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ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Данное учебное пособие ‘Английское предложение: Пунктуация, Орфография’ является заключительной, третьей частью нашего учебного комплекса ‘Структуры и категории предложений и частей речи в английском языке’ (часть 1, видео-лекции 1-5) и ‘Английское предложение: Согласование, Модификаторы, Параллелизм’ (часть 2, видео-лекции 6-8) издательства LAMBERT AP, 2013.

Все три пособия можно использовать как в курсах теоретической грамматики, так и при изучении грамматических явлений английского языка по расширенной программе уровня ESP (‘Теория и методика преподавания иностранных языков и культур’, ‘Переводчик в сфере профессиональной коммуникации’, ‘Регионоведение и международные отношения’, ‘Реклама и связи с общественностью’), а также при изучении английского языка в магистратуре.

При написании пособия автор использовал обширные интернет-ресурсы, а также свой опыт написания учебной литературы с использованием материалов всемирной паутины (смотрите перечень наших статей и пособий в разделе **Bibliography**).

Пособие состоит из **двух тематических блоков**, основу которым составили транскрипции **двух видео-лекций** (смотрите **PART I. Vodeo-Lectures 9-10**) с дополнением обширного теоретического и практического материала (**PART II. 7 Supplements**).

В содержании каждой лекции – 5 Lessons на английском языке (диск прилагается) с упражнениями, выполнение которых контролирует и комментирует лектор Карл Вебер. Предлагаемые лектором упражнения выполняются либо на занятии, либо в «бумажном» варианте дома. По тематике компонентов лекций преподаватель может дозировать по несколько дополнительных упражнений из **Supplements** для закрепления полученной во время просмотра лекций первичной информации и знаний по изучаемой тематике. Распечатку лекций рекомендуется выдавать либо после двукратного неуспешного просмотра лекций, либо заведомо «слабым» в отношении языковой подготовки студентам.

Теоретические выкладки по тематике пособия сопровождаются разнообразным методическим аппаратом.

Дополнительный теоретический материал можно использовать в форме небольших докладов со стороны студентов на теоретических вводных лекциях-коллоквиумах и практических семинарах, варьируя их количество и объём в зависимости от сетки часов, выделяемых на практический и теоретический курсы по грамматике английского языка.

Работа с лекциями К. Вебера апробирована со студентами перечисленных выше специальностей и уровней (кроме магистратуры) в 2007-2013 гг.

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Video-lecture 9: PUNCTUATION

- Lesson 1 – Punctuating the End of a Sentence
- Lesson 2 – Using Commas
- Lesson 3 – Using Semicolons and Colons
- Lesson 4 – Using Quotation Marks
- Lesson 5 – Using Other Punctuation Marks



Lesson 1: Punctuating the End of a Sentence with exercise 1

Hi! I'm Karl Weber.

Welcome to Video Aided Instruction's English Grammar Series. This is the program on punctuation. Punctuation marks are those little signs and symbols, like periods, commas, semi-colons, colons and many others, that are added to sentences to help make them easier to read. Think of punctuation marks as being like traffic signs that you see when you're driving. They tell you when to slow down, when to change direction, and when to come to a complete stop. If you learn how to use punctuation marks correctly in the sentences you write, no one will get lost while reading your work. If you're ready, let's begin with our study of punctuation marks and how to use them.

As you recall, **there are four different kinds of sentences: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory.** Let's look at each of these four kinds of sentences and look at the kind of punctuation mark you need to use to end each type of sentence.

First, use a period to punctuate the end of a declarative sentence. As you recall, a declarative sentence states a fact. The great majority of sentences in usual written English are declarative sentences. So, most of the sentences you write will end with periods. Here are a couple of examples:

“It’s raining outside”, “She is my sister.” Both of these are declarative sentences, they state facts. And, appropriately, each one ends with a period, a simple dot. Most sentences you write will be declarative sentences and will end with periods.

Next, use a question mark to punctuate the end of an **interrogative sentence**. An interrogative sentence asks a question. Appropriately enough, it’s marked at the end with a question mark. Here are a couple of examples: “Would you like some coffee?”, “What time is the party?” Both of these sentences are interrogative sentences. They ask questions, and notice that they are read slightly differently. Your voice turns upward a little bit at the end of an interrogative sentence. Putting the question mark at the end of this sentence makes it very clear to the reader that this is an interrogative sentence, one that asks a question, and that needs to be read in that special tone of voice. Notice that you don’t use a question mark to punctuate the end of an indirect question. What is an indirect question? This is a sentence which refers to or describes a question, but which itself does not ask a question. Therefore, an indirect question is really a declarative sentence, even though at first glance you might think that it is an interrogative sentence. Take a look at this example: “Juan asked Maria whether she would like some coffee.” Now, this sentence refers to or describes a question, one is asking Maria a question “Would you like some coffee?”, but notice that the sentence itself doesn’t ask the question.

Instead, the sentence is really describing the question or making a statement. It is stating a fact that Juan has asked Maria a question. Therefore, the sentence itself is not an interrogative sentence, it isn’t asking questions. So, **it doesn’t end with a question mark, instead, it ends with a period**. This is an example of what we call an indirect question. Here’s another example: “I wonder what time the party will start.” Now, the same general idea might have been stated in the form of an interrogative sentence. For example, this sentence might have been written: “What time will the party start?” That would’ve been an interrogative sentence, a question, and it would have ended appropriately with a question mark. However, the way this sentence was worded it is a declarative sentence. It is making a statement of fact, that is I am wondering something. It is stating that as a fact, rather than asking the question. And therefore, this too is an indirect

question, and one that does not end with a question mark, but rather with a period.

Now, the third type of sentence. Use a period or an exclamation point to punctuate the end of an imperative sentence. An imperative sentence expresses a request or a command. When you're asking or ordering someone to do something, you're writing an imperative sentence. And an imperative sentence may end with a period or an exclamation point. It all depends on the nature of the request or the command. Let's take a look at a couple of examples: "Hand me that hammer, please." This is an imperative sentence, because whoever has written or is speaking in the sentence is expressing a request, asking someone else to do something. Since it's written in a quiet tone of voice and does not have a great deal of urgency or strong emotion built into it, it's appropriate to end it with a period. Most imperative sentences which express requests or commands will end with periods. Occasionally, however, a request or command will be uttered with a great deal of urgency or emotion, in which case an exclamation point may be the appropriate punctuation mark to use at the end of the sentence. Look at this example: "Get out, quick!" This might be spoken by a firefighter arriving at the scene of a fire, warning the people in the house to get out right away. This is a command that's being spoken with a great deal of urgency and emotion and a great deal of emphasis. For all these reasons, ending the sentence with an exclamation point is appropriate. The exclamation point is used in English to indicate that a sentence is being written or spoken with a great deal of feeling. You only want to use exclamation points where they are really appropriate. Certain types of commands do require exclamation points, although as we've seen, most do not. So, an imperative sentence may end either with a period, or an exclamation point, depending on a degree of urgency and emotion that's built into the sentence – you'll have to be the judge.

Finally, use an exclamation point to punctuate the end of an exclamatory sentence. An exclamatory sentence is defined as one that expresses strong emotion or strong feeling. Therefore, by definition, it's appropriate to end an exclamatory sentence with an exclamation point. That tells the reader: "This sentence has just expressed something that is very important with a great sense of urgency attached to it, and therefore, you need to pay close attention to what it says". When you end a sentence with

an exclamation point, you're telling the reader: "Pay attention!" Here are a couple of examples of exclamatory sentences: "The house is on fire!" There's a message that of course contains a great deal of emotion and urgency, and it's appropriate to end it with an exclamation point – that's an exclamatory sentence. Here's another example: "What a beautiful sunset!" Now, here's a message that's much more positive. Rather than talking about physical danger, the person who speaks or writes this sentence is simply reflecting on the beauty of nature. However, because strong emotion is involved, an exclamation point seems appropriate. This too is an exclamatory sentence.

So, as we've seen, each of the four types of English sentences needs to be punctuated in a slightly different way. Most sentences are declarative sentences and they will end with periods, but interrogative sentences need question marks, imperative sentences may use either periods or exclamation points, depending on whether strong emotion is involved, and an exclamatory sentence ends with an exclamation point. In your Study Guide we've provided an exercise, which will enable you to practice using punctuation marks to end sentences correctly.

Exercise 1

Directions: Each of the following sentences is missing its end punctuation. Read each sentence and decide whether it is a declarative, interrogative, imperative, or exclamatory sentence. Then add the correct end punctuation.

1. Where can I buy a portable radio similar to the one you brought to the ball game yesterday
2. After giving me reliable service for eight years, my car finally broke down last week
3. That's an incredible story
4. I'd like to know why the senator voted against the appropriation bill
5. Let me have a copy of the paper you wrote for our art history class

In this exercise, we provided several sentences without end punctuation. Your job is to read each sentence, decide what type of sentence it is, and therefore, what type of end punctuation is needed.

Let's look at first example: "Where can I buy a portable radio similar to the one you brought to the ball game yesterday." Now, what

type of sentence is this? Perhaps you can tell just from the words used that the person who wrote or is speaking this sentence is expressing a question. Therefore, this is an interrogative sentence, and ought to end with a question mark. And therefore, it ought to be read in a particular way, with that rising inflexion at the end which indicates that this is a question, and the question mark would make it obvious that that's what we are reading. "Where can I buy a portable radio similar to the one you brought to the game yesterday?" – Question mark.

Next example: "After giving me reliable service for eight years, my car finally broke down last week." Now, what is this sentence doing? Is it expressing the question, like the interrogative sentence we just looked at? No, not really. Instead, it's simply stating a fact. Therefore, this is a declarative sentence and ought to end with a period. As we've said, most sentences that you write will be declarative sentences and will end with periods. Now, perhaps, you are tempted to say: "This is an exclamatory sentence, because it expresses a strong emotion." But that's not really appropriate. It's possible, that the person who writes or speaks this sentence does have a strong emotion about the fact that the car broke down, but the sentence itself doesn't really speak about that strong emotion. It simply says that the car did break down. And remember, exclamatory sentences should be used rather rarely in your writing. Don't lean toward using a lot of exclamatory sentences. In most cases, treating a sentence as a simple declarative sentence and putting the period at the end is most appropriate, and that would be the correct answer for this question.

Next: "That's an incredible story." Now, here we have a true exclamatory sentence. The person who speaks or writes this sentence is expressing a strong emotion. He or she is saying that the story that has just been told is one that's amazing, incredible, hard to believe, breathtaking – all of those are expressions of strong feeling. And therefore, it would be appropriate to treat this as an exclamatory sentence and end it with an exclamation point. And the sentence if it would be read aloud, would probably be read in such a way as to convey that strong emotion: "That's an incredible story!" That's the way you read an exclamatory sentence, and the exclamation point is appropriate.

Next example: "I'd like to know why the senator voted against the appropriation bill." Now, what is this sentence doing, is it expressing strong emotion? No, not really, very mild emotion. Is it asking the ques-

tion? Well, not really. You might be tempted to think of this as an interrogative sentence, because the person who speaks or writes this sentence does have a question in mind, but notice that the question is being stated indirectly, not directly. For this to be an interrogative sentence, it will have to read something like: “Why did the senator vote against the appropriation bill?” Then the sentence would be directly expressing a question. Instead, this is a declarative sentence, because it only states the question indirectly. It states as a fact, that I am wondering about something, or I would like to know something. It is stating that as a fact, rather than expressing the question directly. And remember, an indirect question is really a declarative sentence and should be ended with a period rather than a question mark.

Next example: “Let me have a copy of the paper you wrote for our art history class.” What kind of sentence is this? Well, this is an example of an imperative sentence, because it’s expressing a request or a command. In this case, I think we’d call it a request – it’s expressed politely and in a quiet tone of voice, there is certainly not a great deal of urgency or emotion in the request, it’s not like the order that the firefighter gives to “get out of the house quick.” Instead, this is a quiet, unemotional request, and therefore, we would treat it appropriately with a period, rather than an exclamation point. Remember, that an imperative sentence may end with either one, depending on how strong the sense of urgency or emotion is. In this case, a period makes sense.

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Lesson 2: Using commas with exercise 2

If a period, a question mark, and an exclamation point are like stop signs, you might think of commas as being like “yield signs.” They tell the reader not to come to a complete stop, but rather to slow down or pause. Now, some writers who aren’t sure about how to use commas correctly tend to sprinkle commas into their sentences almost at random, just to kind of slow down the reader from place to place. That’s not the best way to use commas. Instead, the right way to use commas is to put them in where they are required by certain specific rules, which have to do with pauses or brakes in the meaning of the sentence. In this lesson, we’ll look at the rules that lay out the most important places where commas ought to be used, so that you’ll be able to use commas more correctly in the sentences you write.

First, use a comma to set off a modifying phrase or clause at the start of a sentence. Now, you might remember from other programs in this series that sometimes phrases or clauses, groups of words, can be used as modifiers, that is, they give more information about something else in the sentence. These modifying phrases and clauses almost act like adjectives and adverbs – they give more information about a specific other word that appears in the sentence. Now, when a modifying phrase or clause appears at the start of a sentence, you usually want to use a comma to set it off, to separate it from the rest of the sentence. That makes the sentence a little bit easier to understand, and it puts a pause into the sentence in a place that feels appropriate.

Here are a couple of examples: “Lost in thought, Peter didn’t hear Andre’s question.” Now, let’s look at the phrase that begins this sentence – “lost in thought.” What role does this phrase have in the sentence? Well, it acts as a modifier. It gives further information about Peter. It describes or tells something about Peter. Therefore, this is a phrase that’s acting almost

like an adjective, because it's giving more information about a noun that appears elsewhere in the sentence. Because this is a modifying phrase that appears at the start of the sentence, it makes sense to separate it from the rest of the sentence by using a comma, and notice that the pause makes the sentence a little easier to understand and it seems to fit logically with the meaning of the sentence. "Lost in thought", "Peter didn't here Andre's question." Notice that the pause in the meaning of that sentence makes it a little easier to understand and a little clearer, and that's why the comma works in that location.

Another example: "When I arrived at the beach, the tide was coming in." Here the sentence begins with a clause which acts as a modifier. The entire dependent or subordinate clause "When I arrived at the beach" tells more information about something else that appears in the sentence. "The tide was coming in (when?) when I arrived at the beach." Therefore that entire clause is acting as a modifier, almost like an adverb, because it gives more information about the verb "was coming" later in the sentence. The entire clause then is a modifying clause and it ought to be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma, and that's why we've put in the comma after the word "beach". Notice again that the pause after that modifying clause makes the sentence a little easier to understand. "When I arrived at the beach, the tide was coming in" – the pause seems to make sense and it makes the sentence a little bit clearer and easier to understand. In this case, we have a modifying clause that begins the sentence and therefore it's appropriate to separate it by using a comma.

Here's another rule about when to use a comma: use a pair of commas to set off a word or phrase that interrupts the meaning of a sentence. Sometimes you write a sentence which has a main train of thought, but there's an additional fact or idea that you want to insert somewhere into the sentence, because it's interesting and important, but not necessarily essential to the meaning of the sentence. We consider this group of words an interrupter – something that breaks into the main flow of the sentence. When you put in a group of words like this into a sentence which interrupts the main flow, set it off with commas, a pair of commas, one on either side. That signals to the reader: "Whoops, here's a little detour, don't get sidetracked!" And it makes it easier for the reader to follow the complete meaning of the sentence.

Here's an example: “Harry Truman, the thirty-third president of the United States, was born in Missouri.” Now, we have a group of words in the middle of the sentence here – “the thirty-third president of the United States” – that tells a little bit more about Harry Truman, it's an interesting and important fact, but notice that it interrupts the main flow of the sentence. We can tell this because if we eliminate those words altogether, what is left still makes sense and still has the same meaning – “Harry Truman was born in Missouri.” We understand exactly what's being said, this person, this man named Harry Truman, was born in Missouri. Those words that are added in the middle give a little more information and help to define a bit more about who Harry Truman was, but they're not strictly necessary and they do interrupt the main flow of the sentence. Therefore, it's appropriate to set them off with commas, have a comma before and a comma after that group of words. And again notice that inserting the pauses when we read the sentence makes it easier to understand – “Harry Truman, the thirty-third president of the United States, was born in Missouri.” Notice how the link between the subject of the sentence “Harry Truman” and the verb “was” becomes a little clearer when we pause to set off those words that interrupt the flow from the subject to the verb. So, this is a classic example of a sentence that contains an interrupting phrase that's good to set that off from the rest of the sentence with a pair of commas.

One more example: “My uncle, unlike his three brothers, never learned to drive a car.” When we eliminate the words “unlike his three brothers”, the sentence still means the same thing and still makes sense – “My uncle never learned to drive a car.” Those interrupting words “unlike his three brothers” give a little more information and add an interesting fact, but they're not strictly necessary. So we consider that an interrupting group of words, which ought to be set off by a comma at the beginning and a comma at the end. Don't forget that when an interrupting phrase or clause like this appears in the middle of a sentence – it needs to be set off by a pair of commas. Don't forget to put a comma at the beginning *and* at the end, sometimes people make the mistake of putting a comma in one place, not the other – that's unclear. To make it clear to the reader that this is a phrase or clause that interrupts the rest of the sentence you need to set off the entire thing with a pair of commas.

Now here's a subtle variation which is important to note. *Don't use commas to set off a word or phrase which is essential to understanding the meaning of the sentence.* Sometimes a sentence contains a word, a phrase, a group of words, which may at first glance appear to be an interrupter. But if you look closely you'll realize that the word or phrase is actually essential to understanding what the sentence is saying. When that's the case – don't set it off with commas, because those words are not simply interrupting the flow of the sentence, they are an integral, important part of the flow of the sentence. So, understanding the meaning of what's being said and recognizing what's essential and not essential for the meaning is actually very necessary to punctuate the sentence correctly.

Let's look at this example: "The historian Doris Kearns Goodwin wrote a famous book about Franklin D. Roosevelt." Now, the sentence is saying that Doris Kearns Goodwin wrote this famous book, but it begins with the words "the historian", and you might then think that her name, Doris Kearns Goodwin, is a kind of interrupter. If you take away the interrupter, the sentence does still make a kind of sense – "The historian wrote a famous book about Franklin D. Roosevelt." But think about what that's saying. Can we tell which historian is being talked about if we leave out the words "Doris Kearns Goodwin"? We really can't, now the sentence is saying "The historian wrote a famous book..." but we don't know which historian, so we don't really understand what the sentence is saying. It's essential for us to understand a sentence, to have those words "Doris Kearns Goodwin" in there, and therefore we can't regard those words as a mere interruption – they are essential to the basic meaning of the sentence. We've got to leave them in there, and therefore we shouldn't surround them with commas. When you put a pair of commas around words or a phrase in a sentence you're implying that those words can be ignored to a degree without changing the meaning of the sentence. Now, it wouldn't be the case here, and therefore you don't put commas around "Doris Kearns Goodwin."

One more example: "My uncle Jerry is an expert driver." Once again, the name "Jerry" might appear at first glance to be an interrupter, but if we put commas around it, what's left outside of the commas would be "My uncle is an expert driver." And once again we can't be sure exactly who's being spoken about – I might have several uncles – and therefore, to

simply say “My uncle is an expert driver” might leave the meaning of the sentence somewhat unclear. Since the name “Jerry” is essential to the meaning of the sentence, it’s better not to put commas around it, and, instead, let the sentence read as one unit.

So, before you put a pair of commas around an interrupting word or phrase, make sure it really does interrupt and it’s not essential to the meaning of the sentence. That makes an important difference to the right way to punctuate a sentence.

Our next common rule: use a comma to separate two independent clauses that are linked with a coordinating conjunction. Now, you recall that independent clauses are clauses which contain both a subject and a verb, and can stand alone as a sentence. An independent clause could appear as a sentence all by itself, but sometimes we do link independent clauses in larger sentences. One way of linking two independent clauses to create a larger sentence is by using a coordinating conjunction. There are six coordination conjunctions: and, or, nor, for, but, and yet. Whenever you have a sentence containing two independent clauses, joined by one of these coordination conjunctions, it’s good practice to insert a comma between the two clauses to separate them clearly. It puts in a pause where it’s appropriate and makes the sentence a little bit easier to follow.

Here’s an example: “French wines are considered the finest in the world, but many other countries also produce excellent wine.” Here we have a sentence that’s made up of two different clauses. Each of the clauses here could stand alone as a sentence. “French wines are considered the finest in the world” – yes, that could be a sentence by itself. “Many other countries also produce excellent wine” – that too could be a sentence by itself. Because the two ideas are closely linked, the author has decided to join them into a single sentence and use the coordinating conjunction “but” as the connector, and that makes perfect sense. Notice that a comma is necessary before the conjunction “but”. It puts a pause between the two independent clauses, which separates them, makes it a little easier to follow the logic of the sentence, and it warns the reader: “Slow down a bit, because we’re about to change course”, just like a yield sign on a highway. So when we pause slightly in reading that sentence, it’s a little easier to understand, and the pause makes sense with the shift in meaning that’s about to begin.

So, when you have to independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, use a comma as well.

