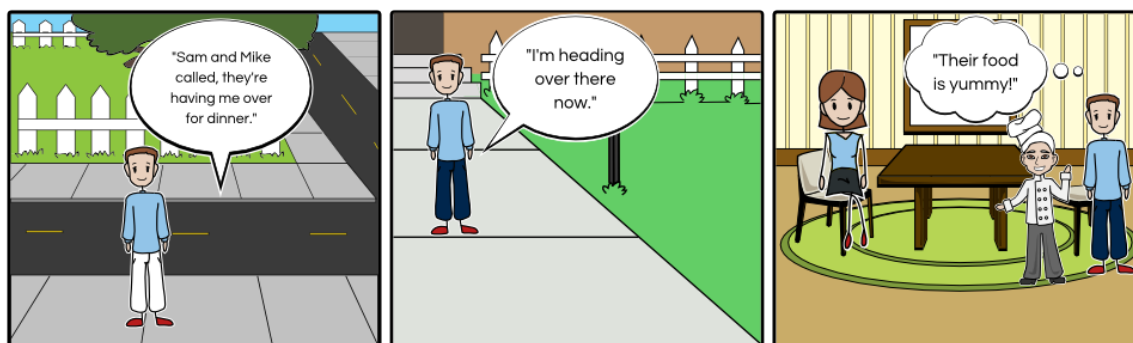


COMMON WRITING ERRORS

aka Pet Peeves of Teachers!



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
There	Here	Substitute the word <u>here</u> for <u>there</u> : There they are. = Here they are. Example: There are many multiple choice questions on the TASC exam.
Their	Our	Substitute the word <u>our</u> for <u>their</u> : Their friends are coming for a visit. = Our friends are coming for a visit. Example: They're wasting their time playing video games all day.
They're	They are	Substitute the words <u>they are</u> for <u>they're</u> : They're going to the movies Friday night. = They are going to the movies Friday night. Example: They're going to study at the library tonight.



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
To	Destination of subject; Object of an action; When two or too is not appropriate to use	Basically, use <u>to</u> when <u>too</u> or <u>two</u> do not make sense. Substitute the words <u>so</u> , <u>also</u> , and a <u>number</u> for the word <u>to</u> : She had to buy a new phone case. = She had so, also, two buy a new phone case. None of those fit, so use to . Example: Please take me to the mall now.
Too	So Also	Substitute the word <u>so</u> or <u>also</u> for <u>too</u> : Blue is my favorite color too . = Blue is my favorite color also . Example: That new movie is too scary for me to go see!
Two	The number 2	Substitute a different <u>number</u> for <u>two</u> : He ate two hamburgers for dinner. = He ate three hamburgers for dinner. Example: I picked apples today and ate two of them. My friend did too.



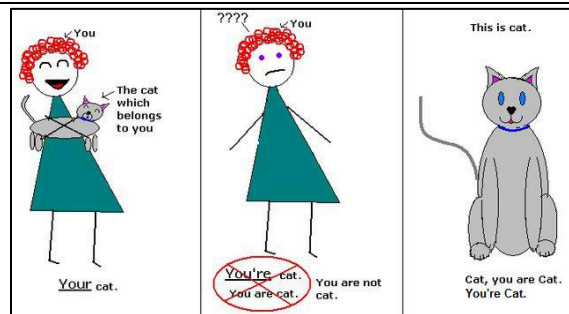
It's / Its

It's = contraction of "it is"
Its = possessive pronoun or adjective

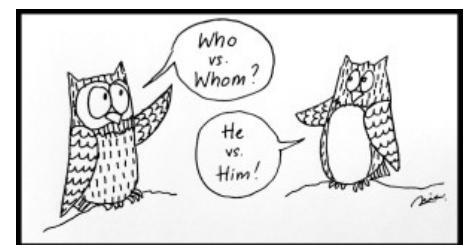
WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
It's	It is	Substitute the words <u>it is</u> for <u>it's</u> : It is not a holiday next Monday. = It's not a holiday next Monday. Example: He bought a new shovel because it's supposed to snow next week.
Its	His Hers	Substitute the word <u>his/her</u> for <u>its</u> : The bird likes her new nest in our tree. = The bird likes its new nest in our tree. Example: She dropped the computer and its screen cracked. <i>*Tricky because its sounds possessive – but its never gets an apostrophe in this case.</i>



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
You're	You are	Substitute the words <u>you are</u> for <u>you're</u> : You are so annoying sometimes! = You're so annoying sometimes! Example: If you're still considering taking the TASC exam soon, you must attend class.
Your	Our	Substitute the word <u>our</u> for <u>your</u> : I like our new classroom. = I like your new classroom. Example: We are going to your new restaurant for dinner Saturday evening.



