Parallel Sentence Structure

**Purpose:** Write beautiful sentences with parallel structure.

**How to use:** Read the sentences. Change the words so the sentences use the same grammatical style. Here is an example.

Not Parallel: Mary likes hiking, cooking, and to ride a bicycle.
This is okay: Mary likes hiking, cooking, and riding a bicycle.

Can you edit these sentences to create a parallel structure?

1. Mike likes to listen to rock music and reading mystery novels.

2. While in France, my nephew spent his time studying French, working in a restaurant, and he jogged along the Seine River every morning.

3. My home-office is filled with student reports, scrap paper and the garbage can is overflowing.

4. Joan decided to paint her office, to add some new curtains, and that the rug needs dry cleaning.

5. He wanted three things out of university: to pick up a marketable skill, to make good friends, and understanding the stock market.

6. My grandfather's favorite pastime is to eat in trendy restaurants and visiting art galleries.

7. Julia is in charge of stocking the shelves, writing orders, and to sell computers.
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Possible Answers and Explanations

1. Mike likes listening to rock music and reading mystery novels.
   Change: The verbs have to be in the same style. You can use "ing". Or, you could use infinitives (e.g. “Mike likes to listen to” and “to read mystery...”)

2. While in France, my nephew spent his time studying French, working in a restaurant, and jogging along the Seine River every morning.
   Change: “Jogged” becomes ‘jogging.”

3. My home-office is filled with student reports, scrap paper and an overflowing garbage can.
   Change: “Overflowing” becomes an adjective by moving it in front of the noun (e.g. garbage can.” So the parallel sentence pattern is adjective plus noun.

4. Joan decided to paint her office, to add some new curtains, and to dry clean the rug.
   Change: “Dry clean” becomes an infinitive (same as the other verbs).

5. He wanted three things out of university: to pick up a marketable skill, to make good friends, and to understand the stock market.
   Change: “Understand” becomes an infinitive (same as the other verbs).

6. My grandfather’s favorite pastime is eating in trendy restaurants and visiting art galleries.
   Change: “Eating” becomes a gerund (ing verb). You could also use all infinitives, like “…pastine is to eat …. and to visit art galleries).

7. Julia is in charge of stocking the shelves, writing orders, and selling computers.
   Change: “Sell” becomes a gerund (same as the other verbs).