Here's an exception to the rule: *omit the comma if both independent clauses are very short.* In some cases you might write a sentence that contains two or even more independent clauses that all very short and joined with coordinating conjunction. If that's the case, you can usually omit the comma, because the effect works perfectly well to read straight through when the clauses are very short. Here's a simple example: "I hear and I obey." Here we have two independent clauses – "I hear", "I obey", and they are joined by the coordinating conjunction "and". You could put a comma before the conjunction "and" if you want, but because the clauses are so short, and the sentence is so quick and easy to read and understand, it doesn't really seem to be necessary. So this is an exception to the rule – you can omit the comma if both clauses are very short.

Here's our last rule for using commas: *use commas to separate items in a list.* When you're listing three or more items in a sentence, it makes the list much easier to read and understand if you separate the items with commas. Here's an example: "The exhibit of Spanish art included paintings by Velazques, Murillo, and Goya." This sentence contains a list of three Spanish painters, whose work was included in the exhibit: Velazques, Murillo, and Goya. To make this sentence easier to read, the author has inserted commas after "Velazques" and "Murillo". The comma that appears before the word "and" in this particular sentence has a special name, it's called a serial comma, and you actually have a choice as to whether to insert that one or not. Normally, when you create a list like this, you will have the word "and" before the last item in the list, and inserting the comma before the word "and" is actually optional – some writers prefer to use it, some writers prefer to omit it. Personally, I like to use it, I think it adds just a little bit of clarity to the sentence, but you wouldn't be wrong if you omitted it. However, the comma after "Velazquez" earlier in the list is absolutely essential. So, use commas to separate items in the list, the final comma, the serial comma, may or may not be inserted – that's your choice.

Here's a slightly different kind of list that also requires commas: "Miriam drove up in a small, bettered, rusty station wagon." Here we have a sentence that strings altogether a list of several adjectives, all describing the noun "station wagon". What kind of station wagon was it? It was a

small one, and a battered one, and a rusty one. So, here we have three adjectives in a row, all added to describe a particular noun. Again, it's much clearer if you insert commas between the adjectives, so we have a comma after "small" and a comma after "battered". Notice that you don't insert a comma after the last adjective. The last adjective here is "rusty". "Station wagon" we consider one noun, even though it's made up of two words. Don't think that in this case the noun is "wagon" and "station" is another adjective, that's really not the case, because she didn't drive up in a wagon, after all. Was it a particular type of wagon? It was a type of car that is known by one name: "station wagon". So, the noun here is "station wagon", and the last adjective that precedes the noun "station wagon" is "rusty". You wouldn't put a comma separating that adjective from the noun "station wagon". But you do have commas separating the other adjectives, so "small (comma) battered (comma) rusty station wagon" would be the right way to string together the adjectives here. So, once again, we have a kind of a list, in this case it's a list or a series of adjectives, and to make the sentence clearer and easier to read, insert commas after each of the adjectives before the last one.

There are some other instances in which commas might be used in sentences, but the rules we've just given you will cover the vast majority of appropriate places to use commas in your sentences.

Turn to your Study Guide and try your hand at the exercise which tests your understanding of these rules. When you finish, come back, and we'll look at those sentences together.

Exercise 2

Directions: *In the following sentences, some commas have been misused or omitted. Read each sentence and decide how commas should be added or omitted to make the sentence correct.*

1. The exhibit includes fossil remains of apatosaurus stegosaurus tyrannosaurus and several other dinosaurs.
2. Having been born in Nigeria Henry, never saw snow until he visited Colorado last winter.
3. Felipe enjoys rebuilding the engines of classic cars and he was happy when Simone asked him to work on her 1969 Corvette.
4. Lake Placid a ski resort in upstate New York, was the site of the 1980

Winter Olympics.

5. We spotted the actor, Tom Hanks, having lunch in a restaurant on Madison Avenue.

In this exercise you were given several sentences, some of which contain commas and some of which do not. Some of the commas are correct, some aren't, and in some cases commas need to be inserted. Let's look at each sentence and figure out the right way to use commas in each one.

First: “The exhibit includes fossil remains of apatosaurus stegosaurus tyrannosaurus and several other dinosaurs.” Here we have a sentence that contains a list. It lists several dinosaurs whose fossils appear in the exhibit. Remember that when you are giving items in a list, you need to separate them using commas, and I think you can see that the sentence will be clearer and easier to understand when those commas are inserted. So, the sentence should correctly be punctuated this way: “The exhibit includes fossil remains of apatosaurus (comma) stegosaurus (comma) tyrannosaurus (comma) and several other dinosaurs.” Now, of course that last comma is the serial comma, the one that appears after the name “tyrannosaurus”, so it’s really optional – you can include it or not, as you prefer. I recommend using it, but it’s up to you, and you wouldn’t be incorrect if you left it out.

Next example: “Having been born in Nigeria Henry, never saw snow until he visited Colorado last winter.” Well, there is a comma in this sentence, and we need to ask whether the comma is appropriate. We also need to ask whether there should be a comma somewhere else in the sentence. As it happens, the sentence should contain one comma, but the comma that it contains is actually in the wrong place. Let’s take a look at the sentence more closely. Notice the opening words of the sentence: “Having been born in Nigeria”. What role do those words play in the sentence? What do they describe or who do they give information about? Well, what those words do is modify the noun that follows, “Henry”. Those words act as a kind of an adjective, giving us more information about Henry. And since the sentence begins with a modifying phrase, you want to set off that phrase from the rest of the sentence with a comma. So there really should be a comma after the word “Nigeria” here. That would make it clear that the opening phrase is a modifying phrase which should be separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma. Now, what about the comma that ap-

pears in the sentence after the name “Henry”? Is that appropriate or not? Well, it really doesn’t fit any of the rules that we’ve seen in this lesson. There is no good reason to put a comma there, and in fact it’s better to not have a comma in a location like this.

Notice that the comma in this case would help to separate the subject of the sentence, “Henry”, from the verb “saw”, and it’s usually a bad idea to separate the subject and verb of a sentence unless it’s necessary. Sometimes you will have an interrupting phrase between a subject and a verb in a sentence, in which case a pair of commas to set off an interrupting phrase is a good idea. But when that’s not the case, it’s better not to separate the subject and verb in a sentence, and therefore the comma here really should be omitted. When we read the sentence with a pause in a correct place where the comma really belongs, after the word “Nigeria”, we can see that the meaning holds together very clearly: “Having been born in Nigeria, Henry never saw snow until he visited Colorado last winter”. Now the sentence makes sense, and the ideas that belong together have been grouped appropriately.

Next example: “Felipe enjoys rebuilding the engines of classic cars and he was happy when Simone asked him to work on her 1969 Corvette.” Here we have two independent clauses joined by the coordinating conjunction “and”. That should be a signal for you that a comma is needed. In normal course of events when you have a sentence consisting of two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, you want to separate them with a comma before the conjunction, so the sentence ought to be properly punctuated this way: “Felipe enjoys rebuilding the engines of classic cars (comma) and he was happy when Simone asked him to work on her 1969 Corvette.” Notice again that the pause actually makes the sentence a little easier to read and a little clearer, so adding the comma helps the reader as well.

Another example: “Lake Placid a ski resort in upstate New York, was the site of the 1980 Winter Olympics”, and here we do have a comma after the words “New York”. Now, is that correct? Does the sentence need any other commas, should this comma be omitted? Let’s think about it. In this case we have an interrupting phrase, a group of words that breaks into the main flow of the sentence. Notice that if we took out the words “a ski resort in upstate New York” and eliminate them from the sentence, the rest

of the sentence would still be clear and we'll have the same meaning: "Lake Placid was the site of the 1980 Winter Olympics". That's basically what the sentence is saying. The interrupting phrase gives a little further information about Lake Placid ("a ski resort in upstate New York"), tells us more about Lake Placid, but it isn't strictly necessary. Therefore, it should be set off by commas on both ends. So, the mistake that the writer of this sentence made was to put a comma at the end of the interrupting phrase, but not one at the beginning, it's a common mistake. There should be a comma in both places, and so the sentence should correctly read: "Lake Placid (comma) a ski resort in upstate New York (comma) was the site of the 1980 Winter Olympics." Now, the author has clearly set aside that interrupting phrase by bracketing it with a pair of commas, and that makes the flow of the sentence a lot clearer.

One more example: "We spotted the actor, Tom Hanks, having lunch in a restaurant on Madison Avenue." Now here again we have some words that serve to give more information about or explain some other words that are nearby. I'm talking about the words "Tom Hanks". Now, those words in this sentence have been set apart by commas, as if "Tom Hanks" is an interrupting phrase. Is that correct? Remember our rule: if you eliminate the interrupting phrase, the sentence should still mean the same thing. Is that the case if we eliminate the words "Tom Hanks", does the sentence still say exactly the same thing? "We spotted the actor having lunch in a restaurant on Madison Avenue." Suddenly the meaning of the sentence is unclear. We don't really know what actor is being described. The sentence suddenly does not have the same meaning. We can see then that the words "Tom Hanks" are actually essential to the meaning of the sentence – if we're going to understand what the author of the sentence is saying, we need those words. Therefore, it's wrong to put commas around "Tom Hanks". It's really not an interrupting phrase; instead, it's a phrase which is essential to understanding the meaning of the sentence. The right way to punctuate this sentence is without any commas at all: "We spotted the actor Tom Hanks having lunch in a restaurant on Madison Avenue." Notice that when we read this sentence without pauses, the meaning is much more clear, and it all hangs together logically. So, knowing where to put the commas in sentences like these requires that you really think about the meaning of the sentence and how the various parts fit together so that

the commas can accurately reflect the meaning of the sentence and help your reader to navigate appropriately.

Lesson 3:
Using Semicolons and colons
with exercise 3

As we've seen, a comma represents a brief pause in a sentence. There are two other punctuation marks that are used to indicate pauses in sentences, which are a little more complicated than commas. These are semicolons and colons. Understanding how to use them is a little tricky, but once you know the rules, you will never get them wrong, and people will consider you very smart and a good writer. Semicolons and colons actually look similar. The only difference is that the colon consists of two dots whereas the semi-colon consists of a dot over what looks like a comma. So that's the difference between a semicolon and a colon visually. They are also used quite differently. In this lesson we'll give you the basic rules for when to use semicolons and when to use colons.

First, use a semicolon to separate two independent clauses where no coordinating conjunction is used. Now, we saw before that when two independent clauses are used to make up a sentence, and they are joined with a coordinating conjunction, such as “and” or “but”, a comma is also used as part of the structure. In some cases, you might choose to take two independent clauses and simply join them in a sentence, because the ideas are closely linked. You might do that without using a coordinating conjunction. When that's the case, you have to use a semicolon in between the two independent clauses. If you fail to use a semicolon, you will have created a run-on sentence, which will be an error. Notice that this is by far the most common use of a semicolon, so what that means is as a general rule whatever appears on either side of a semicolon should be an independent clause.

That is, *it should be capable of standing alone as a sentence, so whenever you use a semicolon, pause and make sure that what appears on either side could stand alone as a sentence.* That should be the case. If

that's not the case, chances are you're using the semicolon incorrectly. Let's look at an example: "Dogs aren't permitted at the hotel; therefore, we'll put Rex in a kennel for a week". Here we have two independent clauses which have simply been joined without using a coordinating conjunction. So, the semicolon that appears after the word "hotel" is correct. Look at what appears on either side of the semicolon. You'll see that each of those clauses could stand alone as a sentence. "Dogs aren't permitted at the hotel" – could that stand alone as a sentence? Yes. "Therefore, we'll put Rex in a kennel for a week" – that too could stand alone as a sentence. So, we have what could be two independent sentences, but because the ideas are so closely linked and they really belong together, the author has chosen to join them in a single sentence, and the semicolon as a way of separating the two independent clauses is correct.

One more example: "In his last years, Matisse gave up painting; his final works are paper cutouts and collages." Once again, we have two independent clauses. So, the semicolon that appears after the word "painting" is correct. Let's look at what comes before the semicolon: "In his last years, Matisse gave up painting". Could that stand alone as a sentence? It certainly could. What about what follows the semicolon? "His final works are paper cutouts and collages" – that too could stand alone as a sentence. So, in this case, the semicolon has been used correctly. So, remember, whenever you are linking two independent clauses without a coordinating conjunction, you need to use a semicolon between them, and a semicolon should basically only be used where what appears on either side could be a complete sentence standing alone.

Now, there are a couple of minor exceptions as to the use of semicolons that is a couple of instances when semicolons could be used without separating independent clauses. Here's the most important one: **use a semicolon to separate items in a list when the items themselves contain commas**. This is a tricky one, and it doesn't come up terribly often, but often enough so you ought to know the rule. As we saw in our lesson about commas, items in a list should normally be separated by commas, but there are times when you're writing a list that contains a number of lengthy items, the items themselves being so lengthy and complex that they actually contain commas or pauses. If you string those together, the whole sentence can become very complicated and difficult to read. Therefore, to add

another layer of separation between the items, it can be a good idea to use semicolons to separate the items. Otherwise, you can't tell where one item begins and a next one ends. Let's take a look at this example, and you'll see what I mean: "Among the leading figures at the Constitutional Convention were Thomas Jefferson, a planter from Virginia; Alexander Hamilton, an aide to Washington during the revolution; and James Madison, a legislator from Massachusetts." Now, this is a long and fairly complicated sentence, but the key to understanding it is to realize that it is built around a list of three different people: Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison. Each of those three people is described using a phrase that is a kind of modifying or explanatory phrase, which for clarity's sake has been separated by a comma. What that means is that it's not immediately clear to the reader where each of the three items begins and ends, so the author of the sentence has wisely chosen to use semicolons to separate the items. That makes it clear that there are three items being listed here, even though there are commas within each of the items, so it's correctly punctuated this way: "Thomas Jefferson (comma) a planter from Virginia (semicolon that warns you that another item is about to begin) Alexander Hamilton (comma) an aide to Washington during the revolution (semicolon) and James Madison (comma) a legislator from Massachusetts". So here's another useful place to insert semicolons: when you're writing a list that contains lengthy items, which themselves contain commas, in order to make it clearer where the items begin and end, separate them using semicolons. In this case, notice that the semicolons do not separate independent clauses; these are not groups of words that could stand alone as sentences. Most of the time semicolons are used only for that purpose, but here's an exception which occasionally comes up and which you need to be aware of.

Now let's turn to colons. Use a colon to indicate that what follows is equivalent to what precedes the colon. In other words, *a colon is used to introduce a group of words that restate or say in other words what you've just said before the colon*. What appears on either side of the colon then should be more or less equivalent or equal in meaning. Here's a tip for you: when used correctly, the colon can often be replaced with the words "that is" or "in other words". So, you can test your use of a colon by asking yourself that question: "Could I take away the colon and substitute the words "that is" or "in other words?" If so, you are probably using the colon correctly. You don't use the colon, notice, to separate independent clauses.

That's a job for a semicolon. Instead, the colon is introducing something that simply restates or says in other words what you've just said.

Here are a couple of examples: "The silent movie era produced three comic geniuses: Charles Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Harold Lloyd." This is a good example of the correct use of a colon. We've put the colon after the word "geniuses", introducing that list of Charles Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Harold Lloyd. Notice that what appears on either side of the colon is more or less equivalent. We just mentioned three comic geniuses (who were they?) Charles Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Harold Lloyd. Those three names are equivalent to or equal to what was stated just before the colon, "three comic geniuses". Let's try our tip, our test, for using the colon correctly. Could we take away the colon and replace it with the words "that is" or "in other words"? We could: "The silent movie era produced three comic geniuses, that is, Charles Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Harold Lloyd." The sentence reads better with a colon, but it does make sense to substitute the words "that is" for the colon, so that's the signal that we're using the colon correctly.

One more example: "I drove all night for only one purpose: to ask Annalisa to marry me." Once again, the colon is separating two things that are more or less equivalent in meaning: "one purpose (what was that one purpose?) to ask Annalisa to marry me". Those two things are the same: the purpose was the asking. If we took out a colon and substituted the words "that is", would it make sense? It would: "I drove all night for only one purpose, that is, to ask Annalisa to marry me". So once again we can see that we're using the colon correctly. Remember that the semicolon separates independent clauses, that's not the case with the colon. Instead, the test for using a colon correctly is whether the things on either side are basically equivalent, or the same in meaning. If so, then a colon is correct.

One last tip: *don't use a colon to separate words that clearly belong together, such as a verb and its object or a preposition and its object.* People know that a colon is used to introduce things, and so sometimes they get carried away and use colons where they actually interrupt the flow of the sentence and aren't really needed. Here are a couple of examples of incorrect uses of the colon which you ought to avoid: "Liana gave her mother: a scarf from Mexico." Here the writer knows that a colon can be used sometimes to introduce something which is going to be described, and

so he or she has put a colon after the word “mother”. But if you look closely you see that the colon is really separating things that belong together. It’s separating the verb “gave” from its direct object, “scarf”, the scarf is what Liana gave. So it really makes sense for the sentence to simply flow rather than putting the colon in, and the colon, in any case, could not be removed and substituted for the words “that is”. And what appears on either side of the colon is not equivalent; the mother and the scarf from Mexico are not equivalents. So, *for all those reasons, inserting the colon in this sentence is incorrect.*

And one more example: “The new security plan was developed by: the local police commissioner and the state department of safety”. Once again, the colon has been used here as a kind of an introductory punctuation mark, and we’ve seen that colons can be used to introduce a list, as, for example, in the sentence we looked at previously, where the colon introduced the list “Charles Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Harold Lloyd”. So, the person who wrote this sentence is thinking: “Why, I have a kind of a list here – the local police commissioner and the state department of safety, so why not put a colon in front of it”. Well, the reason is that the colon in this case is separating the preposition “by” from the object of a preposition (The plan was developed (by who?) by the police commissioner, state department of safety). So, the objects of the preposition come right after the colon. The colon, therefore, interrupts or breaks the flow of the preposition and its objects. And, once again, what follows and precedes the colon are not equivalent. “The new security plan was developed by” is not equivalent to “police commissioner and department of safety”. So, for all those reasons, the use of a colon in this instance is wrong. So, remember our basic rule: the colon should introduce things that are equivalent to what precedes the colon, and you should be able to substitute the words “that is” for the colon and have the sentence still make basically the same sense and the same meaning. If that’s not the case, then you’re using the colon inappropriately.

Okay, those are the basic rules for using the semicolon and the colon correctly. Try your hand at the exercise and see whether you’ve mastered those rules. When you’re done, come back, and we’ll look at those questions together.

Exercise 3

Directions: *In the following sentences, some semicolons and colons have been misused, omitted, or mistakenly replaced by other punctuation marks. Read each sentence and decide how semicolons and/or colons should be added or omitted to make the sentence correct.*

1. To this day, millions of opera lovers consider one man the greatest singer of all time, Enrico Caruso, the renowned Italian tenor.
2. If you see a parking spot on the street, put your car there, otherwise, use a parking lot.
3. Under relentless questioning by the teacher, Joanne finally admitted that: she had copied part of her paper from a book in the school library.
4. At first, Columbus thought his ships had landed in India; for this reason, he called the native people he encountered Indians.
5. Four cities are being considered to host the world soccer championships; Madrid, Spain, Seoul, South Korea, Sydney, Australia, and Bogotá, Colombia.

Now, in some of these sentences, colons or semicolons may appear, and when they appear, they may or may not be used correctly. In other instances, semicolons or colons ought to be inserted. So, your job is to read each sentence and figure out what ought to be done about semicolons and colons.

Let's look at the first example: "To this day, millions of opera lovers consider one man the greatest singer of all time, Enrico Caruso, the renowned Italian tenor." Now, there are no semicolons or colons in this sentence. Do you think either one should be inserted somewhere? What about a semicolon? Remember that a semicolon would normally be used when you have two or more independent clauses joined without a coordinating conjunction. Could this sentence be broken down into two parts that could each stand alone as a sentence? No, not really, there's only one clause here. "Opera lovers consider" is the subject and the verb, and there is really only one independent clause, and, therefore, semicolon wouldn't really be appropriate. But there is a place where a colon ought to be used and that

would be after the expression “the greatest singer of all time (colon)”, because what follows is equivalent to or a restatement of what comes before (The greatest singer of all time (is who?) Enrico Caruso, the renowned Italian tenor). So, what comes before and after the punctuation mark there is basically equivalent in meaning, so a colon would be the appropriate punctuation mark to use. Notice that we could also use the words “that is” instead, and the sentence would mean very much the same thing. That’s a good test as to whether a colon is appropriate or not. So, to correct this sentence after the word “time” use a colon rather than a comma.

Next example: “If you see a parking spot on the street, put your car there, otherwise, use a parking lot.” Now, this sentence again doesn’t contain any semicolon or colon. Does it need one? The answer is yes. In fact, as written the sentence is actually an error; it’s a run-on sentence. Let’s break it down and see how that works. The sentence begins with a dependent clause, or a subordinate clause, a clause that cannot stand alone as a sentence: “If you see a parking spot on the street”. There’s the subject “you”, the verb “see”, and it begins with the subordinating conjunction “if”, which means it can’t stand alone as a sentence. What follows then is an independent clause, one that could stand alone as a sentence: “put your car there”. Here the verb is “put”, the unspoken subject is “you” (it’s telling you to do something), and it could stand alone as a sentence (“Put your car there”). And what follows is yet another independent clause, which could also stand alone as a sentence: “otherwise, use a parking lot”. So, we have a subordinate clause followed by independent clauses, which are simply joined together without a coordinating conjunction or a semicolon. To be correct, we need a semicolon separating the two independent clauses, so the sentence would then read: “If you see a parking spot on the street, put your car there; otherwise, use a parking lot”. The semicolon is needed to separate the two independent clauses which are being joined together without a coordinating conjunction. What appears on either side of the semicolon should be able to stand alone as a sentence, and when you read the sentence that way, you could see that that in fact is the case. So, insert the semicolon after the word “their”, and the sentence is now correct.