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Who	He She	Substitute the word <u>he/she</u> for <u>who</u> : There was an old lady, she lived in a shoe. = There was an old lady who lived in a shoe. Example: The teacher wants to know who will be here tomorrow. <i>(So think – The teacher wants to know if <u>she</u> will be here tomorrow.)</i>
Whom	Him Her	Substitute the word <u>him/her</u> for <u>whom</u> : To him I am writing that letter. = To whom are you writing that letter? Example: You're going to the party with whom ? <i>*Many people mix up these two words; most people use him or her in a sentence rather than whom. It is important to understand the difference.</i>





WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Who's	Who is	Substitute the words <u>who is</u> for <u>who's</u> : Who is the best player on your team? = Who's the best player on your team? Example: Who's taking the TASC exam next month?
Whose	His Her	Substitute the word <u>his/her</u> for <u>whose</u> : Whose books are these? = They are his books. Example: My best friend is driving whose car?

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
We're	We are	Substitute the words <u>we are</u> for <u>we're</u> : We are going to play cards Friday night. = We're going to play cards Friday night. Example: Yes, we're taking the TASC exam next month.
Were	Are	Substitute the word <u>are</u> for <u>were</u> : Pencils are given to us for the test. = These pencils were given to us for the test. Example: Did you see the shirts they were trying to sell?
Where	Here	Substitute the word <u>here</u> for <u>where</u> : Where are the calculators? = Here are the calculators. Example: You have to ask your teacher where it is. (Think: <i>Here</i> it is.)
Wear	To be clothed in; to erode	Substitute the word <u>dress(ed, es) in, model, sport</u> for <u>wear</u> : Michelle Obama dresses in beautiful dresses. = Michelle Obama wears beautiful dresses. Example: Why does he always wear Star Wars t-shirts? He's a big fan! <i>*Note: These words do not all sound alike, but they are often confused in writing.</i>

we're
We're going to school.

were
The cows were eating grass in the meadow.

where
Where is the treasure buried?

wear
Wear your suit to the interview.

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Are	Were	Substitute the words <u>were</u> for <u>are</u> : Are you going on vacation next week? = Were you going to go on vacation next week? Example: We are going to go visit our friend in the hospital.
Our	Your	Substitute the word <u>your</u> for <u>our</u> : Your teachers count on you to attend school daily. = Our teachers count us to attend school daily. Example: We need more computers for our class. <i>*The word "our" is pronounced like the word "hour."</i>

Are
They **are** my brothers.

Our
He is **our** son.

Hour
He is **one hour** late.

Really Learn English!

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
By	To go past Identifies performing an action, an achievement, a deadline, amount/size of a margin	Substitute the word <u>past</u> for <u>by</u> : We just drove past my cousin's house. = We just drove by my cousin's house. Example: Are we taking the bus that will go <u>by</u> the grocery store? Substitute the words <u>via</u> , <u>because of</u> , <u>by way of</u> for <u>by</u> : My team won <u>because of</u> a touchdown! = My team won by a touchdown! Example: The tests were handed out <u>by</u> Kelli.
Buy	Obtain in exchange for payment Accept the truth of	Substitute the word <u>obtain</u> for <u>buy</u> : Are you going to <u>obtain</u> that shirt? = Are you going to <u>buy</u> that shirt? Example: I'm going to <u>buy</u> some vegetables at the Farmers' Market today. Substitute the word <u>believe</u> for <u>buy</u> : I'm not believing that story! = I'm not buying that story! Example: The jury won't <u>buy</u> his alibi.
Bye	A pass to the next round of competition Informal for good-bye!	Substitute the word <u>pass</u> for <u>bye</u> : Our soccer team got a pass in the playoffs. = Our soccer team got a bye in the playoffs. Example: I earned a <u>bye</u> on our next quiz because of my perfect attendance! Substitute the word <u>good-bye</u> for <u>bye</u> : Adios means good-bye in Spanish. = Adios means bye in Spanish. Example: I always tell my mom "I love you, <u>bye</u> " when I leave for school.
Bi	Two or twice, every other	Substitute the word <u>two</u> , <u>twice</u> , or <u>every other</u> for <u>bi</u> : We get paid every other week. = We get paid bi -weekly. Example: I get allergy shots <u>bi</u> -monthly.



