



# When You Catch an Adjective, Kill It: The Parts of Speech, for Better And/Or Worse

*Ben Yagoda*

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What do you get when you mix nine parts of speech, one great writer, and generous dashes of insight, humor, and irreverence? One phenomenally entertaining language book.

In his waggish yet authoritative book, Ben Yagoda has managed to undo the dark work of legions of English teachers and libraries of dusty grammar texts. Not since *School House Rock* have adjectives, adverbs, articles, conjunctions, interjections, nouns, prepositions, pronouns, and verbs been explored with such infectious exuberance. Read *If You Catch an Adjective, Kill It* and:

Learn how to write better with classic advice from writers such as Mark Twain (“If you catch an adjective, kill it”), Stephen King (“I believe the road to hell is paved with adverbs”), and Gertrude Stein (“Nouns . . . are completely not interesting”).

Marvel at how a single word can shift from adverb (“I did okay”), to adjective (“It was an okay movie”), to interjection (“Okay!”), to noun (“I gave my okay”), to verb (“Who okayed this?”), depending on its use.

Avoid the pretentious preposition *at*, a favorite of real estate developers (e.g., “The Shoppes at White Plains”).

Laugh when Yagoda says he “shall call anyone a dork to the end of his days” who insists on maintaining the distinction between *shall* and *will*.

Read, and discover a book whose pop culture references, humorous asides, and bracing doses of discernment and common sense convey Yagoda’s unique sense of the “beauty, the joy, the artistry, and the fun of language.”

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