Next example: “Under relentless questioning by the teacher, Joanne finally admitted that: she had copied part of her paper from a book in the school library.” Now, is the colon being correctly used here? We’ve seen

that colons often do introduce things, but what the colon should introduce is a restatement of what immediately precedes. In this case, what follows the colon is “she had copied part of her paper from a book in the school library”. Is there anything that comes before the colon that’s equivalent to that or means basically the same thing? Not really. So, in this case, the colon is really separating things that belong together, it’s not introducing a restatement, and if you apply the test of could it be deleted and replaced with the words “that is” or “in other words”, you can see the sentence wouldn’t really make sense: “Joanne finally admitted that, that is, she had copied part of her paper...” No, that really doesn’t sound right. In this case, the colon is wrong, and should actually simply be deleted, so the flow of the sentence would not be interrupted: “Joanne finally admitted that she had copied part of her paper...” Now, the sentence connects the things that logically belong together, and the unnecessary colon no longer interrupts the flow of the sentence.

Next example: “At first, Columbus thought his ships had landed in India; for this reason, he called the native people he encountered Indians.” Now, is this semicolon correct? Remember that a semicolon is normally used to separate two independent clauses. Are these independent clauses each of which could stand alone as a sentence? Let’s read them and see. “At first, Columbus thought his ships had landed in India” – does that sound as though it could stand alone as a sentence? Indeed, it does – it has a subject and a verb, it’s independent in meaning and could stand alone as a sentence. What about what follows the semicolon? “For this reason, he called the native people he encountered Indians”. This too could stand alone as a sentence. It’s also an independent clause. So, we have two independent clauses that have been stuck together. You need a semicolon between them to separate them, so in this case the sentence needs no correction, it’s perfectly right as originally written. The semicolon is correct and necessary.

One more sentence: “Four cities are being considered to host the world soccer championships; Madrid, Spain, Seoul, South Korea, Sydney, Australia, and Bogotá, Columbia.” Okay, the sentence is a little hard to read, isn’t it? That should tell you right off the bat that there is something wrong with the punctuation, and actually there are a couple of problems. First of all, let’s look at the semicolon that appears after the word “champi-

onships”. Is that a correct use of a semicolon? Again, normally what appears on either side of a semicolon should be able to stand alone as a sentence. Let’s check that out. What comes before the semicolon is “Four cities are being considered to host the world soccer championships”. That could stand alone as a sentence, so that’s fine. What follows the semicolon, however, is “Madrid, Spain, Seoul, South Korea, Sydney, Australia, and Bogotá, Columbia”. Could that stand alone as a sentence? No, that’s clearly just a list. So, the semicolon is being incorrectly used here. What should be used instead of the semicolon? Well, here’s a place where a colon could be used. We’ve seen that colons can be used to introduce lists, and what follows the colon is indeed a restatement of what comes before. What comes before the colon is the reference to “Four cities are being considered to host the world soccer championships”, and what follows is a list of those four cities. You could indeed put in the words “that is” or “in other words” in place of a colon, in that spot. So, a colon should come after the word “championships”, not a semicolon. That’s the first change we need to make. Now, what about the list of cities themselves? You might’ve found this very confusing; it says that we’re talking about four cities, but we’ve got a whole bunch of proper names here, separated just by commas: “Madrid (comma) Spain (comma) Seoul (comma) South Korea (comma) Sydney (comma)” and so on. Now, if you wouldn’t know anything about these names, you might think: “Well, what’s going on here? Sounds like there’re maybe eight names being listed here, but there’re supposed to be four cities. Madrid, Spain, Seoul, South Korea, Sydney... What’s going on here?” Well, if you know even a little bit about geography, you’ll know that these are four cities that are being listed – in each case, with the country where they are located. And you would normally list a city and a country with a comma in between them. So, it’s proper to describe the city of Madrid, Spain, as being “Madrid (comma) Spain”. That’s the city of Madrid in the country of Spain. So, here we have four items in a list, each item containing a comma onto itself, so we have Madrid (comma) Spain, Seoul (comma) South Korea, Sydney (comma) Australia, and Bogotá (comma) Columbia. Now, what do we do when we have items in a list, each of which contains a comma? For clarity’s sake, this is the other instance where we would use a semicolon. We can separate the items in the list with semicolons, just because the items themselves contain commas, and it’s confusing if you only use commas - you can’t tell then where one item begins and the next item

ends. So, the proper way to punctuate this list would be to use semicolons between the items, and that way it's easy to tell where each item starts. And the list would then read: "Madrid, Spain; Seoul, South Korea; Sydney, Australia; and Bogotá, Columbia". Now, the list is clear, easy to understand, and we can tell where each of the four city names begins and ends. That's the other use of the semicolon - exception to the rule that normally semicolon should only be used to separate independent clauses.

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Lesson 4:
Using quotation marks
with exercise 4

Sometimes when you are writing something, you want to quote what someone else has said. This might happen, for example, in a short story or a diary, where you are writing about an incident from life, either imagined or real, and you have characters who exchange dialog, who talk to one another. It might also happen in an essay that you might be writing for a class at school, where you want to quote what some other writer has said or perhaps quote from a figure from history. In all of these cases, you need to use quotation marks to show where the words you are quoting begin and end.

Here's the basic rule: use quotation marks to set off the words in a direct quotation. Since the quotation marks have to indicate where the quoted words begin and end, quotation marks are always used in pairs, and they are sometimes referred to as opening and closing quotation marks, beginning and ending quotation marks - any expression like that is equally clear and equally correct. The important thing to realize is that you always need both of the pairs of quotation marks. You need quotation mark at the beginning of the quotation and at the end, so it's very clear to the reader where the quotation begins and ends. Here's a simple example: "I have a dream," said Martin Luther King, Jr." The words that Martin Luther King, Jr. actually said were "I have a dream", so to indicate which words those were we've put the opening quotation marks before "I" and the closing quotation marks after "dream". You'll notice that we also have inserted a comma after the word "dream" preceding the quotation marks. In a moment, we're going to look closely at the rules about that, but as a general practice, quotations are usually set off from the rest of the sentence with commas. There's no hard and fast rule about that, but that's what most writers do, and it's a safe rule for you to follow. The important thing at this point to remember is that the exact words of the quotation must be set off by a pair of quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quotation.

Now, how exactly do you combine quotation marks with other punctuation marks? It can be a bit tricky. **Here's the rule: put periods and commas inside the closing quotation marks; put other punctuation marks outside, unless they themselves are part of the quotation.**

Before we go further I should explain that the practice of putting periods and commas inside the closing quotation marks is what's done in the United States. In England and in other countries where British practice is followed the periods and commas often appear outside the closing quotation marks. But if you are writing and working in the United States, it's safe to put periods and commas inside the closing quotation marks, as we did a moment ago with our quotation from the famous speech of Martin Luther King, Jr. Notice that, however, other punctuation marks should be put outside of the closing quotation marks, unless they themselves are part of the quotation. This would apply, for example, to colons, semicolons, exclamation points, and question marks. And another rule to remember is "Don't double up on punctuation marks!", that is, in and around quotations you don't need or want to put both a period and a question mark, for example, which you might be tempted to do if there's a question mark within the quotation. Let's take a look at some examples that will help you sort out what could be a confusing set of rules. The first example reads as follows: "Paula said, "I'll be back by dinner time." Notice the punctuation that we've used in this sentence. The words that Paul actually said were "I'll be back by dinner time", so we have quotation marks around those words. We have the opening quotation mark before "I'll" and the closing one after "time". Fine, and we also have a comma and a period. As we indicated a moment ago, we usually will set off the quotation with a comma from the rest of the sentence. So, we have a comma after the words "said": "Paula said (comma) "I'll be back by dinner time", so that the words that Paula said are being separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma. Finally, since this sentence ends, we need some kind of end punctuation mark and a period seems to be appropriate. So, we have a period at the end of the sentence as well, and following the US rule, we put the period inside the quotation mark. So, the sentence is correctly punctuated: "Paula said, "I'll be back by dinner time."

Now let's look at the next sentence for a slightly different problem: "Then she asked, "What are you planning to cook?" Okay, Paula's

exact words in this sentence are “What are you planning to cook?” So, the quotation marks surround those words; the opening quotation marks come before “What”, and the closing or ending quotation marks come after “cook”. Again, we have a comma separating the quotation from the rest of the sentence (“Then she asked (comma) “What are you planning to cook?”) Now, we have to have a question mark here, don’t we, because there is a question in this sentence? “What are you planning to cook?” is an interrogative sentence, and therefore, it needs a question. Now, where should that question mark go? Should it go before or after the closing quotation mark? Should it be part of the quotation or not? Well, if you think about what Paula is saying, her actual statement is itself the question - “What are you planning to cook?” She is asking the question. Therefore, the question mark belongs with the quotation; it’s part of the quotation itself. So, this sentence should be punctuated with the question mark inside the quotation marks, inside those closing marks. So, the sentence correctly is punctuated: “Then she asked, “What are you planning to cook?” So, we’ve got the question mark inside the quotation marks, because it’s actually part of the quotation, it’s what Paula actually said.

Now, for a third example, *which has to be handled a little differently*: “Kevin answered, “I think I’ll make beef stroganoff”; at least, that’s what I think he said.” Okay, here we have Kevin making a statement, and the author of this sentence goes on to make it separate statement “at least, that’s what I think he said”. So, let’s see how we should punctuate this. What are Kevin’s actual words? “I think I’ll make beef stroganoff” – that’s the actual quotation from Kevin, so the quotation marks should be around those words. The opening quotation marks will come before “I”, and the closing quotation marks come after “stroganoff”. Once again, we have a comma separating the quotation from the rest of the sentence: Kevin answered (comma) and then the quotation appears. Now, after the quotation we have a whole other clause “at least, that’s what I think he said”. That’s not part of the quotation; the author of the sentence is saying that. And since we have two independent clauses here, what punctuation mark do we need to separate the two independent clauses. Well, as you know, you need a semicolon in that instance, because we have two independent clauses each of which could stand alone as a sentence. One sentence could read: “Kevin answered, “I think I’ll make beef stroganoff”. That could be a sentence by itself. You can also have a sentence that simply reads: “At least,

that’s what I think he said”. That could be a sentence by itself. Since we have two independent clauses simply stuck together, we need a semicolon between them. But now the question is “Where does the semicolon go in relation to the quotation marks?” Well, remember our rule: other punctuation marks, other than commas and periods, go outside of the closing quotation mark, unless they are part of the quotation. Is the semicolon part of what Kevin said, “I think I’ll make beef stroganoff”? Not really, Kevin just made that statement and (?) no semicolon within that. He’s not connecting it to some other statement. So, the semicolon is really grammatically necessary as part of the larger structure, not as part of the quotation itself, unlike the example we saw before where the question mark was part of what Paula said. So, in this case the semicolon is not actually part of the quotation, and it should go outside of the quotation marks. So, the sentence would be correctly punctuated: “Kevin answered, “I think I’ll make beef stroganoff.”

So, the rules can get a little tricky as to where the punctuation marks go in relation to the quotation marks. The key thing to remember is comma and period you can always put inside the closing quotation marks.

Other punctuation marks – it all depends on whether the punctuation mark is actually part of the quotation or not. If it is, it goes inside the quotation marks; otherwise, outside. And with practice you’ll find that the rule is not that difficult to understand and practice. Just think about these particular rules each time you write a sentence with a quotation in it, and in time you’ll become comfortable with the rule.

Now, quotation marks are also used in a couple of other specific circumstances the most important of which is governed by the following rule: use quotation marks to set off the titles of essays, poems, articles, stories, and chapters in books. Normally, quotation marks are used for the titles of shorter works. Most other titles, for example the titles of full-length books, are either underlined if you are hand writing or typing your work, or printed in italics, which is the case in a printed book or when you’re typing on the computer. So, generally speaking, as a rule, the titles of longer works, such as full-length books, are underlined or printed in italics, but the titles or shorter units, such as essays, poems, articles, and stories, would be contained within quotation marks. And there are other rules for other types of literary or other works, and you’ll have to refer to a

grammar handbook for more specialized instances. But, generally speaking, the titles of shorter works would be contained within quotation marks, for example: “My favorite short story is Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery.” Here the title of the story is “The Lottery”, so the quotation marks appear around those words, “The Lottery”. And once again the sentence ends with the period, which like all periods goes inside the quotation mark.

Use single quotation marks to set off the words in a quotation within a quotation. Normally, again in American practice, the quotation marks that we use are double quotation marks. That is, you see the two little curly cues that make up the quotation mark. However, there is such a thing as a single quotation mark, which is used for very specific purpose, doesn’t come up that often, but occasionally it does come up. Once in a while, within a quotation there is a quotation, that is, within the quoted words the person who is saying those quoted words is himself quoting someone else. When that’s the case, you need somehow to set off that inner quotation from the larger outer quotation. And it would be a bit confusing if you simply use the same kind of quotation marks, because after a while people would become confused is this the quote within the quote or is it just the larger quote. Therefore, the practice that has evolved over time is to use double quotation marks for normal quotations and in the unusual circumstance where there is a quotation within a quotation - to use single quotation marks to set that off.

Here’s an example of how that might look: “King declared, “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed, ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.’” Okay, we return you again to the famous speech on civil rights by the great African-American leader Martin Luther King, and in that speech Martin Luther King did himself quote other famous words. In this particular quotation, Martin Luther King was quoting from The Declaration of Independence. The words from The Declaration of Independence that Martin Luther King was quoting were “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal”. So, this particular sentence is quoting Martin Luther King who in turn was quoting another literary work. So, here’s how the quotation marks have to work. We put normal double quotation marks around all of King’s words starting with “I have a dream...” and ending with the end of the sentence, “...that all men are cre-

ated equal”, because all of that is what King’s said as he got up on the podium on that important historical day. All of that was what King’s said, so all of that is contained within the double quotation marks. But then within the quotation, where King was himself quoting The Declaration of Independence, we use the single quotation marks to set off those words and make it obvious to the reader where the quotation within the quotation begins and ends, which does mean that at the end of the sentence the single and double quotation marks appear together. So, a little tricky, and you have to look closely to see what you’re seeing, but that’s the right way to do it. So, the sentence is correctly punctuated this way: “King declared (comma) (opening double quotation marks) I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed (comma) (opening single quotation marks) We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal (period) (closing single quotation marks) (closing double quotation marks)”. And that’s the way the sentence should be constructed. Will this come up often in your writing? Not at all, but it will occasionally happen. And when you’re reading, you’ll see sentences written this way, so it’s important to understand the rule not only for your writing, but also so that when you are reading written works, you’ll understand exactly how the quotation marks work.

Finally, *quotation marks are often misused. Don’t use quotation marks for emphasis or to cast doubt.* *Here are a couple of examples of ways that you’ll see quotation marks used which are really not right. In one case, it’s actually wrong, and in the other case, it’s kind of a sloppy or lazy use of quotation marks.*

Our first example, which is strictly wrong, is sometimes you’ll see signs in stores of other locations that read something like this: “Special today: “fresh” corn on the cob.” The author of this sentence is trying to emphasize the word “fresh”. He’s trying to say, “Wow, it’s really fresh! You really want this corn on the cob.” But by putting the quotes around the word “fresh” he’s making it sound as though he is quoting some other source, as though that word “fresh” comes from someone else, which doesn’t really make sense. If the author of this sign wants to emphasize “fresh”, perhaps he could underline it or even paint it in the different color, but quotation marks are only really used to mean “these are words that I’m borrowing from some other source”. It doesn’t really make sense to use

them for emphasis, as people often carelessly do when they are writing things like signs. If you find them in your own papers, that's wrong. Correct that.

And here's another example: "If the English always seem grouchy, it's probably because of their country's "beautiful" weather." Sometimes people will use quotation marks this way in order to indicate a slightly different meaning to say, "Well, I don't really believe that this is true." It's a way of casting doubt or making fun of what's being said, and sometimes even in conversation people will hold up their fingers and wiggle them to say "quote" as if to indicate that there is some doubt about what's being said, like, "Oh yeah, that was a "great" concert". You see, it's a way of being sarcastic, but it's not a very clear or effective way of communicating the meaning. And so, you should avoid using quotation marks this way – it's a somewhat lazy way of trying to be sarcastic or ironic or cast some kind of doubt on what you're saying. In this case, it doesn't really work very well as a piece of writing, and the author would be better off simply straightforwardly saying what he's trying to say. If he's trying to say that English weather is always gloomy, drizzly and chilly, he ought to say that rather than saying, "Quote beautiful weather." The point would come across much more clearly that way. So, avoid that careless and sloppy use of quotation marks. You do see it from time to time, but that's not really good writing.

Okay, *we have an exercise that will test your ability to use quotation marks correctly.* Turn to your Study Guide, and when you finished the exercise, come back and we'll see how well you did.

Exercise 4

Directions: *In the following sentences, some quotation marks and other punctuation marks have been omitted. Read each sentence and add any missing punctuation marks in the proper places.*

1. As Robert Frost remarked in his poem Mending Wall, Good fences make good neighbors
2. What did Emerson mean when he wrote the words, I hate quotations. Tell me what you know
3. The company president asked all employees to look for ways to work more efficiently and therefore save money

4. Churchill ended his stirring wartime speech with the words, Let us therefore bear ourselves so that men will say This was their finest hour
5. Everyone chuckled when Kevin quipped, Why is it that the teacher only calls on me when I haven't done my homework

Now, in these sentences, quotation marks have been omitted and we've also left out some of the punctuation marks that ought to be included, so you can have the fun of figuring out which punctuation marks belong here, and where they ought to go in relation to the quotation marks. So, let's go through each of these sentences and see how well you were able to figure that out.

First: “As Robert Frost remarked in his poem Mending Wall, Good fences make good neighbors” Now, there are actually two things in this sentence that need to be enclosed within quotation marks. There's the quotation itself – the words that come from the poem. The quotation is, “Good fences make good neighbors”. So, we want to put double quotation marks, normal quotation marks, around that entire sentence. So, we'd have opening quotation marks before “Good” and closing quotation marks after “neighbors”. In addition, the title of the poem “Mending Wall” should also be contained within quotation marks. Remember that titles of poems are one of the kinds of titles that would normally be enclosed within quotation marks. So, we'd have quotation marks around “Mending Wall”. In addition, we do need to add a period at the end of the whole sentence, because, after all, sentences need to end with some kind of punctuation mark, and a period would make sense. And a period would go inside the final closing quotation mark; it's because that's what we do with periods. So, the sentence would ultimately be correctly punctuated like this: “As Robert Frost remarked in his poem (opening quotation marks) Mending Wall (comma) (closing quotation marks) (opening quotation marks) Good fences make good neighbors (period) (closing quotation marks)”

Let's look at our next example: “What did Emerson mean when he wrote the words, I hate quotations. Tell me what you know” Ralph Waldo Emerson was a famous 19th century writer, and it's ironic that one of the most famous quotations from his work is this statement about hating quotations, but that's the way it is. Now, we have to figure out how we're going to punctuate this sentence, and doing so will prove to be a little bit tricky.

First, let's figure out where the quotation is, that is, what are the words that Emerson actually said which should be enclosed in the quotation marks. Well, Emerson's words were "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know." So, we want to put quotation marks around those sentences. So, we will have opening quotation marks in front of "I" and closing quotation marks after the word "know". Now, what about the closing punctuation for the entire sentence? What kind of sentence is this? Well, if you think about, it you can see that this is an interrogative sentence. It's asking a question – what did Emerson mean when he wrote the words bla-bla-bla... "What did he mean?" – It's asking a question, so we need to end the entire sentence with a question mark. So, then we have to figure out where does the question mark go in relation to the quotation marks. Does it go inside the quotation marks or outside them? Well, if we were dealing with a period or a comma, we would always put it inside the quotation marks, but remember, other punctuation marks go either inside or outside the quotation marks depending on whether they are part of the quotation itself. Now, did Emerson's quotation contain a question mark? Was Emerson asking the question "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know"? No, that's a declarative sentence; he's not asking a question. So, the question mark is not part of Emerson's quotation, instead, it's part of the broader sentence. The author of this entire sentence is asking the question. So, the question mark should go outside of the closing quotation marks, and the sentence would be correctly punctuated like this: "What did Emerson mean when he wrote the words (comma) (opening quotation marks) I hate quotations (period) Tell me what you know (close quotation marks) (question mark)" The question mark ends the sentence and it goes outside of the quotation marks, because it is not part of what Emerson said. Notice too that we followed the rule of not doubling up on punctuation marks. Emerson's statement "Tell me what you know" is a declarative sentence. It would normally end with a period. However, we don't put in the period, because then we'd be doubling up. We'd have a period, closing quotation marks, and then the question mark and that would look a little weird. So, we simply omit the period, because we need the question mark instead. We don't double up and put the period as well.