The lamp is **by** the chair.

Which shoes should I **buy**?



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Steel	A type of material	Substitute the word <u>metal</u> (another type of material) for <u>steel</u> : That building is made mostly from metal . = That building is made mostly from steel . Example: He ordered <u>steel</u> beams for the new construction project.
Steal	Take something that belongs to someone else	Substitute the word <u>take</u> for <u>steal</u> : Did Robin Hood really take from the rich? = Did Robin Hood really steal from the rich? Example: If I have to beg, borrow or <u>steal</u> , I'll get those art materials!

Steel Beams



Steal



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Weather	Climate	Substitute the word <u>climate</u> for <u>weather</u> : What is the climate prediction for today? = What is the weather prediction for today? Example: The <u>weather</u> in Syracuse is typically cold and snowy in the winter.
Whether	If	Substitute the word <u>if</u> for <u>whether</u> : I am not sure if I should fly or drive. = I am not whether I should fly or drive. Example: I'm on my way, <u>whether</u> you're ready or not!



You have to **sweat** if you want to **eat** sweets.

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Sweet	A taste sensation, usually pleasant	Substitute the word <u>pleasant</u> (another type of material) for <u>sweet</u> : Try some of this cake, it's very pleasant . = Try some of this cake, it's very sweet . Example: I prefer peanut M & M candies because they are both <u>sweet</u> and salty.
Sweat	Moisture issuing from any substance (i.e. Skin, cold glass)	Substitute the word <u>moisture</u> (emit moisture) for <u>sweat</u> : Horses typically emit moisture after running their race. = Horses typically sweat after running their race. Example: Wow, her exercise routine really makes me work up a <u>sweat</u> !

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Dessert	A sweet treat	Substitute the word <u>sweet treat</u> for <u>dessert</u> : She wanted a sweet treat for dessert. = She wanted ice cream for dessert. Example: After you have one <u>dessert</u> , you'll want a second. Remember, <u>dessert</u> has two S's. <i>*Hint: When some people are stressed they eat desserts. Desserts is stressed spelled backwards!</i>
Desert	An arid place Abandon	Substitute the word <u>arid place</u> or <u>abandon</u> for <u>desert</u> : The Sahara is the largest arid place in the world. = The Sahara is the largest desert in the world. Example: Don't <u>desert</u> (abandon) me later, I'll need a ride home!



DESERT

DESSERT

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
See	Perceive with the eyes; witness something; date someone; claim understanding	Substitute the word <u>perceive</u> , <u>witness</u> , or <u>understand</u> for <u>see</u> : I understand that you will be taking the TASC exam next month. = I see that you will be taking the TASC exam next month. Example: I see the ocean – look how big the waves are!
Sea	Body of water (smaller than an ocean)	Substitute the word <u>body of water</u> for <u>sea</u> : Sally sells sea shells by the body of water's shore. = Sally sells seashells by the sea shore. Example: The Irish Sea is a beautiful shade of turquoise!

I see food!



I eat sea food!



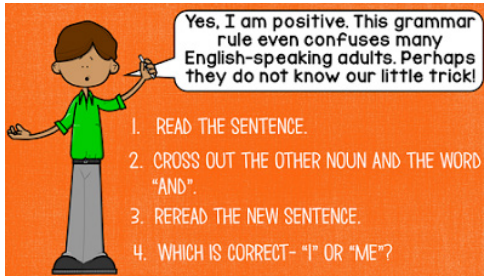
WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Principle	Moral; a rule or standard; fundamental cause or origin of something	Substitute the word <u>moral</u> , <u>rule</u> , or <u>cause</u> for <u>principle</u> : Stick to your morals or cause and keep working towards your diploma. = Stick to your principles and keep working towards your diploma. Example: No, I won't do it! I have principles you know.
Principal	A person of high authority Quantity of money	Substitute the word <u>person of high authority</u> for <u>principal</u> : She was a teacher, now she is our person of high authority . = She was a teacher, now she is our principal . Example: Our elementary school principal is a real <u>pal</u> ! How much is the mortgage principal on your house?



