

THE LITTLE THINGS:

The following are a list of common mistakes I am finding in MANY people's writing. Please study this list carefully and be sure to STOP making these errors.

Tense

You must write in the same tense throughout your essays. The best thing to do is to write in the present tense throughout, but if, by this point, you can't do that, at least be sure to STICK WITH ONE TENSE. So, please **NEVER** write:

Okonkwo walked along the path with Ikemefuna and then kills him.

Stick to one tense...either:

Okonkwo walks along the path with Ikemefuna and then kills him.

OR Okonkwo walked along the path with Ikemefuna and then killed him.

Supposed to

Many of you are writing "suppose to"...this is wrong.

The correct way is: "Supposed to"

Example:

Okonkwo was not supposed to go along with the group that was to kill Ikemefuna.

Happened

Many of you are writing "Happend"...this is wrong.

The correct spelling is "Happened"

Threw and through

Many of you are writing "threw" when you mean "through".

"Threw" refers to throwing an object...you almost always mean "through" in your essays...

Example: **Throughout** the book, Okonkwo moves **through** the ranks in his village and, **through** metaphors and proverbs, is shown to be a strong man.

Know

Many of you are writing "now" or "no" when you mean "know". Be careful, these kinds of mistakes make your writing seem much worse than it really is.

6. Lost, loss

These examples are all correct:

I **lost** my glasses. I **lost** track of time. I **lost** my mother last year.

The **loss** of my grandmother was devastating. After suffering a great **loss**, Hamlet becomes a man of action.

7. Passed, Past

These examples are all correct:

Okonkwo's **past** was defined by fear of being a failure. In Hamlet's **past** he had been a man of thought.

After Solly had **passed** away, Citizen became a freedom fighter. Citizen **passed** through the

door, stick and kerosene in hand.

8. Just/Unjust, Justice/Injustice

That action was just. That man was unjust. I am a just man most of the time.

The world is filled with justice. Injustice is everywhere. There are many injustices in the story of history and very few examples of true justice. I am searching for justice.

9. Commas after transition words and before quotations.

In conclusion, Thus, Therefore, In conclusion, So,

For example, For instance, In summary,

Citizen said, “My name is Citizen Barlow. I done it. I stole the bucket of nails.”

10. Worse / Worst

These examples are correct:

To make matters **worse**... Even **worse** than the death of Gertrude, was the death of Hamlet himself.

The **worst** moment for Hamlet came when the ghost revealed to him the truth about his father’s murder. The **worst** of all of Okonkwo’s acts revolved around his step-son Ikemefuna.

11. Their, There, They’re

-**Their** is used when a group owns something: their culture, their ideas, their fate, their past, their opinion, their rapiers, their dogs...etc.

-**They’re** means “they are” and should not be used in essays—write “they are” instead.

-**There** is used in all the place in which THEIR and THEY’RE aren’t...

There was a man. Right over there at the intersection. If there had been a fight...

12. ‘s for possession

Hamlet’s insanity. The Igbo culture’s core beliefs. Solly’s stick. Aunt Ester’s reponse. The rapier’s tip. Achebe’s novel. Shakespeare’s great work.

THE LITTLE THINGS:

A Do Now:

In preparation for today’s Writers’ Workshop Minilesson, please correct each of the following sentences as though they were in an essay. Note: All the mistakes are grammar/spelling/conventions mistakes. There is only 1 mistake in each sentence.

1. Okonkwo walked along the path with Ikemefuna and then kills him.
2. Okonkwo was not suppose to go along with the group that the Oracle had sent to kill Ikemefuna.
3. After that had happend, Okonkwo knew his people would not go to war and so, as a resolution to his conflict with

society, he killed himself.

4. It is through the play that Hamlet proves Claudius' guilt.

5. Hamlet does not know how to cope with the death of his father.

6. Hamlet loses his sanity after the death of his father.

7. After Hamlet's father passed away it seemed like Hamlet's mind was only concerned with the past.

8. Killing the man was an unjust action.

9. In conclusion over the course of Achebe's great post-colonial novel *Okonkwo* developed from a man with great hopes into a man of deep disappointment.

10. To make matters worse, Ophelia then killed herself.

11. Their culture was very close knit and was based on common religious beliefs.

12. Citizens' development was supported by his spiritual journey towards confession.