

# UNIT 11 What Words Do We Capitalize?

## WRITING APPLICATION A: Capitalizing Geographical Names

How would you feel if you received a special award that was printed with your first name capitalized and your last name in all small letters? Most likely, you would want both your first and last names capitalized. In a similar way when you write, you need to capitalize all important parts of names, including parts of geographical names. When writing geographical names, you should always capitalize words such as *ocean*, *lake*, *river*, *mountain*, *desert*, and *park*, if those words are part of the actual name.

- EXAMPLES
- Both the Rocky Mountains and the Appalachian Mountains have many beautiful vistas.
  - Several major rivers pour into the great Mississippi River, including the Red River, the Arkansas River, and the Ohio River.
  - Vancouver Island is a large island north of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada.

**Writing Assignment:** On a separate sheet of paper, write a comparison of two parks, lakes, or rivers. Give reasons you prefer one over the other.

**Evaluation Checklist:** Reread your first draft. Use these guidelines to help you judge the content and organization of your writing.

- I have capitalized geographical names correctly.
- My writing follows a logical order.
- Each of my paragraphs has a topic sentence and supporting sentences.

**Revising, Proofreading, and Writing the Final Version:** Revise your draft based on your evaluation. Then proofread your revised draft. Write your draft in final form.

## WRITING APPLICATION B: Capitalizing Organizations and Institutions

Often on large buildings, names of important organizations and institutions are displayed somewhere on the building's exterior. In writing, the names of important institutions and organizations are capitalized to help them stand out. However, words such as *the* and any short prepositions that are part of the names are not capitalized. These words are not capitalized because they are not considered important parts of the name.

- EXAMPLES
- Smithmore High School has the largest national student chapter of the National Chemistry Association.
  - She became an exchange student in Australia by being a member of the American Field Service.
  - Elisabeth wrote to the American Medical Association for current information.

**Writing Assignment:** On a separate sheet of paper, use persuasive writing to convince students from other schools that your school is the best school to attend. Give at least three reasons you believe your school is best. Describe interesting clubs and organizations to which students can belong.

**Evaluation Checklist:** Reread your first draft. Use these guidelines to help you judge the content and organization of your writing.

- I have capitalized the names of organizations and institutions.
- I have not capitalized the word *the* or any short preposition when it is part of a name.
- I have stated at least three reasons that my school is the best school to attend.

**Revising, Proofreading, and Writing the Final Version:** Revise your draft based on your evaluation. Proofread your draft after you have revised it. Then write your draft in final form.

## WRITING APPLICATION C: Using Capitals for Calendar Items

Almost every country of the world enjoys at least minor changes in season. However, not every country celebrates the same holidays and special occasions. In writing, the seasons are not capitalized. However, holidays, special occasions, weekdays, and months are capitalized to help them stand out.

- EXAMPLES
- Every Monday about 2 p.m., John starts counting the minutes until it is time to go home.
  - In October, the two accountants met to plan the next year's budget, which took effect in January.
  - Miriam invited five people to dinner on Thanksgiving Day but had no other guests that fall.

**Writing Assignment:** On a separate sheet of paper, compare and contrast the holidays you like most to celebrate. Mention specific names of holidays and seasons in your writing.

**Evaluation Checklist:** Reread your first draft. Use these guidelines to help you judge the content and organization of your writing.

- I have capitalized all holidays, special occasions, days of the week, and months.
- I have not capitalized any of the seasons.
- I have included details that accurately describe the seasons and holidays about which I have chosen to write.

**Revising, Proofreading, and Writing the Final Version:** Revise your draft based on your evaluation. Then proofread your revised draft carefully. Write your revised draft in final form.