Principal of our school



Principal value of money.

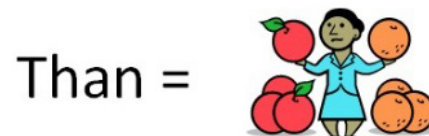
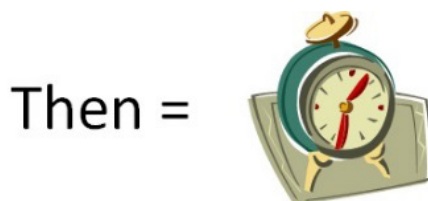


WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Me or I	Me or I Which one to use?	<i>Many, many people get this one wrong!</i> You need to drop the other person to prove which one (<u>me</u> or <u>I</u>) is correct: Katia gave it to my friend and me . = Katia gave it to me . <i>(My friend and I may sound correct, but it is not as you can see from the sentence).</i> Example: My mom will drop <u>you and me</u> off to take the TASC exam!

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Which	The particular one or ones in a group A pronoun	Substitute the word <u>what</u> , or <u>that</u> for <u>which</u> : She didn't know which one to pick. = She didn't know what one to pick. Example: <u>Which</u> house on Seneca Street is yours?
Witch	A woman believed to have magical powers A noun	Substitute the word <u>woman</u> , or for <u>witch</u> : This book is about a witch in Salem. = This book is about a woman in Salem. Example: Centuries ago, a woman could be arrested and tried as a <u>witch</u> .



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Then	When (now, later)	Substitute the word <u>when</u> for <u>then</u> : We left right when ? = We left right then . Example: I found my library book and <u>then</u> realized it was overdue. <i>(I found my library book when I realized it was overdue).</i>
Than	More than	Substitute the words <u>more than</u> for <u>than</u> : He is taller than I am. = He is taller more than I am. Example: We need more computers <u>than</u> that for our class. <i>(We need more than that for our class).</i>



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
All ready	Not ready	Substitute the words <u>not ready</u> for <u>all ready</u> : My teacher is not ready for school break! = My teacher is all ready for school break! Example: My brain is <u>all ready</u> for the TASC exam!.
Already	Soon	Substitute the word <u>soon</u> for <u>already</u> : He will be taller than I am soon . = He is taller than I am already . Example: Let's go! We are <u>already</u> late for class!

ALL READY = PREPARED
We are **all ready** to go.



ALREADY = PREVIOUSLY
We **already** heard that song.



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Less	Can it be counted? No!	If you <i>can't</i> count it, use the word <u>less</u> : I want less gravy than she has. = Can you count it? No! Example: If you ask for <u>less</u> ice, you'll get more soda.
Fewer	Can it be counted? Yes!	If you <i>can</i> count it, use the word <u>fewer</u> : We have fewer hot days than we used to. = Can you count them? Yes! Example: Josie has <u>fewer</u> pieces of gum than Pat. <i>*What does a few mean? It means several. You can count what you are talking about.</i>



You should've asked



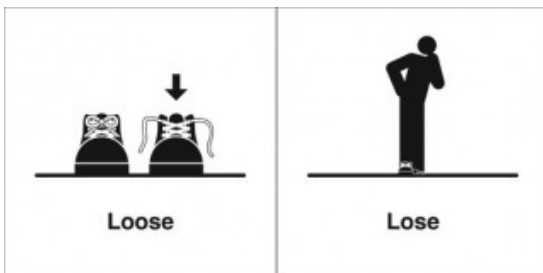
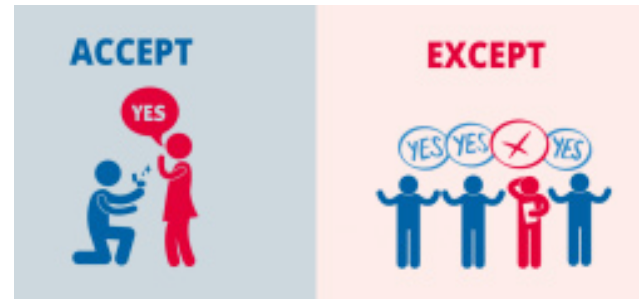
WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Should've	Should have	<i>This word is a contraction (should + have = should've). The ' replaces the letters h a.</i> Substitute the words <u>should have</u> for <u>should've</u> : I should have gone to school today. = I should've gone to school today. Example: That house <u>should've</u> been painted blue. <i>*Lots of people mistakenly use should of. It may sound correct, but it is not correct writing!</i>

