**Capitalization Rules** **I can demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization . . . (L2).**

Keep this list handy all year and refer to it when writing, revising, editing, and reviewing my comments. I expect you to use ALL these rules at a proficient level before leaving middle school.

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| **#** | **Capitalization Rule** | **Example** |
| 1 | **Calendar items:** capitalize the names of holidays, historical events, historical periods, special events, and other calendar items. *Seasons are not capitalized* unless they’re part of a specific title (Canfield’s Fall Carnival). | Easter, Christmas, World War II, Holocaust, Civil War, President’s Day, Super Bowl. |
| 2 | **Literary titles:** capitalize first word, last word, and all the important words in between (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, subordinating conjunctions). *Note: Do not capitalize prepositions unless they are 3 or more letters*. | The Tale of Two Cities  Streams to the River, River to the Sea  The Diary of Anne Frank |
| 3 | **People’s titles:** *Capitalize titles when they are followed by a name, part of a specific title, or instead of the person’s name when you’re directly addressing him/her.* | Followed by a name - - - Mayor Widmyer  *The mayor, Joseph Widmyer, will speak tomorrow.*  Specific - - - The President of the United States  *The president will address Congress.*  Direct address - - -Yes, Judge, I concur.  *I told the judge that I agreed.* |
| 4 | **Family relationships and nicknames:** capitalize relatives’ family names when they come before a name, or when they are used alone in place of a person’s name.  \*DON’T capitalize family titles when they are a common noun. “Generally, there will be a possessive pronoun (*my, her, his, our*) or an article (*the, a, an*) in front of the common noun” (*Grammarly Handbook*).  Capitalize nicknames always. | Followed by a name - - - We visited Uncle Bob and Aunt Mary over the summer.  *We visited my* ***aunt*** *and* ***uncle*** *over the summer.*  *\*We visited my* ***aunt*** *Ronna in Cleveland, too.*  Replace name - - - You look good, Grandpa.  Nicknames - - - This is my brother, John, but we call him Bubba. |
| 5 | **Geographical regions:** capitalize specific geographical regions, but *don’t capitalize compass points.* | We had relatives visit us from the West.  *Go west three blocks and then go left.*  We live in the Southeast.  *We live in the southeast section of town.*  We left Florida and drove north.  Most of the East Coast is freezing during the winter.  *The east coast of Africa is rainy this time of year.* |
| 6 | **Mountains, hills, volcanoes, and bodies of water:** capitalize the name of mountains, hills, volcanoes, and bodies of water when referred to specifically. | We hiked to the top of Mount St. Helens.  *I walked through caves of a volcano this summer*.  Boating on Coeur d’Alene Lake is the best!  *The view from the lake is breathtaking.*  Windsurfing is popular on the Columbia River.  *Let’s go fishing on the river next weekend.* |
| 7 | **Buildings, monuments, structures:** capitalize specific names of buildings, monuments, and structures when referred to specifically. *Capitalize them just like you do literary titles: first word, last word, and any important words in the middle.* | We saw The Statue of Liberty on our road trip this summer.  I can’t wait to visit the Washington Monument when we go to Washington D.C. in 8th grade.  While visiting Seattle, you must go to the top of the Space Needle. |
| 8 | **Streets, avenues, boulevards, etc.**: when a name comes before street, road, avenue, boulevard, way, etc., it must be capitalized. | Dalton Avenue  Northwest Boulevard  Highway 95  Jordan Court  Government Way  *Walk down the road, take a right at the light, and then left onto the freeway.* |
| 9 | **Schools:** capitalize the type of school (high school, middle school, elementary) when the name of the school precedes it. | Canfield Middle School, University of Idaho, Coeur d’Alene High School, North Idaho College, Gonzaga Prep, Dalton Elementary  *I’ll be in high school next year.*  *I plan to go to a university after I graduate.*  *I was nervous to start my first day in middle school.* |
| 10 | **Course names/subjects/classes:** capitalize the names of specific course titles that have a number after them, are **\*proper adjectives**, or are a language.  *Don’t capitalize general academic subjects.* | has a # - - - Geology 101, History 275  has a proper adjective - - - American History  Is a language - - - French, English, German  **\*proper adjective** - - - Mexican food, Italian cuisine, Japanese army  *geometry, science, history, language arts, music* |
| 11 | **Quotations and dialogue:** always capitalize a complete quotation, even mid-sentence. *Don’t capitalize quoted material that continues a sentence.* | Mr. Lilyquist said, “Work hard, and be nice.”  *Mrs. Nelson said that our class “shows grit” and we are “resilient.”* |
| 12 | **Art movements:** these are considered proper nouns and need to be capitalized. | Surrealism, Romanticism, Renaissance, Abstract Expressionism |
| 13 | **Salutations/closing of letters:** capitalize the important words in the salutation (opening) and the first word in the complimentary closing of letters. | Dear Mr. White,  To Whom It May Concern:  Dear Sir or Madam,  Sincerely, Sincerely yours,  With gratitude, |
| 14 | **The pronoun** **I**: always capitalize the pronoun I. | I love reading mystery novels.  My parents and I went to the movies..  Mrs. Nelson, I will never forget to capitalize the pronoun I. |
| 15 | **First word in a sentence:** the beginning of the sentence always begins with a capital letter. | Don’t forget to capitalize the beginning of the sentence.  Mrs. Nelson will go wild if you forget to capitalize the pronoun I. |
| 16 | **Literary titles:** books, films, plays, songs, poems, essays, chapters, etc. Capitalize all the important words and the following:   * the title’s first and last word * all adjectives, adverbs, and nouns * all pronouns (including *it*) * all verbs (actionable, helping, and linking) * no, not, and the interjection O   *Don’t capitalize an article (a, an, the), a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS), or the word to (with or without the infinitive) UNLESS it is the first or last word of the title.* | The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens  “I Can’t Help Falling *in* Love with You”  “I Know Why *the* Caged Bird Sings”  “The Age *of the* Essay”  “How Long Must I Wait, O Lord?”  The Prince *and the* Pauper  To Kill a Mockingbird  Homage to Catalonia |
| 17 | **Colons:** When listing items one by one, one per line, following a colon, capitalization and ending punctuation rules vary. ALWAYS BE CONSISTENT.   1. **Complete sentences in a list:** capitalize the first word after the bullet point, number, or letter. 2. **Single words or simple phrases in a list:** don’t capitalize the first word after the bullet point, number, or letter.   *Don’t capitalize the first item in a list after a colon in the middle of sentence.* | 1. **The following items are requested:**  * Always be prepared for class. * Make sure to bring your materials. * Give yourself time to revise, edit, and think about your work.   2.  **Pack the following**:   * sleeping bag * pillow * toothbrush * water bottle   For class, *bring the following: writer’s notebook, pencil, and novel.*  *You know what to do: practice* |
| 17a | **Colons and quotations:** capitalize the first word of a complete or full-sentence quotation that follows a colon. | The principal made an announcement: “No more Jamba Juices outside.” |
| 17b | **Colons and multiple sentences that follow:** If the information following the colon requires two or more sentences, capitalize the first item. | Mrs. Nelson has three expectations for us: Be kind. Think big. Work Hard. |