Medical Transcription Teachers:

It's no coincidence that the first schools approved by AAMT use The SUM Program for Medical Transcription Training.





If you intend to apply for program approval through AAMT, adopting the entire SUM Program as recommended in The Teacher's Manual is your fastest ticket to approval . . . and a successful medical transcription training program too.

Comprehensive

Effective

Respected

Affordable



Looking at Language

A Tense Time with Verbs

by Richard Lederer, Ph.D.

ave you heard the one about the man who went to trial for having pulled a woman down a street by the hair? When the judge asked the arresting officer, "Was she drugged?" the policeman answered, "Yes sir, a full block." Or the one about the woman who asked a Boston cab driver where she could get scrod. "I didn't know that the verb had that past tense," muttered the cabbie.

Both jokes rely on the fact that verb tenses in English are crazy, fraught with a fearful asymmetry and puzzling unpredictability. Some verbs form their past tense by adding -d, -ed, or -t—walk, walked; bend, bent. Others go back in time through an internal vowel change—begin, began; sing, sang. Another cluster adds -d or -t and undergoes an internal vowel change—lose, lost; buy, bought. And still others don't change at all—set, set; put, put. No wonder, then, that our eyes glaze and our breath quickens when we have to form the past tense of verbs like dive, weave, shine, sneak, and baby-sit.

The past tenses of verbs in our language cause so many of us to become tense that I've written a poem about the insanity:

The verbs in English are a fright. How can we learn to read and write? Today we speak, but first we spoke; Some faucets leak, but never loke. Today we write, but first we wrote; We bite our tongues, but never bote.

Each day I teach, for years I taught, And preachers preach, but never praught. This tale I tell; this tale I told; I smell the flowers, but never smold.

If knights still slay, as once they slew, Then do we play, as once we plew? If I still do as once I did, Then do cows moo, as they once mid?

I love to win, and games I've won; I seldom sin, and never son. I hate to lose, and games I lost; I didn't choose, and never chost. I love to sing, and songs I sang; I fling a ball, but never flang. I strike that ball, that ball I struck; This poem I like, but never luck.

I take a break, a break I took; I bake a cake, but never book. I eat that cake, that cake I ate; I beat an egg, but never bate.

I often swim, as I once swam; I skim some milk, but never skam. I fly a kite that I once flew; I tie a knot, but never tew.

I see the truth, the truth I saw; I flee from falsehood, never flaw. I stand for truth, as I once stood; I land a fish, but never lood.

About these verbs I sit and think. These verbs don't fit. They seem to wink At me, who sat for years and thought Of verbs that never fat or wrought.

Richard Lederer, Ph.D., is the author of more than 3,000 books and articles about language and humor. His syndicated column, "Looking at Language," appears in newspapers and magazines throughout the United States. His new title, Comma Sense: A Fun-damental Guide to Punctuation, with John Shore, is now available from St. Martin's Press. E-mail: richard.lederer@pobox.com/



Books by Richard Lederer

Word Wizard: Super Bloopers, Rich Reflections, and Other Acts of Word Magic (St. Martin's Griffin). \$14.

Anguished English. Bloopers. \$13.00/\$7.50.

The Circus of Words. Letter play for kids 9-14. \$14.

Crazy English. Creative word play. \$14.

The Cunning Linguist. Good clean dirty wordplay. \$14.

The Bride of Anguished English. Bloopers. \$25/\$14.

Fractured English. Bloopers. \$14.

Get Thee to a Punnery. Pun and games. \$13.

Literary Trivia. Stories and games for book lovers. \$13.

A Man of My Words. Career-capping reflections on English. \$26.

The Miracle of Language. Inspirational. \$14.

More Anguished English. Bloopers. \$7.50.

The Play of Words. Word games. \$14.

Pun and Games. Word play for kids 9-14. \$11.

The Revenge of Anguished English. Hardcover, \$26.

Sleeping Dogs Don't Lay. Usage. \$24/\$14.

The Word Circus. Making the alphabet dance. \$16.

Word Play Crosswords, vols 1 & 2. Original puzzles. \$13 each.

The Write Way. A guide to real-life writing. \$14.

ORDER directly from Richard Lederer, 9974 Scripps Ranch Blvd., Suite 201, San Diego, CA 92131. Phone 858-549-6788. Fax 858-549-2276. E-mail: **richard.lederer@pobox.com**. Web site: **www.verbivore.com**. Include \$1.50 for postage and handling of first book, 50 cents for each additional book. Indicate your wishes for personal inscriptions.

Don't Reinvent the Wheel

Authentic Dictation

The eight SUM Program units combined contain 47 hours of dictation from real physicians dictating real patient records, a critical factor in the job-ready success of SUM Program students.

Academic Coursework

Eight courses comprise *The SUM Program* curriculum. Recommended textbooks are written by leading authors in the medical transcription field. Many are in workbook format to enhance learning.

AAMT Approval

Implementing *The SUM*Program can help advance
your AAMT Medical
Transcription Approval
Process, since *The SUM*Program meets or exceeds the
AAMT Model Curriculum recommended requirements for
transcribing authentic physician dictation and associated
medical instruction.

The
SUM Program
for Medical
Transcription
Training

Proven Effective

The SUM Program has been used to train tens of thousands of transcriptionists over the past 15 years. The beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of training are all difficult and are designed to build jobready skills.

Teacher Resources

The Teacher's Manual is packed with course descriptions, outlines, and assignments, and is accompanied by over 200 pages of articles written specifically for medical transcription teachers.

Adaptable

The SUM Program can be used in formal classroom settings, in informal training centers or on-the-job learning environments, and in independent study.

Rely on *The SUM Program* for your MT Training needs.



Health Professions Institute

P. O. Box 801 • Modesto, CA 95353-0801 209-551-2112 • Fax: 209-551-0404 www.hpisum.com • E-mail: hpi@hpisum.com