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Used to	In the past	<p>Many people leave off the “d” when using <u>used to</u>. We don’t always hear the “d” at the end of the word <u>used</u>, so it is a common mistake.</p> <p>To check if you are using it correctly, add the words <u>in the past</u> when using <u>used to</u>: We used to be friends. = In the past, we used to be friends.</p> <p>Example: There <u>used to</u> be a lot more computers in the lab.</p>



It has a “D!”

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Accept	Take	<p>Substitute the word <u>take</u> for <u>accept</u>: Will she take your term paper a day late? = Will she accept your term paper a day late?</p> <p>Example: I have to <u>accept</u> the fact that this car is too small for our family.</p> <p><i>*For past tense, you would substitute the word <u>took</u> for <u>accepted</u>.</i></p>
Except	But	<p>Substitute the word <u>but</u> for <u>except</u>: Everyone has a ride home but me. = Everyone has a ride home except me.</p> <p>Example: Graduation was great, <u>except</u> that it all happened so fast!</p> <p><i>*Many people mix up the words <u>accept</u> and <u>except</u>.</i></p>



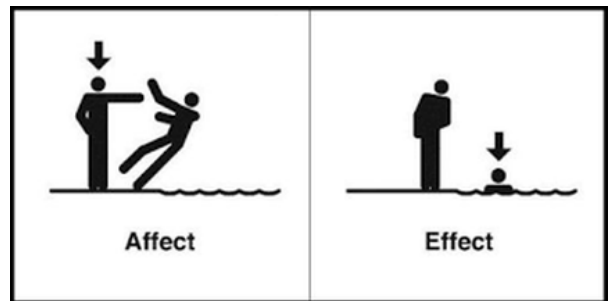
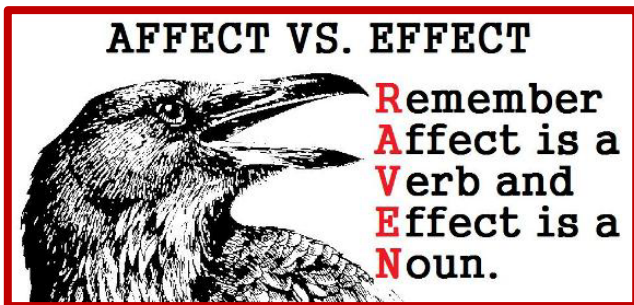
WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Lose	Opposite of win, find	<p>Substitute the word <u>win/find</u> for <u>lose</u>: Did you find your keys again? = Did you lose your keys again?</p> <p>Example: Oh no, the quarterback is injured, we may <u>lose</u> this game!</p>
Loose	Opposite of Tight	<p>Substitute the word <u>tight</u> for <u>loose</u>: His pants are so tight, how does he breathe? = His pants are so loose, how does he breathe?</p> <p>Example: The sign was so <u>loose</u>, it fell off the building.</p>

WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Lay	Put	<p>Substitute the word <u>put</u> for <u>lay</u>: You should put your backpack on the counter. = You should lay your backpack on the counter.</p> <p>Example: I need to lay all of my school work out in front of me to organize.</p> <p><i>*Past tense:</i> Today I will lay the book down. Yesterday I laid the book down. I have laid the book down over the weekend. Today I will put the book down. Yesterday I put the book down. I have put the book down over the weekend.</p>
Lie	Sit	<p>Substitute the word <u>sit</u> for <u>lie</u>: I feel sick; I need to go sit down. = I feel sick; I need to go lie down.</p> <p>Example: Don't lie around all day, get up and enjoy the beautiful weather!</p> <p><i>*Past tense:</i> Today I will lie down. Yesterday I lay down. I have lain down all weekend. Today I will sit down. Yesterday I sat down. I have sat down all weekend.</p>



