

# SPaG Error Hunt

English

Level 2 Writing

The 20 errors examiners see most often · 3 parts · 30 marks

## Why this matters

In the Level 2 Writing exam, roughly **a third of the marks** in each task are for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Examiner reports say the same errors come up year after year: missing apostrophes, comma splices, wrong homophones (their/there/they're), missing capital letters and slipping between tenses. Fix these and your SPaG marks go up without learning anything new.

## Part 1 – One error per sentence (20 marks)

Each sentence contains **exactly one** error. Circle it and write the correction on the line.

1. The residents where told about the roadworks last week. ....
2. Its important that all staff read the new policy. ....
3. We visited manchester for the training day. ....
4. The managers office is on the second floor. ....
5. I would of finished sooner if the printer had worked. ....
6. There going to announce the results on Friday. ....
7. The meeting was long, it went on for three hours. ....
8. Me and Sara will lead the first session. ....
9. He did'nt receive the email until Thursday. ....
10. The team have less members than last year. ....
11. I seen the notice on the door this morning. ....
12. The course is definately worth the money. ....
13. Please bring you're ID to the first lesson. ....
14. The centre is open on saturdays from nine until one. ....
15. She walked into the room and sits down at the back. ....
16. The trainer, who was very patient explained it again. ....
17. Their are three reasons why I am writing to you. ....
18. The childrens' play area needs new equipment. ....
19. We recieved over fifty complaints in March. ....
20. Could you tell me weather the course is still running. ....

## Part 2 – Fix the paragraph (6 marks)

This paragraph is from a formal email. It contains **six** errors. Rewrite it correctly on the lines below.

I am writing to complain about the customer service I recieved at your Kings Road branch on 4 march. The assistant was rude, she ignored me for ten minutes then said it wasnt her job to help. I have been a loyal customer for five years and I never had a problem before. I would like a full refund and a apology.

## Part 3 – Apostrophes: the two rules (4 marks)

**Rule 1 – missing letters:** do not → don't; it is → it's; they are → they're.

**Rule 2 – belonging:** the manager's office (one manager); the managers' office (more than one manager); the children's room (already plural, so add 's).

**Never** for plurals: two coffees, three managers, the 1990s. **Its** (belonging) has no apostrophe: *the dog wagged its tail.*

Add or remove apostrophes so each sentence is correct.

21. The customers complaints were all about the delivery times.
22. Its been a busy week and the teams morale is low.
23. We sell apple's, pear's and orange's.
24. Both managers' agreed that the womens' changing room needs a lock.

**Self-check for the exam:** in the last five minutes, read your work and check only for these four things: apostrophes, capital letters for names/places/days/months, full stops between sentences (no comma splices), and their/there/they're.

# SPaG Error Hunt – Answers

Level 2 Writing

**Want a tutor to mark your work?** Functify Learning runs live 10-week Functional Skills Level 2 English and Maths courses (small groups, mock exam included) and a 5-day self-paced revision course. Start with our free mini mock test at [funtifylearning.co.uk](https://funtifylearning.co.uk).

## Part 1

| #  | Error → Correction                       | Type           | #  | Error → Correction             | Type           |
|----|------------------------------------------|----------------|----|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1  | where → <b>were</b>                      | homophone      | 11 | seen → <b>saw</b>              | verb form      |
| 2  | Its → <b>It's</b>                        | apostrophe     | 12 | definatly → <b>definitely</b>  | spelling       |
| 3  | manchester → <b>Manchester</b>           | capital letter | 13 | you're → <b>your</b>           | homophone      |
| 4  | managers → <b>manager's</b>              | apostrophe     | 14 | saturdays → <b>Saturdays</b>   | capital letter |
| 5  | would of → <b>would have</b>             | grammar        | 15 | sits → <b>sat</b>              | tense          |
| 6  | There → <b>They're</b>                   | homophone      | 16 | add comma after <b>patient</b> | punctuation    |
| 7  | long, it → <b>long. It</b> (or long; it) | comma splice   | 17 | Their → <b>There</b>           | homophone      |
| 8  | Me and Sara → <b>Sara and I</b>          | grammar        | 18 | childrens' → <b>children's</b> | apostrophe     |
| 9  | did'nt → <b>didn't</b>                   | apostrophe     | 19 | recieved → <b>received</b>     | spelling       |
| 10 | less → <b>fewer</b>                      | grammar        | 20 | weather → <b>whether</b>       | homophone      |

## Part 2 – corrected paragraph

I am writing to complain about the customer service I **received** at your **King's** Road branch on 4 **March**. The assistant was rude. **She** ignored me for ten minutes, then said it **wasn't** her job to help. I have been a loyal customer for five years and I **have** never had a problem before. I would like a full refund and **an** apology.

Six errors: received (spelling), King's (apostrophe – accept "Kings Road" if treated as a place name, in which case award the mark for the comma after "minutes"), March (capital), comma splice after "rude", wasn't (apostrophe), "an apology" (grammar). "I never had" → "I have never had" is also acceptable as one of the six.

## Part 3

21. The customers' complaints (more than one customer)
22. It's been a busy week and the team's morale is low
23. apples, pears and oranges (no apostrophes – plurals)
24. Both managers agreed (no apostrophe) that the women's changing room needs a lock

## The five errors that cost the most marks

1. **Comma splice** – two full sentences joined with a comma. Use a full stop, a semicolon, or a joining word (and, but, so, because).
2. **Its / it's** – if you can say "it is", use it's.
3. **Would of / could of / should of** – always *have*.
4. **Capital letters** – names, places, days, months, and the word "I".
5. **Tense slips** – pick past or present and stay with it for the whole piece.