Gerunds and Infinitives: In addition to the five basic forms, verbs in English also have a gerund form (verb + ing) and an infinitive form (to + verb). In these forms, however, the verb no longer acts as a verb. Gerunds and infinitives act as nouns: as subjects, as objects of verbs and prepositions, or as complements.

Some verbs can take either gerunds or infinitives as their objects. These verbs include the following: begin, continue, hate, like, love, prefer, and start. ex: She hates swimming. She hates to swim.

Some verbs can take gerunds but not infinitives as their objects. These verbs include the following: appreciate, avoid, delay, discuss, dislike, enjoy, finish, keep, mention, mind, miss, quit, and suggest. ex: I avoid eating sugar. WRONG ex: I avoid to eat sugar.

Some verbs take an infinitive or a noun + infinitive, but cannot take a gerund as their object. These verbs include the following: advise, agree, ask, decide, encourage, expect, force, hope, intend, invite, learn, offer, order, plan, pretend, remind, seem, tell, want, and warn. ex: Susan agreed to go with him. ex: The university requires potential students to write an essay.

Prepositions such as in, on, by, for, with can be followed by gerunds but not infinitives. ex: He made up an excuse for arriving late to dinner.

Two-word (phrasal) verbs and other verb + preposition combinations can also be followed by gerunds but not infinitives. ex: I often put off studying until late at night. ex: I am accustomed to studying until 1:00 a.m. ex: Have you thought about going to graduate school?

Common two-word verbs followed by gerunds include: give up, insist on, keep on, and put off. Other common verb + preposition combinations followed by gerunds include: apologize for, believe in, complain about, insist on, look forward to, plan on, prohibit (someone) from, take care of, talk about, and think about. Common be + adjective + preposition combinations followed by gerunds include: be accustomed to, be bored with, be excited about, be interested in, be preoccupied with, be tired of, and be worried about.

The verbs make, have, let, and help can all be used to write about causing someone to do something or making it possible for someone to do something. Used this way, these words are followed by a noun phrase or pronoun + the base form of a verb. Help can be followed by an infinitive instead of a base form. ex: The coach made us run another lap, and then he had us do more push-ups. ex: She lets her daughter go out on dates. ex: Can you help me (to) paint the house?

Exercise: In the following paragraph, the bold underlined verbs are not correct. Write the correct verb form above each underlined verb phrase.
For many people, personal health and healthcare are important parts of their lives. A common way to deal with health issues is through diet and exercise. On average, the typical person is live longer than in the past but not necessarily in a healthier way. Many people dislike to make lifestyle changes even though the changes may making them feel better in old age. People do not likes to sacrifice now for uncertain benefits in the future. However, if problems such as obesity and high blood pressure are not controlled, a majority of sufferers will developing heart disease in the future. More women than men exercise regularly and have improve their eating habits. However, there are probably few differences between men's and women's health. The main difference is between people who decide eating a healthy, well-balanced diet and those who let themselves to become lazy when it comes to food. This goes for exercise as well. Even though the number one health concern for most people is weight, and many are preoccupied with lose weight, obesity rates continue to rise. A healthy diet makes one enjoy to exercise more, and a moderate amount of exercise helps people eating well. Therefore, both are necessary for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It's ironic that in the past people did not worried as much as we do today about living healthy lives, yet their health was probably better than ours.

Exercise: Read the following paragraph. Complete the paragraph with the correct form of each verb given.

In the United States during World War II, many Japanese-Americans were sent to internment camps. These Americans did not (understand) why they were being treated as criminals; however, the U.S. government believed that japanese-Americans might (give) American secrets to Japan. Many Japanese-Americans were sent to a camp called Manzanar. Government and camp officials did not (help) the camp residents (adapt) to their new surroundings. The Japanese-Americans were on their own and could only (hope) for an improved situation. As the U.S. involvement in World War II was (end), the government let the internees (move) to U.S. locations farther east. After the war had finally (end), Japanese-Americans were forced (leave) the camps. They began (think) about resuming their shattered lives. Over the past decades, other Americans have slowly been learning more about this episode in U.S. history and are interested in (try) to correct past wrongs. Thinking about past injustices reminds us (prevent) these kinds of actions before they happen again.

Exercise: The following paragraph has ten errors in the use of verb forms, gerunds, and infinitives. Find and correct the errors.

Los Angeles is a city that is full of excitement and diversity. It is unfortunate that the city has receive a lot of bad press because of the smog, the crime, and the riots in the early 1990s. Although some negative perceptions of Los Angeles may be accurate, tourists should not to overlook the city when they make their travel plans. In fact, southern California residents ought to think about visit downtown more often. This area has becomes a center of excitement and diversity. Koreatown, Little Tokyo, and Olvera Street all exist within several square miles of each other. This racial diversity helps Angelenos understanding other cultures and beliefs and helps them accepting differences
more easily. The city's art community is also first-rate. Previously, Los Angeles, did not have a theater district like New York City does, but now there are several theater complexes and many small theaters throughout the city. The one thing Los Angeles has always being famous for is Hollywood, and it's better than ever. Hollywood is responsible for entertain the world and, like the rest of the city, promises to impressing visitors and residents alike.