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Affect	<u>Verb</u> , an action word; basically <i>make a change</i>	<p>Basically you prove that it's a verb by saying either: I affect, S/he affects, You affect: The weather can really affect our moods. = I affect our moods, S/he affects our moods, You affect our mood. It's a verb.</p> <p>Example: Did Martin Luther King Jr.'s <i>I Have a Dream</i> speech affect a lot of people's stance on civil rights?</p>
Effect	<u>Noun</u> Basically means <i>result</i>	<p>Basically you prove that it's a noun by saying either: A/An effect, The effect(s), Some effect(s): Weather has an effect on her moods. = Weather has an effect, the effect, some effect, on her moods. It is a noun.</p> <p>Example: Not doing all of your work will have a negative effect on your TASC exam score!</p>

**See the helpful hint, RAVEN, below!*



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
A lot A lot is two words!	A whole lot	Substitute the words <u>a whole lot</u> for <u>a lot</u> : She had a whole lot of food for the party! = She had a lot of food for the party! Example: We have to learn <u>a lot</u> before we take the TASC exam. <i>*Many people write a lot as one word – alot. This is incorrect! They are two words.</i>



WORD	MEANING	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Regardless	Despite, anyhow, anyway, nevertheless, nonetheless	Substitute the word <u>despite</u> , <u>anyhow</u> , <u>nevertheless</u> , etc. for <u>regardless</u> : They went ahead with their plans despite the circumstances. = They went ahead with their plans regardless of the circumstances. Example: I'm taking and passing the TASC exam next month regardless!
Irregardless <i>(it is a double negative word and not liked by grammar experts)</i>	Without concern or advice, warning, hardship, or heedless	<i>*It is often thought irregardless is not a word, but technically it is. The word is a double negative word: ir as the prefix (meaning not) and less as the suffix (meaning without) so it literally translates to "not without regard" which is the opposite of what a person means when using the word regardless!</i> Example: I told them irregardless of what you read in books, some writers visit the places they write about. Play it safe and us the word regardless!



COMMAS ,,,	EXPLANATION & PRACTICE
Commas separate words and word groups in a series of three or more items. ,	Commas save lives! <u>Example</u> : I like cooking my family and my pets. <i>Really? You like to cook your family and your pets?</i> <u>Correction</u> : I like cooking, my family, and my pets. Example: He served coffee, cheese and crackers, and grapes. <i>Cheese and crackers goes together – the comma is after crackers.</i>



SUBJECT AND VERB AGREEMENT

Keep your verb tenses consistent.

The subject of a sentence must agree with the verb.

For example:

INCORRECT	CORRECT	WHY?
<u>We was</u> going to the game.	<u>We were</u> going to the game.	We and were = <i>plural</i> . I and was = <i>singular</i> .
<u>It don't</u> matter to me.	<u>It doesn't</u> matter to me.	It and does/doesn't = <i>singular</i> . They and do/don't = <i>plural</i> .
<u>One</u> of my cousins <u>are</u> coming over.	<u>One</u> of my cousins <u>is</u> coming over. My <u>cousins are</u> coming over.	One/She/He and is = <i>singular</i> . Two (or more)/They and are = <i>plural</i> .
The <u>kids</u> in the choir <u>is</u> talented.	The <u>kids</u> in the choir <u>are</u> talented.	Kid and is = <i>singular</i> . Kids and are = <i>plural</i> .
<u>There is</u> some problems with these sentences and <u>they is</u> all the same problem!	<u>There are</u> some problems with these sentences and <u>they are</u> all the same problem!	There/They and are = <i>plural</i> . It/She/He and is = <i>singular</i> .
<u>All</u> of them <u>is</u> coming over tonight.	<u>All</u> of them <u>are</u> coming over tonight. He and Julio are coming tonight.	All and are = <i>plural</i> . He and Julio, are = <i>plural</i> .

I BEFORE E
EXCEPT
AFTER C
...WEIRD

I Before E, Except After C!
(Or except like an A,
as in neighbor and weigh)
(However, there are exceptions!)

I before E...
unless you
leisurely
deceive eight
overweight
heirs to forfeit
their sovereign
conceits.

For example:

IE WORDS	AFTER C WORDS	EXCEPT LIKE AN "A"	EXCEPTIONS
Believe, Relief, Piece <u>Your examples:</u>	Receive, Conceive <u>Your examples:</u>	Beige, Rein, Eight <u>Your examples:</u>	Glacier, Alzheimer's, Ancient <u>Your examples:</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____