STRUNK & WHITE, THE ELEMENTS OF STYLE (1957)

Contents

A NOTE ON THIS BOOK v
INTRODUCTION vii
I. ELEMENTARY RULES OF USAGE
1. Form the possessive singular of nouns by 1
   adding ’s
2. In a series of three or more terms with a
   single conjunction, use a comma after each
   term except the last
3. Enclose parenthetic expressions between
   commas
4. Place a comma before a conjunction intro-
   ducing an independent clause
5. Do not join independent clauses by a comma
6. Do not break sentences in two
7. A participial phrase at the beginning of a
   sentence must refer to the grammatical sub-
   ject
II. ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF
    COMPOSITION
8. Choose a suitable design and hold to it
9. Make the paragraph the unit of composition
10. Use the active voice
11. Put statements in positive form
12. Use definite, specific, concrete language
13. Omit needless words
14. Avoid a succession of loose sentences
15. Express co-ordinate ideas in similar form
16. Keep related words together
17. In summaries, keep to one tense
18. Place the emphatic words of a sentence at
    the end
III. A FEW MATTERS OF FORM
    20
IV. WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS
    COMMONLY MISUSED
    28
V. AN APPROACH TO STYLE
    (With a List of Reminders)
    33
1. Place yourself in the background
2. Write in a way that comes naturally
3. Work from a suitable design
4. Write with nouns and verbs
5. Revise and rewrite
6. Do not overwrite
7. Do not overstate
8. Avoid the use of qualifiers
9. Do not affect a breezy manner
10. Use orthodox spelling
11. Do not explain too much
12. Do not construct awkward adverbs
13. Make sure the reader knows who is speaking
14. Avoid fancy words
15. Do not use dialect unless your ear is good
16. Be clear
17. Do not inject opinion
18. Use figures of speech sparingly
19. Do not take shortcuts at the cost of clarity
20. Avoid foreign languages
21. Prefer the standard to the offbeat