

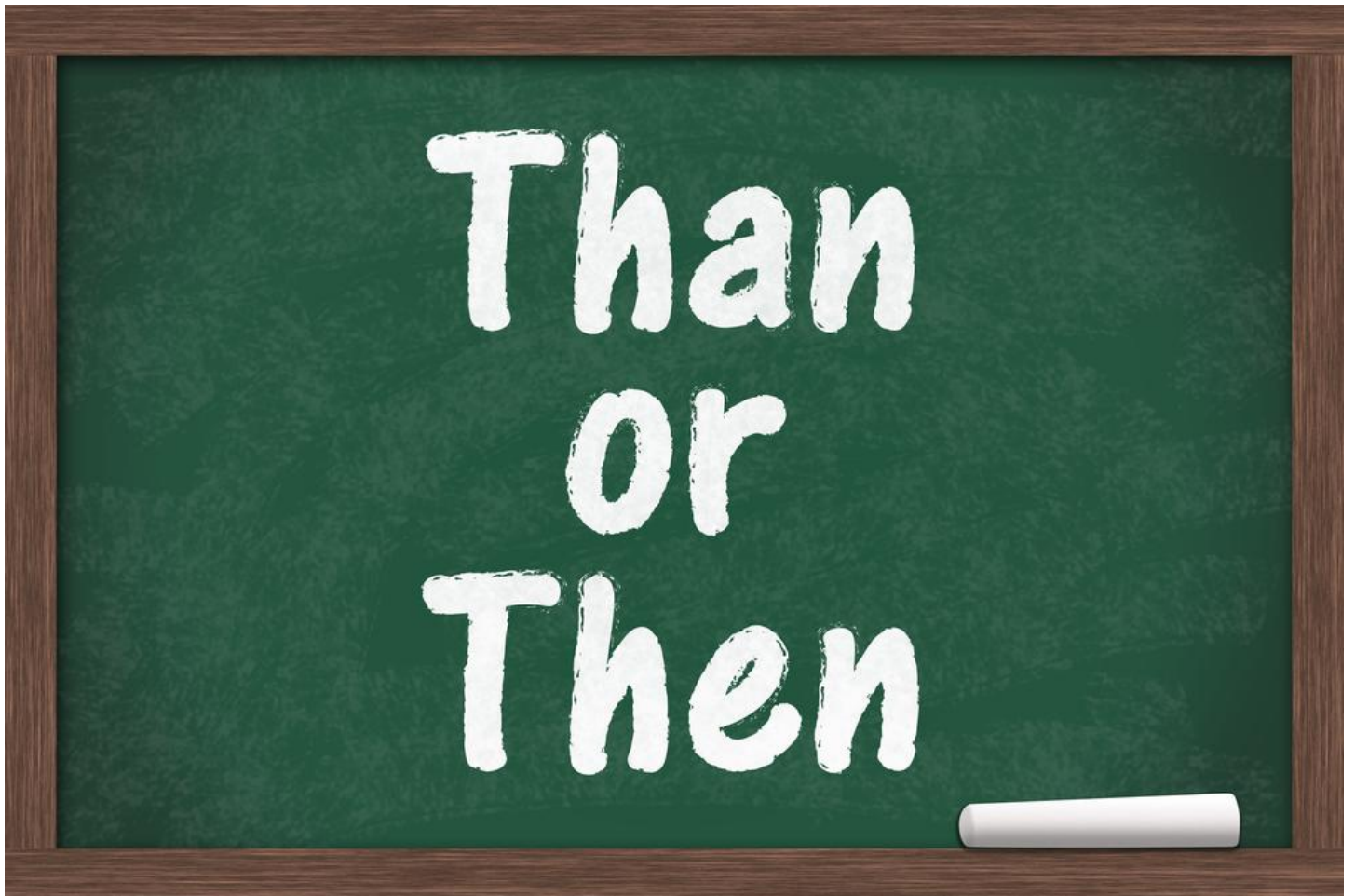


## 6 Mistakes in Elementary Grammar and Lessons on How to Fix Them

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Once kids learn to talk in sentences around 2 or 3 years old, we tend to forget that our children are still language learners. As lifelong learners, we are constantly improving and refining our speaking and writing, but kids are still learning the basics long into elementary school.

Let's take a look at some of the most common grammar mistakes our kids are making every day, and ways to fix them early to advance and enhance language learning.



### Then and than

The Problem: Since the words then and than are so similar in [spelling and sound](#), kids and adults alike often mix the two.

A Lesson to Fix It: The word than is used when we compare two things, but the word then is used to indicate a time or when something will happen after something else. An

easy way to memorize the rule would be to reinforce that there is a letter “a” in the word than, just like the “a” in the word compare. Likewise, the letter “e” in then is just like the letter “e” in time. Next, play a simple game with sentence strips.