Next example: "The company president asked all employees to look for ways to work more efficiently and therefore save money" Where do the quotation marks go in this sentence? Well, this is perhaps a tricky question

– there are no quotation marks in this sentence and there shouldn't be any. Why? Well, remember what quotation marks are for – quotation marks are used to set off the words in a direct quotation. That means that when you write a sentence that actually quotes the exact words used by someone else, you enclose those words in quotation marks. This sentence is not a direct quotation. Actually, it's an example of an indirect quotation. Here we are reporting what the company president said: "The company president asked all employees to look for ways to work more efficiently and therefore save money" It is a report of something that was said. So, in that sense it's a quotation, but it's an indirect quotation, because the exact words are not being reported. If they were, we would have a true quotation, a direct quotation which would have to be enclosed in quotation marks. So, for example, suppose the sentence read something like this: "The company president said, "All employees should look for ways to work more efficiently and therefore save money." Now we would be quoting the exact words actually spoken by the company president, and we would enclose those in quotation marks. But as it is, this is not a direct quotation. It's an indirect quotation, and quotation marks are not used with that. So we put a period at the end of the sentence and move on to the next example.

"Churchill ended his stirring wartime speech with the words, Let us therefore bear ourselves so that men will say This was their finest hour" Okay, here's another slightly complicated example, and, by the way, for purposes of this exercise we've slightly shortened the actual quotation from Churchill. So, if you ever look up the actual speech, you'll see the words are a little different. But, we're organizing it this way just to make the exercise a little clearer and easier. What exactly did Churchill say? Well, the exact words used by Churchill were "Let us therefore bear ourselves so that men will say "This was their finest hour" Okay, Churchill said that whole thing, so therefore all of those words should be enclosed in quotation marks. So, we would have opening quotation marks before the word "let", and closing quotation marks after the word "our". However, we notice that something else is going on within this quotation. Churchill himself is quoting other words. He is quoting what men in the future might say about the people of today. And what might those men of the future say? They would look back on the people of Churchill's own historical time and say, "This was their finest hour." So, Churchill is imagining what the words of the future person might be and quoting them within his quotation. So, we have

here that unusual situation of a quotation within a quotation. So, here is where single quotation marks need to be used, and we'll put the single quotation marks around the words "This was their finest hour". And we will also use a comma to separate that quotation from the broader quotation, and finally end the whole thing with the period inside all of the quotation marks, because that's where periods always go. So we've got a quotation within a quotation here, and that's why we'll use both double quotation marks for the bigger quote and single quotation marks for the smaller quote within a quote. The sentence as a whole then will be punctuated like this: "Churchill ended his stirring wartime speech with the words (comma) (opening double quotation marks) Let us therefore bear ourselves so that men will say (comma) (opening single quotation marks) This was their finest hour (period) (closing single quotation marks) (closing double quotation marks)" You have to look closely to make sure you've set up all the layers of quotation marks correctly, but if you do, then the reader will be able to understand exactly what Churchill said and exactly where Churchill was quoting from the imagined speech of some future person. Therefore, the entire structure of this rather complicated quotation will be clear.

Final example: "Everyone chuckled when Kevin quipped, Why is it that the teacher only calls on me when I haven't done my homework" Okay, we have a quotation here. What exactly did Kevin say? What are the words that should be within the quotation marks? Kevin said, "Why is it that the teacher only calls on me when I haven't done my homework". So, we want quotation marks around all of that, so we will have opening quotation marks before the word "why" and closing quotation marks after the word "homework". Now, we can also see that a question is involved here. The question is exactly what Kevin said. Kevin is asking the question. Kevin's own statement is an interrogative sentence: "Why is it that the teacher only calls on me when I haven't done my homework?" So, we are going to need to end this sentence with a question mark to reflect the fact that Kevin is asking the question. But where does the question mark go? Well, remember that the question mark like other punctuation marks (other than period and comma) only goes within the quotation marks when it's actually a part of the quotation. And that is the case here. Kevin's actual quotation is itself a question, and therefore the question mark is part of the quotation. So, here we will put the question mark inside the closing quotation marks, because it's all part of what Kevin said. So, the sentence should be correct-

ly punctuated like this: “Everyone chuckled when Kevin quipped (comma) (opening quotation marks) Why is it that the teacher only calls on me when I haven’t done my homework (question mark) (closing quotation marks)”

As you can see, *knowing how and where to use quotation marks can be a little tricky, and combining them with other punctuation marks takes a little bit of practice. But follow the rules that we’ve given you in this lesson, keep working at it, and soon I think you’ll find you can handle these without making any errors.*

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Lesson 5:
Using other punctuation marks
with exercise 5

The punctuation marks we've looked at so far - the period, the question mark, the exclamation point, the comma, the semicolon, the colon and quotation marks – all of these are by far the most common and important punctuation marks. There are a few other marks though that you ought to know how to use, even though as a writer you're better off using them relatively infrequently. So, the punctuation marks that we're going to talk about in this lesson are ones that, generally speaking, you should avoid using a lot. Some writers do use these punctuation marks heavily, and usually it has a bad effect on style. Nonetheless, it's important to know about them, and we'll cover them briefly in this lesson.

First, parentheses. Parentheses, like quotation marks, always have to be used in pairs. They are those little curved symbols. And parentheses are used to set off words or phrases that interrupt the meaning of a sentence. Now, we've already seen that pairs of commas can be used to set off words that interrupt the meaning of a sentence. Parentheses would mark a stronger interruption. The words within parentheses should truly be relatively unimportant or non-essential to the meaning of the sentence, almost words that the reader could ignore and still capture the gist, the meaning of the sentence. So, only use parentheses when you want to insert some additional words or an additional fact or idea that's relatively unimportant, but you just want to kind of toss it in to the sentence.

Here are a couple of examples of how parentheses could be used: "Everyone in Los Angeles (at least, everyone I know) seems to be writing a screenplay." Here the point of the sentence is that everyone seems to be writing a screenplay, and the author just briefly interrupts himself or herself to say "Well, everyone I know". Maybe it's not true of everyone. It's not a terribly important aside; it's a little idea that's just being kind of thrown in to add a little bit of color to the sentence. Not very important, and that's why putting it within parentheses is probably appropriate.

Another example: “John Lennon (1942-1980) was a member of The Beatles, the most famous group in the history of pop music”. Okay, the author wants to give you a basic piece of information about John Lennon, and while he’s at it he thinks, “Well, I might as well throw in John Lennon’s birth and death dates that might be useful to the reader, and rather than write a whole separate clause or sentence about that I can easily insert those dates just by putting them within parentheses after the name John Lennon”. And very often in encyclopedias or other reference works you will see a parenthetical insertion used for just this purpose – to stick in an additional piece of information in a way that’s unobtrusive and which the reader can ignore or look at if they are interested. So, here’s another good example of how parentheses can be used.

*Some people get into the habit of using parentheses a lot in their writing, and that’s not too good because then sentences constantly feel like they are breaking apart and being interrupted. So, **avoid using parentheses a lot, but once in a while for a statement that’s truly an aside like this, you can use them.***

Another punctuation mark that’s used for an abrupt break is a dash. Use a dash to indicate an abrupt break in the meaning of a sentence. A dash should feel like a more sudden and sharp break or interruption in a sentence than a comma, semicolon or colon. In fact, when you use a dash, you should really only use it when there’s a sudden change in the sentence: in its tone, its feeling or in the meaning of the sentence.

Here’s an example: “Someone had taken the file from the mayor’s desk - but who?” Notice that how these last two words suddenly change the statement from being simply a statement of a fact that someone had taken the file to suddenly turning the sentence into a kind of a mystery (“who had taken it?”). There’s almost a sudden air of danger or urgency added by those last couple of words. This is the kind of sentence that you might read in a mystery story where the author is introducing one of the important clues that will lead to the criminal. So, in order to set up that tone of a sudden shift from a rather straightforward statement of fact into an atmosphere of mystery or danger, the dash has been used. And that is an example of how a dash indicates an abrupt break in meaning of a sentence.

Now, sometimes authors use pairs of dashes to surround interrupting material. As we've already seen, both pairs of commas and parentheses can be used to surround interrupting material. When you use dashes to do it, again it feels a little bit more abrupt. And it's somewhat more informal in feeling. So, if you are writing something rather informal, such as a story, for example, or a letter to a friend, using dashes can work perfectly well in this context, but for writing a paper for school, for example, or a report for work, you might prefer to use either commas or parentheses. But here's an example of how dashes could be used in pairs to set off material that interrupts the main flow of the sentence: "Parker claimed - with some justification - that his enemies were being hypocritical." Here the sentence mainly flows this way: Parker claimed that his enemies were being hypocritical. The author wants to throw in the additional fact that there was some justification for what Parker was claimed. And so he's done it as a parenthetical or interrupting phrase, and in this case he is chosen to use dashes to separate the interrupting phrase from the rest of the sentence. It's perfectly correct; you could either use commas or parentheses, and those would be equally correct in this particular sentence. As I say, the dashes would have a somewhat more informal feeling. If you do use dashes in this way, remember you have to have a dash both before and after the interrupting material. If you use it only in one place, you'll be making an error.

The last punctuation mark we are going to tell you about is what's called ellipses. In a different program in this series we talked about ellipsis meaning the omission of one or more words from a repeated phrase of clause. Ellipses which is spelled -es at the end is a little different. Ellipses also has to do with omissions and the punctuation mark known as ellipses consists of three periods. Sometimes people refer to it as dot-dot-dot. I've never figured out why in this particular context a period is referred to as a dot, but that's in fact what ellipses are, it's three periods. If you're typing ellipses you would space them out so it be period-space-period-space-period-space. Ellipses are used to indicate words omitted from a quotation or to signal the trailing-off of the end of a sentence.

Here are examples of each of these two uses of ellipses.

First: "As Lincoln once remarked, "You can fool all of the people some of the time . . . but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." Now, here we have a quotation enclosed within quotation marks, but Lin-

coln's actual words were more extensive than this. The actual quotation from Lincoln is, "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time". For whatever reason, the author of this sentence doesn't want to include all of Lincoln's words, but only some of them. So, to indicate the words that have been left out, the author has put in ellipses, three periods in a row, which indicate to the reader – "here are some words omitted that Lincoln actually said, but which I am choosing to leave out". It's a form of intellectual honesty, if you will; you are warning the reader: "Well, Lincoln said a little more than this. I'm leaving some it out, so if you want to quote Lincoln later on, you'd better look up the whole quotation to get all the exact words." So, from time to time, you may need to use ellipses for this purpose. For example, if you are writing a paper for school and you want to quote some other writer, you may not need or want to quote an entire sentence. And if that's the case, use ellipses to show where you are leaving words out.

Now, *occasionally, writers also use ellipses*, as I've said, *to signal the trailing-off of the end of a sentence*, in which case they use ellipses as end punctuation and create a sentence that looks something **like this**: "The house is dark; I wonder why . . ." And we have the three periods at the end indicating that the speaker or the writer of the sentence had their thoughts a kind of trailing-off. And I guess the idea is to create a sense of uncertainty or mystery, and the way I read the sentence, of course, was designed to indicate that kind of mood. Once in a great while, using ellipses to end the sentence this way could be appropriate, but again, some people get into the habit of using ellipses continually in their writing as a way of ending sentences. And it gives the feeling that they are a little too lazy to figure out exactly how they want to end the sentence, do they want to end it with a period, a question mark, an exclamation point, what's the link between one sentence and the next. And it creates somewhat of a vague feeling, almost as though there's fog creeping between the sentences.

So, use this very sparingly. Once in a while, in an appropriate context, where you really want to suggest that the sentence is drifting to an end rather than coming to a complete halt, you could use ellipses to end a sentence. But don't do it too often; it's not the greatest form of writing.

So, these last three forms of punctuations are used a little less often than any of the other punctuation marks that we've talked about in this program, and they have less hard and fast rules about how they are used. But sprinkled here and there occasionally in your writing they can serve a perfectly good function, and so it's important to know how and when to use them – parentheses, the dash and ellipses. We've provided an exercise that will test your use of parentheses and the dash. Not ellipses, because of the unusual way in which ellipses are used to indicate omissions from quotations. It's kind of hard to create an exercise to test that, since you'd have to omit words from quotations. So, we focused on parentheses and dashes in this exercise. Try your hand at the exercise, and come back, and we'll look at the questions together.

Exercise 5

Directions: *In the following sentences, parentheses or dashes have been omitted. Read each sentence and insert the indicated punctuation marks in the proper places.*

- 1.** Because the following day Wednesday was the first of June, Loretta's rent payment was due. (*parentheses*)
- 2.** Napoleon's exile to the island of Elba marked the end of his career or so it seemed. (*dash*)
- 3.** The Battle of Bull Run known in the South as First Manassas was the first major encounter of the Civil War. (*parentheses*)
- 4.** When we compare today's automobiles to those of a century ago, we can see that much has changed in fact, practically everything has changed. (*dash*)
- 5.** In a later section of the book chapters four through six, the author describes in detail the early struggles of the American labor movement. (*parentheses*)

In this exercise we've given you some sentences where either parentheses or dashes could be used, and we've even suggested at the end of the sentence which might be appropriate. And, in fact, because these punctuation marks are used without very hard and fast rules, you could actually interchange them to some extent. So, we've told you which one we think you'd might want to use in a particular sentence, and your job is just to figure out how and where to use them.

Let's look at our first example: "Because the following day Wednesday was the first of June, Loretta's rent payment was due." And we've suggested using parentheses in this sentence. Now, parentheses would be used to set off a word or phrase that interrupts the meaning of a sentence. Which word or phrase does that here? Well, in this case, the word "Wednesday" is a little additional information. It tells you specifically what the following day was, and it might make the story a little easier for someone to understand or to follow, but that would be appropriate to enclose in parentheses. So, the best use of parentheses in this sentence would be: "Because the following day (Wednesday) was the first of June, Loretta's rent payment was due."

Next example: "Napoleon's exile to the island of Elba marked the end of his career or so it seemed." And we've recommended that you insert a dash or dashes somewhere into the sentence. Now, a dash, remember, is used to signal an abrupt break in the meaning of the sentence. Is there an abrupt break anywhere here? Well, yes, the last four words of the sentence take a very different tack from the remaining part of the sentence. Up to that point in that sentence we are being told that Napoleon's career was over, but the last four words tell us, "Ah! Something different is going to happen!". "Or so it seemed" – when we read those four words, we realize that the sentences that follow are going to tell us about how Napoleon actually started his career again after being exiled to Elba. So, there is a sudden break in meaning there, and that's where we would insert the dash. So, the sentence could now read: "Napoleon's exile to the island of Elba marked the end of his career—or so it seemed." The dash alerts the reader, "Aha! Sudden unexpected change is happening."

Next example: "The Battle of Bull Run known in the South as First Manassas was the first major encounter of the Civil War." And we've suggested that you use parentheses somewhere in this sentence. Well, this is a good example of another way that parentheses can be used – to give some additional information about a fact that's mentioned in the sentence, and to do it in the way that's not obtrusive. If the reader finds it useful or helpful, then fine, the reader knows where the information appears. In this case, the words "known in the South as First Manassas" ought to be enclosed in parentheses. You can see why – the battle is mainly known as The Battle of Bull Run, but within a certain part of the United States, it has a different

name. If this sentence is being read by someone who happens to be from Georgia, let's say, in school they might have learned the name "First Manassas". And so having it in parentheses for them would help clarify for them exactly which battle is being described. Most readers, however, will probably ignore the parenthetical phrase or skim over it in their reading, and that's why putting it in parentheses is useful. It sets this particular information aside as not very important, but it's nice to have in case the reader wants it. So, the sentence would then read: "The Battle of Bull Run (known in the South as First Manassas) was the first major encounter of the Civil War."

Next sentence: "When we compare today's automobiles to those of a century ago, we can see that much has changed in fact, practically everything has changed." And we want to see you insert a dash into this sentence. Now, where is there an abrupt or sudden break in the meaning of the sentence? Well, it comes between the word "changed" and the phrase "in fact". The sentence there suddenly shifts from saying that a lot of things have changed to say that actually everything has changed. It's almost as though the speaker of the sentence or the writer of the sentence is interrupting his own thinking to say, "Much has changed . . . Huh, what am I saying, everything has changed!" It's like they are correcting themselves in midstream, so putting the dash there indicates the break in meaning and the sentence would then read: "When we compare today's automobiles to those of a century ago, we can see that much has changed—in fact, practically everything has changed." Another good example of the use of the dash.

And our last sentence: "In a later section of the book chapters four through six, the author describes in detail the early struggles of the American labor movement." And you are asked to pick certain words and enclose them within parentheses. Which are the words that interrupt the main flow of the sentence, but give a little additional or extra information that might be helpful? In this case, the interrupting words are "chapters four through six". So, we would enclose those in parentheses. Once again, the reader can ignore those words if he or she chooses, but in case the reader wants to look up that later section of the book, the chapter reference is there, and it makes it easy to find it. So the sentence would read: "In a later section of the book (chapters four through six), the author describes in detail the early struggles of the American labor movement." So, one good way of using pa-

rentheses is to get a reference like that in. You can even use parentheses, for example, to enclose a page number within a paper you might be writing for school.

So, if you are quoting a particular work, you could put the page number in parentheses to make it easy for the teacher to look up that quotation in the book if he or she wants to do so. And it does that in a rather unobtrusive way, without taking away too much attention from the main flow of the sentence. It's a good use of parentheses.

Conclusion

Earlier in this program I suggested that punctuation marks could be thought of as being like traffic signs. They tell you where to slow down, where to come to a complete stop, and where to change direction. That's a good comparison, but here's another one. You could also think of punctuation marks as being like the symbols that composers use when they write music. Symbols such as rests or the symbols that indicate an increased volume or decreased volume, speeding up or slowing down. The punctuation marks tell the reader exactly how to read the sentences and the paragraphs that you write. They tell the reader which points need greater emphasis, which ideas belong together, which ideas should be separated, and where there's an abrupt change in the meaning. If you use punctuation marks skillfully, they can make your writing much easier to understand and enable your readers to follow your thinking just as efficiently as a trained musician or a trained singer can follow the instructions given by the composer for performing a piece of music in a way that really embodies what the composer originally had in mind.

So, learn the proper ways of using punctuation marks, and you'll find that your writing will be much easier to understand and much more effective at getting across your meaning in a powerful way. Hope you've enjoyed watching this program, and I'll look for you in other programs in Video Aided Instruction's English Grammar Series. Thanks for watching.

▪ Additional study and practice material see in Supplements attached

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Lecture 10:
SPELLING & CAPITALIZATION

- **Lesson 1: Some helpful spelling rules**
- **Lesson 2: Prefixes and suffixes**
- **Lesson 3: Words that are often confused**
- **Lesson 4: Spelling plurals**
- **Lesson 5: Rules for capitalization**

Hi! I'm Karl Weber. Welcome to Video Aided Instruction's *English Grammar Series*. This is the program on spelling and capitalization.

Of all the languages in the world, English may be the most difficult to spell. In some other languages, Italian, for instance, each letter represents only one sound. So, if you know how to say a word in Italian, you know how to spell it. In English, however, the relationship between sound and spelling is unpredictable. For example, in the following words, the sound of O [oo] is represented by ten different letters or combinations of letters: so, sow, sew, oh, owe, dough, doe, beau, soak, soul. And the same letter may represent many different sounds in English. For example, in these words the letter O represents seven sounds: so, to, on, honey, horse, women, bor-ough. No wonder English is hard to spell! Perhaps you wonder why some-one hasn't tried to fix English spelling by making it match the pronuncia-tions of words. Actually, some people have tried. Such well-known figures as the playwright George Bernard Shaw, the novelist Mark Twain, and the dictionary maker Noah Webster, have all proposed simplified systems for spelling English. None of these systems have been adopted, however. There are several reasons. First, if words are to be pronounced as they are spelled, whose pronunciation will we follow? As you know, English sounds very different in New York City; Liverpool, England; Atlanta, Georgia;

Bombay, India; and Sydney, Australia. If we had different spelling systems for every style of pronunciation, communication would be more difficult, not easier. Furthermore, if children were to learn a new system of spelling, they would find it hard or impossible to read the millions of existing books that are printed with traditional spelling. And it would cost billions of dollars to convert and reprint those books. For these reasons, the crazy spelling of English is simply something that we have to live with, like traffic jams or bad weather. In this lesson, you'll learn some rules and techniques that would make it easier for you to spell English words correctly. And when you are still in doubt, consult a dictionary.

Lesson 1:
Some helpful spelling rules
with exercise 1

There are quite a few words in English that are hard to spell. Luckily, it's not necessary to learn each of these words individually. Some of the hard words fall into groups that can be learned together. In this lesson, we'll look at a few rules that can help you remember how to spell some of these groups of hard words.

Our first rule deals with the letter combination ie or ei. Many words in English contain these combinations, but it's not always easy to remember whether to use **ie** or **ei** in a particular word. Our first rule takes the form of a little poem that can help you remember. **Here is how it goes:**

I before E, except after C, or when sounded like A as in *neighbor* and *weigh*.

