repetition of

consonant sound at the beginning of a series of words.

OXYMORON: The expression deadly exuberance is an oxymoron, a pairing of dissimilar

terms, words or ideas.

T  9. There should be a comma between coffee and and in the last clause.

S V S V

*The resulting adrenaline rush did more for me than my coffee and I was now awake.*

The two clauses are independent and there is a coordinating conjunction between them, so a comma should be inserted. You could also use a period if you wanted to.

Correctly punctuated, the sentence would look like this:

*The resulting adrenaline rush did more for me than my coffee, and I was now awake.*

Here are two other options:

*The resulting adrenaline rush did more for me than my coffee. And I was now awake.*

*The resulting adrenaline rush did more for me than my coffee; I was now awake.*