Write out sentences using the words then and than, but draw lines to represent blanks where those words should go. Encourage kids to write in the correct version based upon the usage of the sentence. Help your child read out each sentence, and remind them of the matching words compare and time.

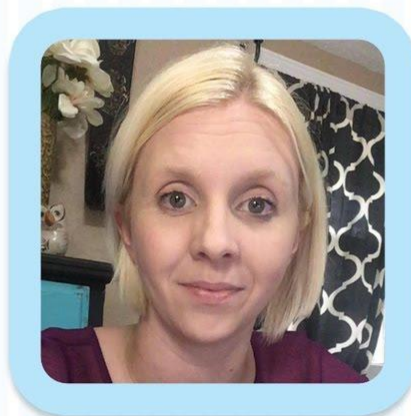
## “Bayed” instead of bought

The Problem: Irregular verbs like “to buy” are tough for kids because the spelling changes depending on the tense.

A Lesson to Fix It: If your child is struggling with irregular verbs, play a simple game: a memory match game! Search the internet for a list of irregular verbs that your child uses often. Using sticky notes or small squares of paper or card stock, write the present and past versions of the word on the bottom of the tiles. For instance, take two squares, and write the word become on one, and became on the other.

Continue this process with different irregular verbs until the game uses as many of the verbs as you would like your child to study during the game. When finished, flip the tiles down so the blank side is facing up, and arrange the tiles in a random order on the floor or on the table. Your child will play a memory game, flipping up the verbs to match the present to the past tense versions!

# IRREGULAR VERBS



Watch on [YouTube](#)

# I and Me

**The Problem:** The words I and me are both first person pronouns, but how do we know which one to use? While most adults can just hear if it sounds right, kids need to learn when to use each word.

**A Lesson to Fix It:** The word I is usually used as the subject in a sentence, and the word me is usually used as the predicate. This often gets fuzzy when the speaker includes someone else in the sentence.

Luckily there is an easy “trick” to figure it out! For example, if someone said, John and I went to the store, simply erase the other name and see if the sentence still makes sense. In the above example, the word I is correct. To practice this at home, search for [printable grammar worksheets](#) that practice this skill since the “trick” relies on seeing sentences to make the determination of which pronoun to use.


# Lie versus Lay

**The Problem:** The words lie and lay are misused all the way into adulthood! Nip this in the bud with an easy fix: lie means to recline, and lay means to place.

**A Lesson to Fix It:** Get your child moving with a quick and simple lesson! After teaching the simple rule above, have your child grab a few items around the house and tell your child to stand up. Say a sentence aloud, but leave a blank. For example, say “Zach, \_\_\_\_\_ down on the couch”. Your child will pick the correct word and act out the action. Say, “Zach, \_\_\_\_\_ the remote control on the coffee table.” Again, your child will choose the correct word and act it out, internalizing the rule each and every time!

## GRADE 2: BUILDING VOCABULARY

# Practice Verbs



### Get a Move On!

Choose the verb that best completes each sentence.

1. The spider got ready to \_\_\_\_\_.  
☐ slide    ☐ crawl

2. The fireman is \_\_\_\_\_ down the pole!  
☐ sliding    ☐ slithering

3. The snake \_\_\_\_\_ away.  
☐ slid    ☐ slithered

4. The excited octopus \_\_\_\_\_ his legs.  
☐ wiggles    ☐ crawls

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# Their, They're, and There

**The Problem:** Just like the words to, two, and too, these words are often misused since they sound exactly the same.

**A Lesson to Fix It:** To practice, play a game that teaches your child all about homophones! Search online for a free crossword puzzle maker. Create a list of homophones, like those above, and make up sentences, leaving blanks where the correct word should go.

The sentences will be the clues, and the homophones like their, they're, and there will be the answers. Once created, print it out and help your child as he or she completes the puzzle.

# It's versus Its

**The Problem:** The words it's and its are often confused because we typically use an apostrophe to indicate possession, but in the case of the word it's, the apostrophe indicates the [contraction](#) it is.

**A Lesson to Fix It:** Teach your child to question themselves each time they see or use the words it's or its. In every case, your child should ask themselves if the words "it is" can replace it. If so, use it's, if not, use its.

Another trick that words is to erase the word to see if the word his can fit. If so, the word its can stay. If not, use it's. Like the words me versus I, sometimes kids need direct practice with sentences on a page. Digital videos and online games can help, and are often available for free in apps or on the web.

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Kids are bound to make mistakes as they learn to speak and write. Using the above ideas, your child will correct their errors in no time!