Let's take a closer look at this rule. It tells you that **ie** is usually correct (I before E). However, when the letter combination comes after the let-

ter C, then **ei** is used instead. So, for example, a word like *receive* is spelled R-E-C-**E-I**-V-E. Because the combination comes after the letter C, **ei** is correct. Furthermore, we use **ei** when the sound of the vowel combination is A, for example, in the word *neighbor* or the word *weigh*. In both of those words the letter combination sounds like A, and therefore it's spelled **ei**, rather than **ie**. Now, there are a few English words that are exceptions to this rule: words that use **ei**, even though they don't follow the letter C, nor does it sound like A. You can remember most of the most common words that are exceptions to this rule, if you memorize this rather strange sentence. Here it is: neither leisurely foreign sheik seized their weird height. Does this sentence make a lot of sense? Not really, but it is easy to remember as a good way to make a know of these exceptional words in English which are spelled **ei**, even though they don't fit into our rhyming rule.

Our next rule has to do with the sound able or ible which comes at the end of many words. It means "able to be done". Now, it sometimes can be difficult to remember whether to spell this suffix -ABLE or -IBLE. Here are a couple of rules that will help you distinguish able-words from ible-words. The ending is usually -IBLE is the root is not a complete word. For example, look at the word *credible*. This means "able to be believed". It comes from a Latin root *credere*- which means "to believe". But in English the root *cred*- is not a complete word. No one can use the word *cred* in English. Since it's not a complete word, **ible** would be the expected spelling, and that is correct. So, *credible* is spelled with **ible**, not **able**. Other examples in English include *impossible* and *plausible*, because "imposs" and "plaus" are not complete words in English.

Now, there's another group of words that are also commonly spelled ible rather than able. These are words where the root ends in NS, SS, soft C, or soft G. Examples include defensible, admissible, enforcible, and legi-

ble. Because the root in these cases ends with that soft sound, -IBLE is also correct. Otherwise, words with this suffix usually are spelled -ABLE. So, in this rule we've defined two groups of words that usually end in -IBLE; otherwise, -ABLE is correct.

Our next rule deals with another common ending: -FY or -EFY.

There are four words in English that end in -EFY. Memorize these four, and you'll know how to spell them correctly. They are *liquefy*, which means to make liquid; *putrefy*, which means to rot; *rarefy*, which means to make more rare or more pure; and *stupefy*, which means to make something or someone stupid or dull. Those four words are spelled -EFY. Other words with the same suffix are spelled -IFY, for example, *magnify*, *beautify*, and *identify*. So, when you have a word that ends with this sound, you would usually spell it -IFY. Only the four exceptions with -EFY are need to be memorized.

And our last rule also deals with commonly confused endings. These are all endings that sound like -CEDE. Once again, we have a group of exceptional words that you can memorize, and otherwise, all the other words that have that -CEDE ending will fall into a single category. Here's the rule. Three words end in -CEED; those three words are *exceed*, *proceed*, and *succeed*. One word ends in -SEDE: *supersede*. All other words that end with *this sound* are spelled with -CEDE, for example, *concede*, *recede*, and *precede*. Again, if you memorize the words that are exceptions to the general principle, you shouldn't have too much difficulty with the cede-words.

Okay, the rules you've learned in this lesson will help you spell many dozens of English words. Do you think you've mastered them? Turn to your Study Guide in which we've provided an exercise which will test your knowledge of these rules.

Exercise 1

Directions: *Some of the following sentences contain misspelled words. Read each sentence and decide whether or not there is a spelling error. If you aren't certain, you may use a dictionary. Correct any misspelled words you find.*

1. The telescope at the city observatory can magnefy images from space thousands of times, making distant stars and galaxies clearly visable.
2. After entering the auditorium, the members of the graduating class are supposed to prosede directly to their seats.
3. Yesterday I recieved a package in the mail that was supposed to be delivered to my next-door neighbor.
4. During the early stages of the war, some feared that Hitler's armies were practically invincible, and a few were ready to concede defeat.
5. As darkness fell over the mountains, the weird cry of a distant coyote was faintly audible.

In this exercise we've provided you with five sentences, some of which contain spelling errors. Your job is to locate any spelling errors and correct them, and you are allowed to use a dictionary, if you find that helpful.

Let's look at the first sentence: "The telescope at the city observatory can magnefy images from space thousands of times, making distant stars and galaxies clearly visable." Now, in this sentence there are two spelling errors. Did you catch both of them? The first one is *magnefy*. *Magnify* in this sentence was spelled with -EFY, but remember there are only four words in English that end in -EFY, and *magnify* isn't one of them. Correct spelling is -IFY. The secondary is the word *visable*. Here the suffix -ABLE was spelled with an A - V-I-S-A-B-L-E. This is incorrect. Remember, if the root is not a complete word in English, the usual spelling is -IBLE. "Vis" is not a complete word in English, and therefore, -IBLE would be the expected spelling, and that would be correct - *visible*.

Let's look at the next sentence: "After entering the auditorium, the members of the graduating class are supposed to prosede directly to their seats." Here –CEDE has been spelled –SEDE in the word *proceed*. But that's wrong. Remember that –SEDE is used in only one word in English: *supersede*. *Proceed* is one of the group of words, three words that are spelled with –CEED. Remember those three words are *exceed*, *proceed*, and *succeed*. Therefore, the correct spelling of *proceed* is P-R-O-C-E-E-D, and that's a spelling error you should have caught in this sentence.

Next example: "Yesterday I recieved a package in the mail that was supposed to be delivered to my next-door neighbor." Now, in this sentence we have two words that use the EI or IE combination of letters. Are they spelled correctly? Well, one is correct, and one isn't. First, we have the word *receive* which is spelled EI in this case. Is that correct? No, it's wrong. Remember our rule: I before E except after C. In this case, the word *receive* contains the EI combination after the letter C. And therefore, I should not come before E, but instead the other way around. EI is correct in the word *receive*, so this word is spelled wrong in this sentence. What about the word *neighbor*? *Neighbor* is spelled with EI, and that's correct, because remember that when the vowel combination is sounded like A, as in neighbor and weigh, E comes before I. So, in this sentence, one of the words with the EI/IE combination is spelled incorrectly, one – correctly.

Our next example: "During the early stages of the war, some feared that Hitler's armies were practically invincible, and a few were ready to concede defeat." Now, there are two tricky words in this sentence. Let's see whether you were able to spell them correctly. The first one is *invincible*. That includes that suffix, -ABLE or -IBLE, which can sometimes be difficult. Is –IBLE correct spelling as it's done here? Well, remember that when the root ends with the soft C sound, that is a C that sounds like an S, then –

IBLE is normally correct. Therefore, the –IBLE spelling in this case is correct, because *invincible*, the root there (*invinc-*), ends with that soft C sound, the C that sounds like an S. So, –IBLE is the correct spelling, and the sentence is right so far. What about the word *concede*? We’ve seen that that –CEDE ending can be tricky. Well, –CEDE is the most common *spelling for this ending*. We saw that there are just four words that don’t fit that rule, and *concede* is not one of them. So, *concede* is correctly spelled in this sentence with the –CEDE ending. All the words in this sentence are correct, there is no error here.

Last example: “As darkness fell over the mountains, the wierd cry of a distant coyote was faintly audible.” Once again, there are two possibly tricky words in this sentence. Are they spelled correctly or incorrectly? Let’s take a look. First, we have the word *weird*, which contains the EI or IE combination. Remember that *weird* is one of the words that shows up in our little sentence, the sentence which is design to remind you of words that are spelled EI, even though they don’t fit into the rule. The sentence is, “Neither leisurely foreign sheik seized their weird height.” The word *weird* is in that sentence, and that’s there to remind you that it’s spelled EI, not IE. So, in this sentence it’s incorrect, and would need to be fixed. What about the word *audible*? Again, that –ABLE or –IBLE ending can be tricky. Remember our rule that when the root is not a complete word in English, very often –IBLE is the correct spelling. Is “aud” a complete word in English? Not at all; therefore, we would expect *audible* to be spelled with –IBLE, and that is in fact the correct spelling. So, *audible* is correctly spelled in this sentence; *wierd* is not.

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Lesson 2:
Prefixes and suffixes
with exercise 2

Prefixes are syllables that are added to the beginnings of words or word roots to change their meaning. Suffixes are syllables added to the ends of words or word roots to change their meaning.

And we've already seen both prefixes and suffixes can pose tricky spelling challenges. In this lesson, we'll look at some rules that will help. Let's begin with the prefix IN. It usually means "not". For example, take the word *visible*, which means "able to be seen". When you add the prefix IN in front of that word, it becomes *invisible* which means "not able to be seen". Now, when added to a word starting with the letter L, the IN changes into IL. So, for example, the word *illegal* is spelled I-L-L-E-G-A-L. *Legal* begins with L, and so therefore when we want to add IN in front of that word, the IN turns into IL. *Illegal* means "not legal". Similarly, when we want to add the prefix IN in front of the word *literate*, the IN turns into IL, and the word becomes *illiterate* which means "not able to read and write". IN also changes when it's added to a word starting with M or P. In this case, the IN becomes IM. So, for example, when we want to add the prefix IN meaning "not" to the word *mortal*, IN becomes IM – *immortal*, someone who does not die is immortal. When we add IN to *mature*, it becomes IM – *immature*. And when we add IN to the word *possible*, it also becomes IM – *impossible*, that is, not able to be done.

So, the prefix IN when it's added to the front of words usually means "not", and in most cases it's a simple matter of adding the IN. But

when the word or word root begins with L, M, or P, the IN changes, and you need to know that in order to spell the words correctly.

Here's a rule that deals with the suffix. *When you add a suffix that begins with a vowel to a word that ends in silent E, you drop the E.* Many words in English end with an E that is not pronounced, a silent E. When you add a suffix that begins with a vowel to such a word, the silent E simply disappears. Now, suffixes that begin with vowels include: -able, -ing, -er, and various others. This is a rule that comes up quite often. Look at this example. Let's take a look at the verb *to move*. It ends with a silent E; although the E is there, we don't pronounce it. We don't say [mu:veɪ] in English, simply [mu:v]. It's as if the E wasn't present, so we consider it a silent E. Now, what if we want to add the suffix -ing to the word *move* and turn it into *moving*. According to our rule, because the suffix begins with a vowel I, we drop the silent E, and *moving* is spelled M-O-V-I-N-G. Or, to take another example, suppose we want to add the suffix -able to the word *move* to create the word *movable* meaning "able to be moved". Once again, we drop the silent E, and the word *movable* is correctly spelled M-O-V-A-B-L-E.

Now, there are a couple of exceptions to this rule. The most common exception is as follows: when you add a suffix that begins with the letter A to a root that ends in CE or GE, you don't drop the silent E. And there's a special reason why this is the case, but first, let's look at a couple of examples. Take the word *noticeable*. *Noticeable* is created by adding the suffix -ABLE to the root or word *notice*, it means "able to be noticed". Because of our rule, since this root ends in CE, we don't drop the silent E, and we spell *noticeable* N-O-T-I-C-E-A-B-L-E. Similarly, the word *vengeance* is spelled V-E-N-G-E-A-N-C-E, because it's created by adding the suffix -ANCE which begins with the letter A to the root *venge-* which ends with

GE. In this case, once again we don't drop the silent E. The reason for this exception to the rule is that if you were to eliminate the silent E from a root that ends in CE or GE, it might make the resulting word difficult to pronounce. For example, if *noticeable* was spelled without the silent E after C, it might at first glance look as though the C is a hard C and as though the word is ought to be pronounced ['nəʊtɪkeɪbl] or ['nəʊtɪkəbl], and that would be wrong. So, the E makes it clear to the reader that the C or G is soft and ought to be pronounced that way, and that's the technical reason for this exception to the rule.

Here's another rule that deals with spelling suffixes. When you add a suffix that begins with a vowel to a one-syllable word that ends with a single vowel and a single consonant, double the consonant. This is a complicated rule, so let's look at each part of the rule separately. First of all, we are talking about one-syllable word, so these are short words that contain only one basic sound. Next, we're talking about one-syllable words that end in a vowel and a consonant, a single vowel and a single consonant. So, if the word ends with more than one consonant, such as *jump*, for example, which ends with MP, this rule would not apply. Or if the word contains two vowels before a single consonant, such as the word *leap*, again the rule would not apply because of those two vowels, EA. This rule only applies to a one-syllable word that ends in one vowel and one consonant. When that's the case and you are adding the suffix that begins with a vowel, you double the consonant. For example, let's take the word *run*. *Run* is a one-syllable word which ends with one vowel and one consonant – the last two letters in the word are U and N. Therefore, the rule applies. So, if we're going to add a suffix that begins with a vowel to *run*, we would double the end. So, for example, suppose we want to add the suffix –er meaning “one who” (a runner is one who runs). We need to double the end, and *runner* is

spelled R-U-N-N-E-R. In the same way, if we want to add the suffix –ing and turn *run* into *running*, we double the end, and the word would be spelled R-U-N-N-I-N-G.

Here's one more suffix rule. When you add a suffix to a word that ends in Y, the Y usually becomes I. Here are some examples. Take the word *beauty* which ends in Y. Suppose you want to add the suffix –ful to mean “full of beauty”, *beautiful*. The Y in *beauty* becomes an I, and *beautiful* is spelled as you see it. Let's take the word *crazy*; it also ends in Y. Suppose you want to add the suffix –ness and turn it into the word *craziness* to describe the state of things being crazy. *Craziness* would be spelled with an I – the Y at the end of *crazy* turns into an I. One more example: the word *identify* ends in Y. You want to add the suffix –cation to it and turn it into *identification*, which means “something that names or identifies a person”, the Y once again turns into an I, and *identification* is spelled as you see.

Do you think you've mastered these rules about prefixes and suffixes? You can listen to the lesson again, if necessary. ***If you think you understand these rules, try your hand at the exercise which allows you to test your understanding of the rules.***

When you've finished the questions, come back, and we'll take a look at them together.

Exercise 2

Directions: For each of the following words, add the indicated prefix or suffix. Write out the new word, including the prefix or suffix, using the correct spelling.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. trace + ing | 6. limp + ing |
| 2. in + mobile | 7. adore + ation |
| 3. lonely + ness | 8. fly + er |

4. hit + able	9. in + tangible
5. in + logical	10. trace + able

In this exercise we gave you ten words and asked you to add a particular prefix or suffix to the word, and then see if you could spell it correctly. Let's look at these ten examples together.

First, trace + ing. Well, remember that when you add a suffix that begins with the vowel to a word that ends with silent E, the E usually disappears. So, tracing would be spelled T-R-A-C-I-N-G; the silent E disappears.

Second example: in + mobile. *Mobile* means “to be able to move”; *in-* means “not”. So, when we add those two elements together it creates the word that means “not able to move”. Now, IN added to a word that begins with M normally changes into IM, and sure enough the correct way to spell the word would be I-M-M-O-B-I-L-E. It's a word that means “unable to move”.

Next example: lonely + ness. Here we have the word *lonely* that ends in Y. We've asked you to add the suffix –NESS to it to describe the state of being lonely. Well, remember when you add a suffix to a word that ends in Y, the Y normally turns into an I. So, the correct way to spell *loneliness* is L-O-N-E-L-I-N-E-S-S.

Next, we've given you the verb *hit* and asked you to add the suffix -able to it. Something that is hittable would be something that can be hit. For example, in baseball, a pitch that comes right down the middle of the plate is usually easy for the batter to hit, and it would be described as a hittable pitch. Well, remember that when you are adding a suffix that begins a vowel, such as –ABLE to a one-syllable word that ends in one vowel and one consonant, the consonant is usually doubled. That's what we have to

do here. The word *hit* is a one-syllable word that ends in the vowel I and the consonant T. So, when we are adding the suffix –able to it, we need to double the T, and the resulting word would be spelled H-I-T-T-A-B-L-E.

Next, logical plus the prefix in-. Something that's a logical is reasonable, it makes sense. In- means “not”, so something that's not a logical would be described by the new word that we've created. Remember, when we add IN to a word that begins with L, the IN normally turns into IL. So, the correct spelling of the resulting word would be *illogical*, I-L-L-O-G-I-C-A-L.

Next we have the word *limp*, and we've asked you to add the suffix –**ing** to it. Now, remember our rule: when you are adding a suffix that begins with the vowel to a one-syllable word that ends with a single vowel and a single consonant, you would normally double the consonant. Does that rule apply here? Well, *limp* is a one-syllable word, but it doesn't end with a single vowel and a single consonant. It ends with a vowel I followed by two consonants, M and P. Therefore, no doubling is necessary, and when we add –ing, there's really no change in the spelling of the word. The final spelling of the correct word *limping* is L-I-M-P-I-N-G.

Next example: adore + ation. Here we're adding a suffix to a word that ends with a silent E, and the suffix begins with a vowel, -ation. Therefore, the silent E needs to be dropped, and the resulting word *adoration* should be spelled A-D-O-R-A-T-I-O-N.

Our next word is fly + er. Now, remember that when a suffix is added to a word that ends in Y, the Y normally turns into an I. So, the word *flier* which means “one who flies” would be spelled F-L-I-E-R. The Y turns into an I when a suffix is added.

Next, tangible with the prefix IN or in- added. Something that's tangible is something that can be touched or felt, anything that's material or physical would normally be described as tangible. Something that is not tangible would be intangible, and there's no change in spelling to the prefix. Remember, the prefix IN changes its spelling when it is added to a word that begins in L, M, or P, not when it's added to a word that begins with T. So, the correct spelling of *intangible* is I-N-T-A-N-G-I-B-L-E.

Finally, trace + able. Something that is traceable is something that is able to be traced. Now, trace ends with a silent E, so your immediate thought might be, "Well, let's eliminate the silent E since we're adding the suffix that begins with a vowel". But remember our exception: when you add a suffix that begins with the letter A to a root that ends in CE or GE, you don't drop the silent E. So, the correct way to spell *traceable* would be T-R-A-C-E-A-B-L-E. Remember that if the silent E were dropped in this case, it might be difficult to pronounce the resulting word, and if you eliminate the silent E from *traceable*, the word might look as though it should be pronounced ['trækəbəl] which would be incorrect. So, the silent E needs to be retained in this particular word.

Did you get all of the questions in this exercise right? I hope so. If you are ready, move on to the next lesson.

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Lesson 3:
Words that are often confused
with exercise 3

People often make spelling errors when they write a word that sounds the same or almost the same as another word with a different meaning and a different spelling. In this lesson we'll look at some of the most commonly confused words and explain how you can tell them apart, and therefore spell them correctly.

First, there are a couple of words that sound like *accept*. They spell differently and have different meanings. *To accept* (spelled A-C-C-E-P-T) is a verb meaning “to take”. *Except* (E-X-C-E-P-T) can be used as either a verb or a preposition. When it's used as a verb, it means “to exclude”. When it's used as a preposition, which is more common, it means “other than”, “Except for the weather, I enjoyed the picnic.”

Here are two words that sound like *access*. A-C-C-E-S-S, *access* means “availability”. *Excess* means “too much of something”.

Two words that sound different, but have related meanings, and therefore are often confused, are *advice* and *advise*. *Advice* spelled with a C is a noun; *advise* with an S is a verb. When someone gives you some *advice*, they *advise* you.

The words *affect* and *effect* sound almost the same, but they are spelled differently and they have different meanings. A-F-F-E-C-T, *affect* is usually used as a verb and it means “to influence”, “The weather may *affect* your mood.” *Effect* spelled with an E, E-F-F-E-C-T, is usually used as a noun meaning “influence”, “The weather can have an *effect* on your

mood.” *Effect* is also used as a verb meaning “to accomplish”, “The president effected a change in tax policy” meaning “The president accomplished a change in tax policy.” So, be careful which of these words you are using, and be sure to spell correctly.

Here are two words that sound practically the same: *coarse* and *course*. *Coarse* with an A is an adjective meaning “rough”, for example, the hair on a back of a horse’s neck is usually coarse. *Course* spelled with a U means “direction”, or it can mean a subject at school, “What English course are you taking next year?”

The words *complement* and *compliment* are spelled slightly differently and have somewhat different meanings. *Complement* with an E in the middle is a verb meaning “to complete”. *Compliment* with an I is a verb meaning “to praise”, you might compliment your friend on her dress. And if she chooses a bag and shoes that go with the dress perfectly and complete the outfit, you could say, “Oh, those shoes really complement your outfit.”

***Faze* and *phase* are two different words with different spellings and different meanings.** *Faze* (F-A-Z-E) means “to daunt or overwhelm”, “He was really fazed by all the work he had to do.” *Phase*, spelled P-H-A-S-E, is a noun that means “period”, “One phase of your life gives way to another.”

The word *its* and *it’s* are spelled almost the same, except that one contains an apostrophe, and they have an important difference in meaning. *Its* without an apostrophe is a possessive pronoun which means “of it”, “A cat hurt its paw,” meaning the paw of it, of the cat. *It’s* with an apostrophe means “it is”. When you use (its/it’s) in a sentence, always ask yourself, “Could I substitute the words it is for (its/it’s)?” If so, then you

mean *it's* with apostrophe and you need to insert the apostrophe. Otherwise, leave the apostrophe out.

Here's a group of three words that people often get tangled up in. **First**, we have the verb *lead*, which means “to direct”. The past tense of the verb *lead* is *led* which means “directed”. However, there's **another word** pronounced [led] which is spelled the same as *lead*, L-E-A-D. This *lead* is a noun describing a kind of metal. So, always be careful as to which *lead* you are using. If you are using *led* as a verb meaning “directed”, “Someone led a group on an expedition,” for example, you spell it L-E-D. If you are referring to the metal, the grayish metal that is called *lead*, it is spelled L-E-A-D.

These two words are pronounced somewhat differently, and they have different meanings, but people often confuse them. *Loose* with two O's is usually used as an adjective meaning “slack”, “These pants are loose on me.” *Lose* with only one O is usually used as a verb meaning “to mislay” or, perhaps, “to be defeated in a contest”.

These two words are pronounced the same: passed and past. Passed spelled P-A-S-S-E-D is the past tense of the verb *past*, and it means “went by”. Past spelled P-A-S-T is a noun referring to a previous time. It can also be used as an adjective referring to something from a previous time. But P-A-S-S-E-D, remember, is part of the verb.

Peace spelled P-E-A-C-E means “tranquility”; it's the opposite of war. ***Piece*** spelled P-I-E-C-E means “a part” – “a piece of pie”, for example.

***Pore* and *pour* are pronounced the same**, but they have different meanings. *Pore* spelled P-O-R-E means “to study”. It's often used in the expression “to pore over some papers”. *Pour* spelled P-O-U-R means “to spill” – “pour a cup of coffee”, for example.

Precede spelled P-R-E-C-E-D-E means “to go before”. ***Proceed*** P-R-O-C-E-E-D is pronounced slightly differently, and it means “to go ahead”. When one person precedes another, in a parade for example, that means that one person goes before the other. Both of them proceed down the street together, however.

Principal and principle are two different words with somewhat different meanings. *Principal* spelled with P-A-L at the end is an adjective or a noun meaning “chief”. It’s usually used as a noun to mean “the leader of a school”. *Principle* spelled P-L-E is a noun meaning “a rule”. There are certain important principles of science that every physics student needs to know. One easy way of remembering the PAL spelling of the name of a person who is the head of the school is the say, “The principle is your pal”. The word pal is spelled P-A-L and it appears at the end of that word *principal* when it’s used to mean the head of the school.

There are three words that sound like *rain*. They are spelled differently, and they have slightly different meanings. R-A-I-N is the most common, that means “precipitation”. The stuff that falls down, the water that falls from the sky is rain. R-E-I-N, *rein*, that refers originally to the bridle of a horse, that is, the leather strap that you use to control the horse would be described as rein or a set of reins. *To rein* spelled this way means “to control”. And R-E-I-G-N, *reign*, means “rule” in the sense that a king rules a country. It’s a different type of control, but when *reign* is used in this way, it refers to a king or another leader who rules a country, whereas *rein* refers to pulling back or holding back some powerful force, the way a rider uses the reins to hold back a horse. The meanings are somewhat similar, but fundamentally different, and therefore you need to distinguish between those two types of rein in particular.

*Here are two words that sound the same, but actually have opposite meanings. **To raise** spelled R-A-I-S-E means “to lift up”. **To raze** (R-A-Z-E) means “to tear down”; it’s usually used in reference to buildings. When a building needs to be torn down to be replaced by another building, we might speak of razing it spelled with a Z.*

*Here is another group of three words with different spellings and different meanings. **Sight** spelled S-I-G-H-T means “vision, something that one sees or the ability to see”. **Site** spelled S-I-T-E means “a place”. The site for a new office building, for example, would be the place where that building is going to be built. To cite (C-I-T-E) means to refer to something. When you are writing a paper for school, for example, you might cite a reference source. That is, you would refer to it or name the book from which a particular piece of information was drawn.*

***Stationary** and **stationery** look almost the same, but they are quite different in meaning. When **stationary** is spelled A-R-Y, it means “still, not moving”. **Stationery** spelled E-R-Y refers to paper and envelopes that you buy at a place called a stationery store.*

*Here’s another trio of words that sound the same, but have different meanings. **Their** spelled T-H-E-I-R means “of them”. You might speak of a married couple and their child, the child of them. **There** (T-H-E-R-E) means “in that place”. And **they’re** spelled T-H-E-Y-apostrophe-R-E means “they are”. When you are using (there/their/they’re) in a sentence ask yourself, “Could I substitute they are for (there/their/they’re)?” If so, then you want the word with the apostrophe. If you could make that substitution, then one of the other two *there’s* is necessary.*

*Here’s another group of three words that sound the same, but are used very differently, and they are spelled differently. **To** spelled T-O is a prepo-*

sition meaning “toward, in the direction of”. **Too** spelled T-O-O is an adverb which means “also”. **T-W-O** is usually used as a noun or an adjective and it refers to the number *two*.

Weather and **whether** sound almost the same, but they have different meanings. **Weather** spelled W-E-A-T-H-E-R means “the state of the atmosphere”, if it’s raining, sunny, or whatever. **Whether** spelled W-H-E-T-H-E-R means “if”. You might look outside to see whether it is sunny or rainy. That would be spelled W-H-E-T-H-E-R, but you would look outside to see the weather spelled W-E-A-T-H-E-R.

And, finally, **your** and **you’re**. Y-O-U-R is again a possessive adjective meaning “of you”, “You and your best friend.” *You’re* spelled Y-O-U-apostrophe-R-E means “you are”. Once again, when you use *you’re* in a sentence stop and ask yourself, “Could I substitute the words *you are* for *you’re*?” If so, then you want *you’re* with the apostrophe. Otherwise, use Y-O-U-R with no apostrophe.

Exercise 3

Directions: Some of the following sentences contain misspelled words. Read each sentence and decide whether or not there is a spelling error. If you aren’t certain, you may use a dictionary. Correct any misspelled words you find.

1. The American Civil Liberties Union works to defend freedom of speech and the other basic principals of our democratic society.
2. Traces of lead have been found in early Italian pottery, causing some scientists to suspect an epidemic of lead poisoning among the ancient Romans.
3. This empty lot will be the sight of the new physics laboratory, scheduled to be built in the next two years.
4. The rein of King Arthur is described in English legends as a time of unparalleled piece and prosperity.
5. The third and fifth holes offer the most difficult challenge on this golf coarse.

Once again, we gave you several sentences and challenged you to find any misspelled words they contain.

Let's look at the first sentence: "The American Civil Liberties Union works to defend freedom of speech and the other basic principals of our democratic society." The misspelled word here is *principals*. Remember that when principle refers to a rule, which is the use here, it should be spelled P-L-E at the end. So, spelling it P-A-L-S is incorrect here. Remember, that principal spelled with P-A-L usually refers to the head of a school. So, if the American Civil Liberties Union went to court to defend the rights of a principal of a school, then it would be spelled P-A-L. But in this case, the sentence is talking about basic rules of democracy, and therefore, P-L-E would be the correct spelling for that kind of principle.

Our next sentence: "Traces of lead have been found in early Italian pottery, causing some scientists to suspect an epidemic of lead poisoning among the ancient Romans." Here we have the word *lead* appearing twice, and as we saw, the word *lead* can often be confusing. Is it spelled correctly here? L-E-A-D is correct. In this sentence, *lead* refers to the greyish metal which is somewhat poisonous and therefore shouldn't be used in the cooking or food utensil, but was used in such a way in ancient Rome. So, *lead* has been spelled correctly here. Remember, that when *led* is being used as the past tense of the verb *to lead*, it's spelled L-E-D, but that's not the case here. So, this sentence doesn't contain any spelling error.

Next example: "This empty lot will be the sight of the new physics laboratory, scheduled to be built in the next two years." Now, remember from the lesson we saw that there are three ways to spell the word that is pronounced [saɪt]. The way it's spelled in this sentence, S-I-G-H-T, is incorrect with this usage. Sight spelled that way means "the power to see, vi-

sion, or something that you see”. When we’re talking about a location or a place, we want spell site S-I-T-E. And that would be the correct spelling here.

Next: “The rein of King Arthur is described in English legends as a time of unparalleled piece and prosperity.” Well, we gave you two errors in this sentence, not just one. I hope you caught them both. The first error is with the spelling of *rein*, R-E-I-N. Remember, that there are three different forms of a word *rein*. The way it’s spelled here, R-E-I-N, would refer to the piece of leather that is used to hold back a horse, or it could be used as a verb meaning to restrain, control, or hold back. In this case, however, the author of the sentence is trying to use the word *reign* that is spelled R-E-I-G-N, meaning “the rule of a king”. Since he’s referring to the time when King Arthur ruled or reigned over England, it should be spelled with a G. The other misspelling is the word *piece*. Remember that piece spelled P-I-E-C-E means a bit or part of something. In this case, however, the author is talking about a time of peace meaning of tranquility, the absence of war. So, the correct spelling would be P-E-A-C-E.

Final example: “The third and fifth holes offer the most difficult challenge on this golf coarse.” Here *coarse* has been misspelled. C-O-A-R-S-E means rough, and it’s an adjective. In this case, the word *course* is been used as a noun, and it’s been used in this particular sentence to refer to a series of holes that go to make up a game of golf, the place on which a game of golf is played. That noun is spelled C-O-U-R-S-E, and that spelling would have to be correct to make the sentence correct.

Did you catch all these spelling errors? If not, take a look at the lesson and remind yourself of the principles behind the differentiation among all these different words that sound similar, but are spelled differently, and when you’re ready, move on to the next lesson.

Lesson 4:
Spelling plurals
with exercise 4

Changing nouns from singular to plural sometimes leads to tricky spelling situations. The following rules will help.

Most nouns become plural simply by adding -S. Thus, *car* becomes plural by adding S and turning it into *cars*. *House* becomes plural by adding S and turning it into *houses*. And *nation* becomes plural by adding S and turning it into *nations*.

In some cases, add ES if the plural noun is pronounced with an extra syllable. So, for example we refer to *one glass*, *two glasses*. Notice that the word *glass* is only one syllable long, whereas *glasses* has two syllables, therefore we need to add ES at the end of the word *glass* to turn it from singular to plural. In the same way, we refer to *one dish*, *two dishes*. *Dish* is a one-syllable word, *dishes* is a two-syllable word. Therefore, we add ES to the end of *dish* to turn it into the plural *dishes*.

So far, so simple. *Now it gets a little more complicated.* **Some nouns have irregular plurals**, that is plurals that are formed in a different way that's hard to predict. You just have to memorize these few difficult irregular plurals. Luckily, there aren't too many common words in English that have irregular plurals. Here are the most common:

- *Man* becomes plural by turning it into *men*.
- *Woman* becomes plural by turning it *women*.
- *Child* becomes *children*.

- *Foot* becomes *feet*.
- *Mouse* becomes *mice*, and *louse* becomes *lice*.

If you memorize these few irregular plurals, you'll know most of the irregular plurals that are likely to come up in the sentences you write.

Some nouns have singular and plural forms that are the same. For some reason, the most common examples all refer to animals. Here they are: *fish*, *deer*, *sheep*. Whether you are referring to one fish or many fish, one deer or many deer, one sheep or many sheep, you would use the same word.

In some cases, plurals are formed differently *depending on the last letter of the word*.

Here are the rules you need to know. Nouns ending in a vowel plus Y: add S to form the plural. In other words, they follow the usual rule. Thus, the word *boy* which ends in the vowel O plus the letter U turns into the plural form simply by adding S – *boys*. In the same way, *key* becomes *keys*, and *monkey* becomes *monkeys*. However, nouns ending in a consonant plus Y form the plural differently. The Y is usually changed to I and ES is added. So, for example, consider the word *berry*. This ends with the consonant R and the vowel Y. To make it plural, we change the Y to I and ES, so *berry* becomes *berries*. In the same way, *emergency* becomes *emergencies*, and *company* becomes *companies*.

The letter O can also be tricky at the end of a word. Some nouns ending in a consonant plus O form the plural by adding ES. For example, *potato* becomes *potatoes*, and *veto* becomes *veto*s. Unfortunately, there are some exceptions. There are some words that end in a consonant plus O which form the plural simply by adding S with no E. The most common

examples are *pianos*, *solos*, and *sopranos*. Notice that all three have to do with music. Maybe that will help you to remember them.

Most nouns that end in a vowel plus O: simply add S. For example, *radio* which ends in the vowel I plus O becomes plural simply by adding S – *radios*. In the same way, *stereo* becomes plural simply by adding S – *stereos*.

Finally, some English words use a foreign plural form. Remember, that the English language borrows lots of words from other languages, and those other languages have their own way of forming plurals. And in a few cases, the English language still follows a foreign rule for whatever reason. Here are the most common words that you need to know which use a foreign plural form. The singular word *medium* refers to a form of communication. Television, for example, is a communication's *medium*. The plural form is *media*, M-E-D-I-A. People often talk about the media by which they mean, for example, television, movies, radio, the Internet, the print media such as books and magazines, and so forth. When you hear people talking about the media they are really talking about all the different media, each one of which is a medium. So, *media* is a plural word, referring to one medium, and another medium, and another medium, and yet another.

Another singular word that follows the foreign rule for pluralization is *phenomenon*. A *phenomenon* is a happening. When we are referring to more than one phenomenon, we call it *phenomena*. The ON at the end turns into A. So, when we are speaking of more than one phenomenon, we speak of phenomena – “unusual phenomena”, for example.

A *criterion* is a rule or a yardstick. Again, when we want to turn this into a plural, we change the ON at the end into an A. So, when we are referring to more than one rule or yardstick, we refer to *criteria*, e.g. “The

criteria by which we judge whether a movie is good. The most important criterion, however, might be the acting.”

Finally, the word *crisis* means a turning point or time of difficulty.

We turn it into a plural by turning the final I into an E, *crises*. Richard Nixon wrote a book about his political career, which refer to several crises, through which he had lived.

One last point under the pluralization issue.

There are a couple of words in English that people often confuse as to whether they are singular or plural, so we put these under the heading of “Is it singular or plural?” Take the word ***data***, for example. Technically, the word *data* is a plural word. It refers to several pieces of information. A single piece of information, if you want to refer to that, would be called ***datum***, D-A-T-U-M. That’s the singular form of *data*; it’s rarely used, however. The important thing to remember is when you do refer to data that you are using a plural word. So, for example, if you are writing a paper about a scientific experiment, you might say, “The data are complex.” You would use the plural verb *are*, not a singular verb, because *data* is plural.

Well, now that you’ve seen these rules about how to turn singular words into plural words and spell them correctly, try the exercise which will give you a chance to test your knowledge of these rules. When you’re done, come back and we’ll see how well you did with the exercise.

Exercise 4

Directions: Turn each of the following words into a plural, using the correct spelling.

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------|
| 1. studio | 6. crisis | |
| 2. pony | 7. tray | |
| 3. bunch | 8. ox | |
| 4. deer | 9. Triangle | 5. Zero |

In this exercise we gave you a number of singular nouns and simply asked you to create the plural form. If you understood the rules and laws, then you probably didn't find this exercise too difficult. Let's see how well you did.

First, *studio*. How do we turn this into a plural? Well, remember our rule that most nouns ending in a vowel plus O turn into a plural simply by adding S, and that would be correct here. So, *studio* becomes *studios* simply by adding an S, and the correct spelling would be S-T-U-D-I-O-S.

Next, *pony*. Well, remember, most nouns that end in a consonant plus Y turn into a plural by transforming the Y into an I and then adding ES, so the correct spelling of *ponies* is P-O-N-I-E-S.

Next, *bunch*. Well, when you turn *bunch* into *bunches*, notice that an extra syllable gets added. So, you are adding an S, but because *bunch* turns into *bunches* and becomes a one- turning into a two-syllable word, we have to add ES. So, the correct spelling of *bunches* is B-U-N-C-H-E-S. Remember that when adding the S adds another syllable onto the word, you add ES rather than simply the letter S.

Next, *deer*. This is a little bit of a tricky question. Remember that *deer* is one of those few unusual words that have the same form in both singular and plural. So, the singular form is *deer*; the plural form is also *deer*.

Next, *zero*. How do we turn *zero* into *zeroes*? Well, most nouns that end in a consonant plus the letter O turn into a plural by adding ES, and that would be correct with *zeroes*. The right spelling is Z-E-R-O-E-S.

***Crisis*,** how do we turn *crisis* into a plural? Remember that *crisis* is one of a handful of English words that use a foreign form for the plural. So, ra-

ther than turning *crisis* into *crisises*, for example, we simply change the final I into an E. The correct plural of *crisis* is *crises*, C-R-I-S-E-S.

How do we make *tray* into a plural? Well, there's a word that ends in a Y, but remember, our unusual or special rule only applies to a word that ends in a consonant plus Y. When a word ends in a vowel plus Y, we simply add an S, and it's usual. So, *tray* becomes plural by simply adding an S and turning it into *trays*.

Our next question was a truly tricky one. Here's an example of an irregular English plural that we didn't provide to you in the lesson. Perhaps you knew this. If not, you might have noticed it, if you looked it up in the dictionary. The plural of *ox* is not *oxes*, but rather *oxen*. We gave in the lesson a few examples of some unusual irregular English plurals: *men*, *women*, *children*, *feet*, *mice*, and *lice*. *Oxen* is one more example to add to your list.

Our next question: *triangle*, how do we turn this into a plural? This is a very easy one. This is, in fact, the only truly normal word on this list. Simply add an S at the end; *triangle* becomes *triangles*.

Good job! Turn to the next lesson.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 5: Rules for capitalization with exercise 5</p>

*In this lesson we're going to talk about one final aspect of spelling, namely, capitalization. **Capitalization** refers to using of large letter at the beginning of a particular word.*

Now, the rules for capitalization can be very complicated, and they do vary from one type of publication or one situation to another.

In fact, for example, newspapers and magazines often have their own style manuals which are guides that their writers and editors follow, which cover rules such as capitalization. And they may have their own specific form of capitalization which may differ from what other magazines and newspapers follow. Your teacher may ask you to use a particular style manual in writing papers for his or her class, and if so, you'll want to look at the rules on capitalization that are provided in that specific style manual. What we're going to do in this lesson is provide the basic rules for capitalization. We're not going to try and get into all the possible details that we could address, but we'll provide you with some basic rules which will cover 90% of the situations which are likely to arise in your writing, and which you won't make any serious mistakes if you follow.

Here they are.

First, always capitalize the first word of a sentence.

Next, capitalize the name of a specific person, place, or organization. For example, you would capitalize the first letter in each of these names: Brad Pitt, Minneapolis, Swarthmore College. If you are not refer-

ring to a specific person, place, or organization, you would use a lowercase letter. So, for example, if you were writing a sentence that simply referred to colleges in the United States, you would not capitalize the word *college*, because a specific college is not being referred to.

Capitalize the name of a day, month, or holiday. For example, you would always capitalize the first letter of Saturday, April, Columbus Day. Don't capitalize the names of seasons. So, for example, use a lowercase letter for the beginning of the words *spring* and *autumn*.

Capitalize the names of historical eras or events. For example, each of these terms would be capitalized: World War II, the Renaissance, the Cultural Revolution. This last phrase refers to an era from modern Chinese history. Notice that the word *the* usually is not capitalized. Only the main word in these titles is capitalized.

Always capitalize the name of a nationality or region. For example, you would capitalize the first letter in Korean, the Mideast, the Northwest Territory. **Don't capitalize directions.** This is different from describing a region. When you are using a directional name to describe a place on the globe, a particular area of the world such as the Mideast, you would capitalize it. But when simply referring to a direction of the compass, you would not capitalize it. So, for example, in this sentence you do not capitalize the word *west*, "Go west, young man." Here the word *west* is not referring to a region known as the West. Instead, it's simply pointing in a particular direction, and therefore, capitalization is not used.

Capitalize a rank or title when joined to a name. For example, we would capitalize the ranks or titles in the following phrases: President Bush, Secretary General Kofi Annan, Archbishop Moore. Titles and ranks are usually not capitalized when they are not joined to names. For example,

in this sentence, “The president addressed the crowd,” the word *president* is not capitalized. Of course, it would be, if it said, “President Bush addressed the crowd.”

Finally, capitalize the first word and other important words in the titles of works of art.

Here are some examples. *The Old Man and the Sea*, this is the name of a famous novel. The first word is *the*, so we capitalize the T. *Old man* and *sea* are all important words, and they are capitalized as well. Another example: *Arrangement in Black and Gray*. This is the name of a famous painting. In fact, you probably know the painting by the name *Whistler's Mother*. The actual title is *Arrangement in Black and Gray*. The first word *arrangement* is capitalized, and so are the important words *black* and *grey*. Here's the title of a piece of music: *Symphony in D Major*. *Symphony*, *D*, and *major* are all capitalized. Notice that in all of these examples we did not capitalize words like *and*, or *or*. We did not capitalize articles, which includes *the*, *a*, and *an*. And we did not capitalize prepositions. The rule is that the prepositions that are shorter than five letters should not be capitalized when they appear in titles. A preposition that is five letters long or longer should be capitalized. A word that long looks a little strange in a title when it is not capitalized. So, for example, if you were writing the title of a work that included the preposition *through*, which is longer than five letters, you would capitalize the T at the beginning of *through*. Otherwise, most prepositions which are shorter than five letters are not capitalized. So, words like *to*, *in*, *for*, *by*, *from* and so on would not be capitalized, unless, of course, they happen to be the first word of the title.

So, these are the most important basic rules for when you capitalize words. Otherwise, don't capitalize words that appear in your sentences – it's not necessary.

After you've absorbed these rules, try your hand at the exercise that tests your understanding of capitalization. When you're done, come back and we'll see how well you did on the exercise.

Exercise 5

Directions: *Some of the following sentences contain words that are incorrectly capitalized. Read each sentence and decide whether or not there is an error in capitalization. If there is an error, correct it.*

1. My favorite book is *Zen and the art of Motorcycle maintenance* by robert m. pirsig.
2. The three senators were greeted at the airport by mayor Bloomberg and his young assistant.
3. Many people consider Labor Day weekend the last celebration of Summer.
4. *The Garden Of Delights* by Hieronymus Bosch is one of the most unusual paintings of the middle ages.
5. Before being named President of the University, professor Meyer taught at several other colleges in new England.

Here we gave you several sentences, and in some cases words are correctly capitalized, and in some cases they are not. Your job is to find all the errors and correct them. Let's take a look at each sentence.

First: "My favorite book is *Zen and the art of Motorcycle maintenance* by robert m. pirsig." OK, here we have a sentence that includes the title of a work of art, namely, a book. So, we know that there's an important rule that's going to need to be followed. Let's take a look at this sentence and see whether capitalization has been done correctly. The first word of the sentence, *my*, is capitalized as it should be, so that's fine. Let's look at the title: *Zen and the art of Motorcycle maintenance*. The first word of the title, *Zen*, has been capitalized, that's correct. The author of this sentence has also capitalized the word *motorcycle*, and that's also correct, because that's one of the important words in the title. But the other words have not been

capitalized, is that correct or not? Well, the words *end* and *the* should not be capitalized, and neither should the word *of*. Those are short words, and it is one of the kinds of words that we have taught you in the lesson shouldn't be capitalized. *The* is an article, and *of* is a short preposition, and none of those should be capitalized. However, the other words in the title are all important and should be capitalized. So, the word *art* should be capitalized, and the word *maintenance* should also be capitalized. Now, the sentence ends with the name of the author of the book, and the names of specific people should always be capitalized. So, Robert should have a capital R, the middle initial M should be capitalized, and the P in Pirsig should also be capitalized. So, there are five letters in this sentence that need to be turned from small letters in the capital letters, and I hope you caught them all.

Next example: “The three senators were greeted at the airport by mayor Bloomberg and his young assistant.” OK, here we have a sentence that includes a number of titles. Which one should be capitalized, and which ones shouldn't? First of all, the first word of the sentence, *the*, is capitalized as it should be. Then we have the word *senators*, “the three senators”. This is a rank or title. Should it be capitalized? Well, remember our rule: normally, when a rank or title is not connected to a name, it should not be capitalized. So, the lowercase S is correct in this sentence, so *senators* would not be capitalized. What about “mayor Bloomberg”? The name Bloomberg is capitalized, as it should be. What about *mayor*, that's his rank or title. In this sentence *mayor* is not capitalized, should it be? Remember our rule that when a rank or title is connected to a name, it normally should be capitalized. So the M in *mayor* in this case should be capitalized. Here's one other title that's mentioned here, “Mayor Bloomberg and his young assistant.” *Assistant* is another rank or title, should it be capitalized? Once

again, it's not connected to a name. So, therefore, it shouldn't be capitalized. By the way, you might have noticed the word *airport* and thought, "Hmm, maybe that should be capitalized. After all, it refers to a place." But only the name of a specific place should be capitalized. If the sentence referred to Kennedy Airport, for example, then *Kennedy* and *airport* would both be capitalized, because here a specific airport is being named. In this sentence, however, it simply says, "The three senators were greeted at the airport". No specific airport is being referred to, so a lowercase, non-capital A for airport is correct. So, in this particular sentence, only one change needs to be made to make it correct. The M in *mayor* should be capitalized.

In our next sentence, again only one change is needed. Let's see if you caught it, "Many people consider Labor Day weekend the last celebration of Summer." Now, remember that the names of specific days, months, or holidays, should be capitalized. So, Labor Day should be capitalized, L and D, and the way the sentence is written, it was capitalized. So, that is correct. Now, what about weekend, should the W in weekend be capitalized? After all, that's referring to a particular day. Labor Day weekend would be Saturday, Sunday and Labor Day Monday itself. But no, not really, the weekend in Labor Day weekend is not strictly part of the holiday. Only the names of days like Saturday, Sunday, and Monday should be capitalized, as well as the name of the actual holiday, such as Labor Day. If you are referring to Labor Day weekend, the evening of Labor Day, the day before Labor Day, you wouldn't capitalize any of those other words. Only Labor Day itself should be capitalized. However, there is another error in the sentence. The word *summer* here has been capitalized, and many students make the mistake of capitalizing the names of seasons. After all, they figure, if May, June, and July should be capitalized, why shouldn't summer, spring, and winter be capitalized? However, that's not correct. The

names of seasons are specifically not capitalized, and therefore the lowercase S should be used. The initial word in the sentence, of course, is capitalized, M, that's correct. So, with that one change, change the S of *summer* from capital to lowercase, the sentence would be correct.

Our next sentence also contains the title of a work of art, “*The Garden Of Delights* by Hieronymus Bosch is one of the most unusual paintings of the middle ages.” Let's start with that title. It comes first in the sentence, and let's see whether it's been capitalized correctly. *The Garden of Delights* is the name of the work; it's a painting. And remember our rule: the first word in the title and all the important words should be capitalized. So, *the* should be capitalized. What about *garden*, is that an important word? Clearly it is. What about *of*? Well, that's not; that's a short preposition. Remember that prepositions of less than five letters should not be capitalized, so this capital O should be turned into a small O. What about *delights*, is that an important word? Yes, it is, so the capital D is correct. The sentence goes on to say, “by Hieronymus Bosch,” and Hieronymus Bosch is the name of a specific person, and so the capital H and the capital B are correct. Is there anything else in the sentence that needs changing? Well, yes. The sentence ends by referring to, “one of the most unusual paintings of the middle ages.” Remember what we learned: a historical era or event should be capitalized. The Middle Ages is, certainly, a historical era. So, Middle Ages should be capitalized; capital M and capital A should be used in referring this particular era of history. So, three changes need to be made to make this sentence correct. Change the capital O in *of* to lowercase, and make Middle Ages capitalized, capital M and capital A.

Now, our last sentence: “Before being named President of the University, professor Meyer taught at several other colleges in new England.” Well, we've got some places here; we've got a person being named, as well

as some ranks and titles. Let's see whether capitalization has been done correctly here. Let's start with the first phrase, "Before being named President of the University". Well, here we have a rank or title, *president*. Is it connected to a name? In this case it isn't; it doesn't say "President Meyer". It just says, "Before being named President of the University," and normally a title or rank is not capitalized where it's not connected to a name. So, we want to change *President* into a lowercase P, rather than a capital P. What about "president of the University"? Remember we said that the name of a specific organization would be capitalized. Is a specific organization being referred to here? Well, no, it simply says "the University". We don't know what university it's being referred to. Suppose it said "Columbia University". Then it would be a specific organization being referred to and Columbia University, both of those words, would be capitalized. But when we simply refer to "the University", it's not a specific organization, so we have lowercase U instead. That's the second change that needs to be made. OK, the sentence goes on to refer to "professor Meyer". Now, Meyer, of course, is capitalized – that's the name of a specific person. What about *professor*? It is lowercase here, is that correct? It's a rank or title, and in this case it is connected to the name of the person – Professor Meyer. Therefore, it should be capitalized: the P in professor should be a capital P. So, that's another change that needs to be made. Finally, the sentence says that, "Professor Meyer taught at several other colleges in new England." Now, what about the word *colleges* there? It's the name of an organization, should it be capitalized? No, because a specific college is not being referred to, rather a group of several other unnamed colleges. Finally, the sentence refers to "new England". That is a region of the country, and a region or nationality should always be capitalized. England has been capitalized, but the author of this sentence forgot to capitalize *new*. And it should also be capitalized, because the name of the region being referred to here is not

England. It's New England. That's what we call those six states in the northeastern part of the United States. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts constitute New England. So, those six states make up a specific region, and the whole title of the region New England should be capitalized. So, in this sentence we actually need to make four changes. *President* and *university* should be lowercase; *professor* and *new* should be capitalized.

I hope you caught all those changes. If you did, you can consider yourself an expert in capitalization.

Conclusion

It would be really nice if English spelling were simple, logical, and clear. But it isn't, and it's not going to become that way. So this is something you simply have to work at and practice in order to become good at it. Misspellings do make your writing look bad, and people who notice these spelling errors will think you are not very bright. It's not fair to judge people's writing that way, but it's something that people tend to do. So, do work at spelling words correctly to make your sentences and your pieces of writing look smarter, more correct, and have people take them more seriously.

Here are a couple of final tips that will help you become a better speller. Number one: don't be afraid to use the dictionary. One of the reasons dictionaries were invented was to make it easy to look up the correct spelling of difficult words. When you sit down to begin writing a piece of work, whether it's for school, for your job, or any other purpose, get into the habit of pulling the dictionary off the shelf, and putting it on the desk next to you. In that way, it will be easy to look up any word that you are in doubt about. If the dictionary is up on the shelf, out of reach when you set

to work writing, and you come upon a word that you are not quite sure about, it's very tempting to simply put down your best guess and not bother to get up from the chair and pull down the dictionary. Getting the dictionary and putting it next to you before you begin the work will guarantee that you are more likely to actually use the dictionary, and therefore correct misspelled words as you write. My second tip is this: get a notebook and begin keeping a list of words that you misspell. Whenever you get a paper back from a teacher, for example, if your teacher has pointed out one or more words that you have misspelled, write down the correct spelling of those words in your notebook. Review the notebook from time to time and add to it every time you catch yourself misspelling a word. Chances are good that the words you write in your spelling notebook will be words that you'll come to learn sooner or later, and in time you'll never misspell them again. So, the sooner you begin keeping your own personal spelling notebook, the sooner you will banish your own personal spelling demons and improve your accuracy of the spelling you do in your own writing.

Well, thanks for watching. I hope you got a lot out of the techniques for spelling and capitalization that we taught you in this program, and I look forward to seeing you and working with you on other grammar topics as you review the other programs in Video Aided Instruction's 'English Grammar Series'.

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▪Additional study and practice material in Supplements attached
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Good luck!

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PART II.

Supplements 1-7

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- Supplement 7:** English usage – 130 common mistakes in 4 levels

Supplement 1:
Punctuation – terms & notions
with samples

Abridged from: R. Allen. Punctuation. OUP, 2002. 106 pp.

Full stop (.)

This is also known as *a period, point, full point, or stop*. The term *period* dates from the 16th century and originally meant a complete or well-formed sentence; then in the 17th century it came to be applied to the punctuation mark that ended it, along with the other names mentioned. The name *full stop* (now the most familiar term in everyday use) occurs in Shakespeare (see the quotation to the right), where it is used as an exhortation from one speaker to another to cut short his speech.

Full stop in sentences

The main use of the full stop is to mark the end of a sentence when this is a statement. In a short sentence it is often the only punctuation mark that is needed:

Joe counted the rest of the money in the box and frowned.

A full stop can also mark ‘incomplete’ sentences when they lack a verb or have words that are understood, as in the opening of *Nice Work* by David Lodge (1988):

Monday, January 13th, 1986. Victor Wilcox lies awake, in the dark bedroom, waiting for his quartz alarm clock to bleep.

Or in this statement from Bill Gates of Microsoft of what business is all about:

I think business is very simple. Profit. Loss. Take the sales, subtract the costs, you get this big positive number.

■ So called ‘elliptical’ sentences of this kind are common in literature for special effect:

>It was a dream breakfast. Bacon and egg and sausage and beans and tomatoes. All steaming hot. A rack of toast with marmalade and butter in dishes. And a big mug of tea.

>We're here on holiday. For a rest. We can do without people crashing in through the kitchen window.

■ When the sentence is a question or exclamation, you use a question mark or exclamation mark instead. Both of these marks include a full stop in their forms (*see below question mark and exclamation mark*).

Full stop in abbreviations

The use of full stops in abbreviations is gradually disappearing, because the original intention of showing that a group of letters is not an ordinary word but a collection of initials is no longer so important. Abbreviations are increasingly spelt without full stops when they consist entirely of capital letters (AGM, NNE, TUC) or a mixture of capital and small letters (BSc, Dr, Ms).

■ *But full stops are still usual when the abbreviation is made up entirely of small letters*, because in this form they are less immediately recognizable as abbreviations rather than words (*a.o.b.*, *p.m.*, *t.b.a.*). Abbreviations consisting of the first few letters of words, often called 'shortenings', are usually spelt with a full stop at the end (*co.*, *Oct.*, *Tues.*). If an abbreviation with a full stop comes at the end of a sentence, you do not need to add another full stop, unless another piece of punctuation, such as inverted commas or a bracket, come after the abbreviation: *Bring your own pens, pencils, rulers, etc.* but *Bring your own things (pens, pencils, rulers, etc.)*.

■ There is a special kind of abbreviation, called an *acronym*, that goes one stage further than an ordinary abbreviation and becomes a word in its own right. Acronyms are often written with small letters, can form plurals, and are pronounced as syllables rather than as the sequence of letters from which they are made. Examples include *radar* (= radio detection and ranging), *scuba* (= self-contained underwater breathing apparatus), and names of organizations such as *NATO* (= North Atlantic Treaty Organization). Because acronyms are fully-fledged words, they do not have full stops.

Full stop in other uses

Full stops are used to mark off units of money (*£24.99*, *\$100.50*), to show decimal fractions (*17.5%*), and to separate hours and minutes in showing time (*12.30 p.m.*; but in American English a colon is used, e.g. *12:30 p.m.*).

Full stops are also used to separate the parts of an email address or website name:

<http://www.oup.co.uk>

Comma (,)

The term *comma* dates from the 16th century and is derived from a Greek word *komma*, which literally meant ‘a piece cut off’, and came to be used of a phrase or group of words and then the punctuation mark associated with them.

The comma works primarily as a separator. Its main role is to indicate the structure of sentences and to make their meaning clear by showing which words belong together and which do not. It usually represents the natural breaks and pauses that you make in speech, and can mark groups of words, or phrases, as well as single words:

The comma separating phrases

You often need a comma to mark off parts of a sentence that are linked by words such as *and*, *but*, and *yet* (called conjunctions), and also by so-called ‘subordinating’ conjunctions such as *if* and *although*. This is especially important when the subject of the sentences changes or is repeated:

The interviewer hesitated, and when he asked the next question he sounded faintly embarrassed.

The use of a comma in these cases is especially important when the sentence is fairly long:

If we moor a tiny boat at some fixed point in the pond, the boat will bob up and down rhythmically as the waves pass under it.

It is not normally correct to join the clauses of a compound sentence without a conjunction (the so-called ‘comma splice’):

X His was the last house, the road ended with him.

You should either put in a conjunction such as *and*, or use a semicolon:

His was the last house, and the road ended with him.

or

His was the last house; the road ended with him.

It is also incorrect to separate a subject from its verb with a single comma:

X Those with the lowest incomes and no other means, should get the most support.

This should be

Those with the lowest incomes and no other means should get the most support.

A comma also separates parts of a sentence that balance or complement each other:

>The meeting is not cancelled, only postponed.

>It was getting warmer, but not yet warm enough for their picnic.

A comma is used to introduce direct speech, especially when this is continued after a reporting verb such as *say* or *ask*:

A former headmistress once said, 'If Constance had nothing else to read, she'd read the label on a jam jar!'

A comma can help to avoid ambiguity or momentary misunderstanding:

>Inside, the house was both smaller and larger than it looked.

>She had loved, herself, as a young girl.

When an adverb or adverbial phrase such as *already*, *moreover*, *still*, *yesterday*, *personally*, or *next day* comes at the beginning of a sentence, you need to put a comma after it when there would be a natural pause in speaking:

>Personally, I have always looked upon cricket as organized loafing.

>On the plus side, death is one of the few things that can be done as easily lying down.

>Crucially, his confessions of major fraud were ignored.

>As a townee, she'd had little experience of the countryside.

>Still, he did at least show encouraging signs of intending to leave.

The same applies to subordinate clauses that come at the beginning of a sentence. These can be based on present participles (forms ending in -ing) or begin with a word such as *although*, *when*, *if*, or *because*:

>Putting the plates down, Bella sat in a chair and pulled Jinny towards her.

>If Jane does not get well soon, we will call the doctor.

>When our vital interests are challenged, we will act.

A comma is especially important after the word *however* when this comes at the beginning of a sentence and means 'by contrast' or 'on the other hand':

However, a good deal of discretion is left in the hands of area managers.

But you do not use a comma after *however* when it comes before an adjective or adverb and it means 'no matter how much':

However large it was, it was not going to be large enough for this.

The comma used in pairs

You use commas in pairs to mark off parts of a sentence that are asides or not part of the main statement:

>The universe that we know, of course, is a tiny fragment of the actual universe.

>Despite his good intentions, however, all thought of Alice slipped from his mind.

>But memories, she knew, must be painful for him.

>She felt she had, at last in India, come to the right place.

Remember that pairs of commas do the same sort of job as brackets, and you need both commas just as you need both brackets. (*On this point see below*)

You also use commas to separate a relative clause (one beginning with *which*, *who*, *whom*, or *whose*) when this is adding extra information and the sentence would make sense without it:

The money, which totals more than half a million, comes from three anonymous donors.

But you do not use commas when the clause identifies a person or thing you have just mentioned and is an essential part of the meaning:

What happened to the man who called last week?

The comma separating words

A comma is used to separate adjectives of the same type (i.e. covering the same range of meaning) that come before a noun:

>They were behaving like horrible, craven infants,

>an idyllic, unspoilt countryside

The comma can be replaced by *and* between a pair of adjectives to make a stronger effect:

They were behaving like horrible and craven infants.

When the adjectives have a different range of reference (for example, size and colour), and could not normally be separated by the word *and*, it is usual to omit the comma:

(-) He was wearing his baggy brown jacket.

X He was wearing his baggy and brown jacket.

(-) She gave him an old Dutch painting.

X She gave him an old and Dutch painting.

But you can put a comma in to give extra emphasis to each of the adjectives, and this is quite common in descriptive writing:

They were put down in a wide, dark road.

(The effect of the comma is to make the sentence equivalent to:

They were put down in a wide road that was also very dark.)

But note that you always leave the comma out when the last adjective has a strong connection with the noun, so that the two words effectively make a set term or phrase (in the examples, *foreign correspondent*, *old lady*, and *grey seal*):

>the newspaper's new foreign correspondent

>a little old lady

>a beautiful grey seal

Commas are used to separate items in a list or sequence. You do not need a comma before *and* in the last item, although some people put one and this is not incorrect:

It is as though we were to speak of dogs, lions, weasels, bears, hyenas, pandas, and otters all in one breath.

An alternative is to include a comma in this position only when it is needed to add clarity:

For breakfast they had tea, toast and marmalade, and eggs.

(The final comma clarifies the special link between *toast* and *marmalade*, which is effectively a phrase in its own right.)

Omit the comma between nouns that occur together in the same grammatical role in a sentence (called apposition), when the second identifies the first. Very often it is a name:

>Her friend Helen had also been playing on the beach.

>Their dog Gruff would be waiting at the gate.

But you need a pair of commas when the second noun is treated as a piece of extra information and is not part of the main structure of the sentence:

They could see the holiday house, Rose Cottage, in the distance.

Semicolon (;)

The term dates from the 17th century and, as its name suggests, literally means 'half a colon', although this literal meaning is a little deceptive in regard to its modern function.

The main role of the semicolon is to mark a division that is stronger than a comma but less strong than a full stop.

The two parts of a sentence divided by a semicolon should balance each other, rather than lead from one to the other (in which case you probably need a colon):

To err is human; to blame it on the other party is politics.

The rich don't have children; they have heirs.

Charlotte had gone on to university; Luke was now at sixth-form college.

You will find the semicolon especially useful to make a stronger division in a sentence that already contains commas:

>He'd rather that I'd stayed at home, and then he would continue to make jokes about me being the last housewife in captivity; or else that I had found some trendy, highly-paid job in the media.

>There was more fresh meat and vegetables, and an improvement in the food supply, so that not so many people died of starvation or diseases caused by malnutrition; transport improved, so that food shortages in a particular area could be remedied.

You could write the last piece as two separate sentences, but the balance between the two statements would not be so clear.

Colon (:)

The term dates from the 16th century and is derived from a Greek word kolon meaning 'a limb' and in grammar 'a clause'; like other names it later came to denote the associated punctuation mark. (It is a different word from the one referring to the intestines.)

While a semicolon links two balanced statements, a colon leads from the first statement to the second. Typically it links a general or introductory statement to an example, a cause to an effect, or a premise to a conclusion. (In many cases a conjunction such as so or for example could be introduced between the two halves.)

When we parted he offered me a choice: maintenance for myself and the children, or the house and all its contents outright, and nothing else.

>Dear old Grandpa: he'd only been here twenty minutes and he was bored already.

>I feel angry: do I look angry?

But the difference between semicolon and colon is not always clear-cut. In a sentence like the one below you could easily replace the colon with a semicolon to give a stronger sense of balance between the two statements:

That is not what a scrupulous, principled government does:

that is what a weak, cynical, vacillating government does.

You also use a colon to introduce a list of items. You can interpret the idea of a 'list' quite broadly; it doesn't have to be a list of physical things in the conventional sense but can, for example, consist of descriptive words as in the second example below:

>The very wealthy employed a variety of servants: cooks, butlers, footmen, grooms, chambermaids, housemaids, laundry maids, and scullery maids.

>The best thing a pilot can be is careful: sober, meticulous, receptive, and careful.

In some older printing, you sometimes see a dash after the colon when a formal list of items is displayed beneath on separate lines. This is unnecessary but not wrong.

You can use a colon to give more emphasis or drama to a statement in direct speech:

She suddenly burst out: 'Guy's very unhappy. What can we do for him?'

In American English, a colon is sometimes used instead of a comma after the initial greeting in a letter:

Dear Dr Harvey:

Brackets () []

The term dates in this meaning from the 18th century, and is a development of the term used in building, which dates from the 16th century. The form comes from a Latin word *bracae* meaning 'breeches', which the Romans are thought to have acquired from their neighbours in Gaul.

The brackets you will use most often in writing are round brackets or parentheses () and square brackets [].

You use round brackets:

- to add an explanation or extra comment:

Each age finds its own killer (in our day, for example, the cigarette and the motor car).

This can sometimes be a complete sentence:

Personal cleanliness was improved by an increase in the production of soap and of cotton clothing (the latter could be washed more easily and more frequently than woolen garments).

- to show words that are optional or reflect doubt in the writer's mind:

The dust has yet to settle on this contentious issue but a consensus (perhaps incorrect) seems to be emerging.

■ to give references and statistical information, such as a person's dates or the source of a quotation:

William Hogarth (1697-1764) satirized the scandal in his famous caricature Gin Lane.

To be or not to be, that is the question (Shakespeare, Hamlet)

Note that punctuation coming at the end of the part in brackets goes outside the brackets when it belongs to the sentence as a whole, and inside them when it belongs to the words inside, especially when these form a separate sentence beginning with a capital letter:

>Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829), the great French biologist and early evolutionist.

>In 1742-3 the output of British spirits was 8 million gallons (including 7 million gallons of gin).

>He grinned. (He'd had a lot more to drink than she had.)

There is another kind of brackets, square brackets, but you won't need to use these much except in more formal writing and editing. They are mainly used to put in extra information to clarify a point that might otherwise be unclear or ambiguous to the reader:

Kate had said that after Joanna had been to see her, she felt much better about it all.

Is it Kate or Joanna that felt much better? It could be either, and so the reporting sentence needs an addition such as:

Kate had said that after Joanna had been to see her, she [Kate] felt much better about it all.

Dash (_)

The reason for the name, which dates from the 16th century, is uncertain. It may be connected with the idea of a 'dash' or 'stroke' of the pen, but this meaning of the word *dash* is not recorded until a later date.

In formal printing there are two types of dash, although not many people are aware of the difference. There is a so-called en-rule (-) and a longer em-rule (—). The em-rule is the one used as a dash in general use, while the shorter en-rule is used for some special purposes (e.g. to mark a range of dates or numbers, as in *1801-2 and pages 51-9*, and to link words when the notion is 'between', as in *American-Chinese hostility*).

Note that, in printing, both these dashes are longer than a

hyphen.

It is worth knowing the difference if you do a lot of word-processing, because most programs are able to distinguish them (although you may have to use a special combination of keystrokes).

But there is no real distinction in ordinary writing, where the dash is done freehand and varies considerably in length. You use this either singly or in pairs for several purposes:

■ A single dash can introduce words that explain or elaborate on what has gone before:

Each school can, once again, become what it was always meant to be - a building that has four walls with tomorrow inside.

You can also use a colon here, but the dash is more relaxed and conversational in style.

But individuals do not evolve - they can only grow, reproduce, and die.

Here you could use a semicolon instead, but the effect would again be more formal.

■ A single dash can also introduce an extra point or afterthought:

>She had always imagined he would go on for years - and perhaps he would.

>Familiarity breeds contempt - and children.

■ You use a single dash when you want to break off a statement without completing it. This is normally only done in giving direct speech, especially in fiction:

‘It’s just I think it would have been a bit nicer if - ’

(A full stop at the end of a sentence ending like this is optional.)

■ You can use a pair of dashes to mark asides and added comments that do not form part of the main statement. Dashes form a more distinct break than commas would and usually have a more casual or conversational feel:

>It sounded - yes, that was it - like something heavy being dragged across the stony yard in front of the cottage.

>Then too - after an involuntary cry of shock - he had lowered his eyes as if afraid of embarrassing me.

Slash (/)

The more formal printing name for this is *oblique* (from Latin *obliquus*, meaning ‘sloping’) or *solidus* (a Latin word for a coin corresponding to our shilling), and it is sometimes also called *stroke*.

The slash has a number of special uses at word level:

■ to mark alternatives to *or* in certain contexts:

- >Dear Sir/Madam
- >name of parent/guardian
- >he/she

■ in some abbreviations:

- >a/c (= account)
- >c/o (=care of)
- >km/h (= kilometres per hour, as an alternative to *kph*)

■ instead of a dash to show a range of places or dates:

- >the financial year 2001/2
- >the London/Paris flight

At phrase and sentence level, the slash is conventionally used to show the ends of lines in poetry when this is written in continuous form:

Tyger Tyger, burning bright / In the forests of the night

The slash (here called a forward slash) is also used to mark off the parts of an Internet domain name or website (and a double slash is used after the colon of the initial prefix *http*):

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/news>

A reverse slash (called a *backslash*) is used more generally in computing to mark off different levels in the path name of a file, beginning with the name of the drive and ending with the file name:

C:\my documents\personal\invitation.doc

Question mark (?)

Main uses

You normally use a question mark to show that what you have said is a question:

- >Are they arriving tomorrow?
- >Where shall I put the chair?
- >Is that you?
- >Who will cure the nation's ill?

It is sometimes used when the question is put in the form of a statement, to reflect a rising intonation in speech:

- >She told you that?
- >Surely they are the same?
- >I wonder if I might interrupt you?

You do not use a question mark when the question is expressed in indirect speech, i.e. it is reported rather than expressed in the original words used:

He asked what time it was.

But you do use a question mark in so-called ‘tag questions’ such as *did she?* and *aren’t you?*, which are really emphatic statements put in the form of questions:

>She didn’t agree, did she?

>You’re much better now, aren’t you?

Double question marks

Using more than one question mark (??, ???, and so on) to express a strong feeling or doubt in a question that doesn’t expect an answer (a so-called rhetorical question) is acceptable in informal writing but should not be used in reports, business letters, and other more formal contexts:

What sort of people are they??

A single question mark in round brackets is a standard convention used to express a doubt about something, such as a date:

Julius Caesar was born in (?) 100 BC and murdered in 44 BC.

You use an exclamation mark to show in writing something that is normally said loudly or strongly in speech. There are several reasons you might do this:

- to attract attention:
- to tell someone what to do;
- to express surprise:
- because you think something is interesting or exciting.

The most common uses are to express in writing words that do the following in speech:

- call someone or attract their attention:

John! Where are you?

- give a command or warning:

>Do as I say!

>Watch out!

But don’t use an exclamation mark in an instruction that is expressed as a statement with a verb such as *advise*, *urge*, and *recommend*

>We urge you to take immediate action.

>I recommend that you write a letter of complaint.

■ indicate a strong feeling of absurdity, surprise, approval, dislike, regret, etc., especially after how or what:

- >How extraordinary!
- >What an appalling suggestion!
- >Aren't they strange!
- >And then he kissed her!
- >Why, Andy, you've been hurt!

■ express a wish or a feeling of regret:

- >I'd love to see the children!
- >If only you had said!

■ in speech, indicate someone calling out or shouting:

'Bert!' he shouted, and jumped down the stairs three at a time.

The exclamation mark also occurs in literature, especially in poetry, to express a strong feeling or idea that the poet wants to share with the reader (or hearer):

- >O, weep for Adonais! (Shelley)
- >All too soon the tiny breakfast, Trolley-bus and windy street!
(Betjeman)

You do not normally need to use the exclamation mark in this way in normal writing, but you can use it in informal writing to add emphasis to an interesting or noteworthy point you are making (the equivalent of *would you believe it?* or *yes he really did*, etc.). It is usual to put the exclamation mark in round brackets immediately after the word or phrase that you are highlighting:

There are ten (!) children in the family now.

This, and the use of double exclamation marks or a combination of exclamation mark and question mark, should only be used in personal letters and other informal types of writing such as emails:

- >My goodness, I was angry!!!
- >Are you being serious?!

It is very important, as a matter of good style, not to be tempted to use exclamation marks just to add an artificial sense of drama or excitement to a piece of writing that is essentially routine or straightforward.

Quotation marks (‘ ‘ “ ”)

These are also called *inverted commas*. Their chief role is to indicate speech and quotations, in which words used by someone else are quoted in

their original form. In writing it is common to use double quotation marks (“ ”), although in printing practice varies between the double and single style (").

Single quotation marks are more usual in British printing and double marks in American printing, but the distinction is not always so clear-cut in general usage.

The rules given here are based on British practice, and any differences in American English are noted.

It is important to know the difference between direct speech and indirect speech.

Direct speech gives the words as spoken:

‘Don’t call me soft,’ he said, and kicked her on the ankle.

Indirect speech turns the words used into a ‘reported’ form so that they come from the writer and not the person who originally used them:

He told her not to call him soft, and kicked her on the ankle.

You use quotation marks in direct speech, but not in indirect speech.

In direct speech, the quoted words form the main structure of the sentence, built round a verb such as *say* or *ask*. The closing quotation mark normally comes after a final full stop, or after any other punctuation that forms part of the quotation, such as an exclamation mark or question mark:

>He went back to the kitchen, saying: ‘I’ve done some soup and a salad.’

>‘Well?’ he said at last. ‘Isn’t it for me?’

When the quoted speech is followed or interrupted by a reporting verb such as *say*, *shout*, etc., the punctuation that divides the sentence is put inside the quotation marks:

‘If people can be taught evil,’ she beams, ‘they can be taught kindness too.’

When your writing includes several speakers having a conversation or exchange, the words start on a new line when there is a change of speaker:

>Harriet said: ‘When do you suppose Callard heard?’

>‘Yesterday, I should think.’

>Then he may still contact you.’

>‘Oh yes, I’m not worrying.’

>‘If he doesn’t, what will you do?’

>‘I don’t know. I haven’t thought.’

Notice that the identities of the speakers are not normally repeated each time. The reader has to keep track of the alternating speakers and may need to refer back to the beginning of the conversation. This is an accepted convention, but if the exchange continues for a long time it is a good idea to help readers by reminding them occasionally of which speaker is which. If there are more than two speakers, you need to do this more often.

The rules are slightly different when you include words as a quotation within a sentence and these do not form the main part of the sentence.

There are several reasons you might want to do this:

- to quote a word or phrase from someone else, or one that you have already used and want to discuss further:

These ‘captains of industry’ often risked their entire fortunes.

- to indicate a word that has a special status, or is one that your readers might not recognize (either at all or in the meaning you are using). In this type, the writer will often go on to explain the term (and in the following example certainly should):

The aptest name for my approach to understanding how things work is probably ‘hierarchical reductionism’.

If a quoted word or phrase comes at the end of a sentence or coincides with a comma, the punctuation that belongs to the sentence as a whole is placed outside the quotation marks, because the quotation is not part of the main structure:

>It is technically incorrect to talk about bat ‘radar’, since they do not use radio waves.

>It can hardly be a coincidence that no language on earth has ever produced the expression ‘as pretty as an airport’.

In American English, however, it is usual to place quotation marks outside the sentence punctuation (and note the more characteristic double quotation marks):

Thomas Henry Huxley once defined science as “organized common sense.”

When a quotation occurs within a quotation, the inner quotation is put in double quotation marks if the main quotation is in single marks (or vice versa, especially in American practice):

>British ‘What do you mean, “news”?’

>American “What do you mean, ‘news’?”

In the following example, the writer is quoting what a person (called Phipps) said, and Phipps himself is quoting what someone else said:

‘He said,’ said Phipps gleefully, “‘Yes, they have more money.’”

This is a fairly unusual alignment that tends to occur mainly in fiction. In ordinary writing it is best avoided whenever possible, as it can be quite confusing to the reader.

Apostrophe (’)

- The term is recorded from the early 17th century and comes from a Greek word *apostrophos* meaning ‘turning away’ and hence ‘omission’ or ‘elision’, which is the meaning relevant here. Like other names for punctuation marks, *apostrophe* originally referred to the process involved and only later to the mark used for it. It was commonly used in Greek and Latin to mark dropped letters in manuscripts (for example, *tertius* meaning ‘third’ was written as *t’cins*), and this is the use of the apostrophe that was first adopted in English in the 16th century, especially by the early printers.
- The use of the apostrophe to show a possessive form (as in *the man’s head*) is much later, however. It occurs only rarely in the First Folio (1623) of Shakespeare in this role, and it appears in modern editions of his plays because editors have changed the convention. Some people claim that the possessive form’s is historically a contraction of *his* (e.g. *Henry his name* = *Henry’s name*) but this is not correct: it is derived from an Old English inflection that involved the adding of a final -s to mark a possessive form.
- The rules for using apostrophes as possessive markers have always been unstable (and continue to be), and the main conventions were established as late as the 19th century. Indeed, some grammarians of that time questioned the possessive use because it did not involve an omission of letters; so this was still regarded even then as its primary function.

Apostrophes in possessive words

Despite its shaky history, the main role of the apostrophe in modern English is still to show possession or association, as in *Penny’s house* and *the bank’s address*.

If the noun is singular (i.e. it denotes one person or thing) you form the possessive by adding’s:

- >the cat’s paws (one cat)
- >the bus’s windows (one bus)

>Mary's hair

If the noun is plural (i.e. it denotes more than one person or thing) and ends in -s you add an apostrophe after the s:

>the cats' paws (several cats)

>the Smiths' house (a family of people called Smith)

If the noun is plural and ends in a letter other than -s, the possessive is formed by adding 's:

>the children's clothes

>the people's cars

>the sheep's hoofs

(In the last case, there is no way of knowing whether there are several sheep or only one, and so it is often better to rephrase this type of possessive to make it clear what you mean.)

The apostrophe is rapidly disappearing in company names and other commercial uses, e.g. *Lloyds Bank*, *Citizens Advice Bureau*. In each case you should follow the practice of the organization itself regarding its name.

Adding another -s to names that already end in -s (such as *James*) can make an awkward sound, and this often leaves people unsure about what to do.

There is a simple rule you can follow:

■ When you would pronounce the name with an extra -s in speech, then add an 's:

James's, Dickens's, Thomas's, The Times's

■ When you would normally pronounce the name without the extra -s, then just add an apostrophe without the extra s:

Bridges', Connors', Mars', Herodotus', Xerxes'

■ With French names ending in (silent) -s or -x, add 's:

Dumas's, le Roux's

The modified word is then pronounced with a final -z.

Beware of confusing who's (= who is or who *has*) and *whose* (= *of whom*):

✓ Who's (= who is) there?

✓ Who's (= who has) done this?

X Who's (* who is or who has) turn is it?

✓ Whose turn is it?

An apostrophe should not be used in the pronouns *hers*, *its*, *ours*, *yours*, and *theirs*:

X a friend of our's

- ✓ a friend of ours
- X the house is their's
- ✓ the house is theirs

A common mistake is to confuse *its*, which is a possessive word, and *it's*, which is a contraction of 'it is' or 'it has':

- X The dog was licking it's paw.
- ✓ The dog was licking its paw.
- ✓ It's (= it is) time to go.
- ✓ It's (= it has) been raining.

Apostrophes in contractions

You need an apostrophe to mark letters that have been omitted in forms known as 'contractions' (e.g. *they've*, *wouldn't*). There are not many of these left in modern English. Although they are found increasingly in print (in this book, for example), they are still widely associated with the informality of speech, and some more traditionally-minded people frown on them in more formal contexts. For this reason it is advisable to use the full forms in documents in which it is important to make a good impression, such as CVs and job applications, unless you know what your readers' attitude to contracted forms is likely to be (e.g. some companies have a more informal writing style as a matter of course).

The most common contractions are based on a pronoun and verb:

<i>Full form</i>	<i>Contraction</i>
I am	I'm
I had	I'd
I have	I've
I will or shall	I'll
I would	I'd
you are	you're
you had	you'd
you have	you've

you will or shall	you'll
you would	you'd
he is	he's
he had	he'd
he has	he's
he will or shall	he'll
he would	he'd
it is	it's (but beware of confusion with the possessive <i>its</i> : see below)
it had	it'd (awkward and best avoided)
it has	it's
it will or shall	it'll (awkward and best avoided)
it would	it'd (awkward and best avoided)
she is	she's
she had	she'd
she has	she's
she will or shall	she'll
she would	she'd
they are	they're
they had	they'd
they have	they've
they will or shall	they'll
they would	they'd

Note that the contractions based on *have* are only used when *have* is an auxiliary verb, i.e. it is used with another verb to form a special tense:

✓ He's bought a new car.

X He's a new car.

✓ They've got a cheek.

X They've a cheek.

In more casual English, this rule is applied flexibly when the contracted word is *have*, and it is possible to say, for example:

✓ I've a new car.

✓ We've several of those.

There is another group based on a verb + *not*. The verb is always one that can be followed by *not*, i.e. an auxiliary or 'modal' verb like *be*, *can*, *do*, *have*, or *ought*, or one of the verbs *dare* and *need* which behave in a special way:

<i>Full form</i>	<i>Contraction</i>
are not	aren't
can not	can't
could not	couldn't
dare not	daren't
did not	didn't
do not	don't
does not	doesn't
had not	hadn't
has not	hasn't
have not	haven't
is not	isn't
may not	mayn't

might not	mightn't (very informal)
need not	needn't
ought not	oughtn't
should not	shouldn't
will not	won't
would not	wouldn't

Notice that the apostrophe comes between the *n* and the *t* because it stands for the missing letter *o*:

X does'nt

✓ doesn't

Some words used in poetry and literature are shortened or contracted with an apostrophe, e.g. *e'er* (= ever), *tho'* (= though), *o'er* (= over). These words are not normally used in ordinary writing.

Words that are shortened by omission of letters from the beginning of longer words do not need an apostrophe when they are established in their own right, e.g. *cello* (= violoncello), *flu* (= influenza), *plane* (aeroplane).

An apostrophe is also used in some Irish names beginning with *O*, e.g. *O'Connor*, *O'Donnell*. **Note that** the letter following the apostrophe should be a capital letter.

Apostrophes in plural forms

An apostrophe is used to show a plural in a limited range of words:

■ short words ending in a vowel, especially *o*, that might not be recognized otherwise:

do do's

(because *dos* looks odd and *does* would be confusing)

■ pronouns used as nouns:

The cats were all she's

(because *she* is not primarily a noun and *shes* would be unfamiliar)

Beware of using an apostrophe in a word that is neither a possessive nor a special case but an ordinary plural. You sometimes see this on shop signs, and so it is sometimes known as the 'grocer's apostrophe'. Words ending in

-o are especially vulnerable to this error (probably because of confusion with the *do's* type), but you also find it in quite harmless words such as *ap-ples* and *pears*:

X video's for hire

X apple's 30p a pound

Avoid this at all costs: it is one o f the key stigmas that will mark you as illiterate.

Apostrophes in abbreviations

It is no longer necessary to use an apostrophe to form the plurals o f abbreviations and single letters, except when clarity calls for it:

Several MPs were standing around.

Dot your i's and cross your t 's

An apostrophe is needed to make a possessive form of an abbreviation:

The BBC's decision to go ahead with the broadcast was widely criticized.

Hyphen (-)

▪The word and the device both date from the 16th century. The name is derived from a Greek word *huphen* meaning 'together'. The ancient Greeks also used a linking hyphen, except that it was a curved sign under words rather than a straight line put between them.

▪The hyphen was used much more widely in the past to indicate words that were formed from other words (e.g. in compound forms such as *to-day* and *with-out*). In modern English its use is much more restricted, and the so-called 'spelling' hyphen, in which the hyphen is a regular feature o f a particular spelling, is fast disappearing. This development is very welcome, because it means that the hyphen can enjoy a more effective and useful role on those occasions when it really is indispensable.

▪Strictly speaking, a hyphen is shorter than a dash (in printing, about half the length), but in writing there is often little noticeable difference. Usually, however, there is no space on either side o f a hyphen as there is with a dash.

▪The dash and the hyphen have very different roles. While the dash has an essentially separating role at sentence level, the hyphen has a linking role at word and phrase level. There is a lot of variation in general usage, and dic-

tionaries show different practices from case to case. This can be confusing, but the following guidelines will help you to use hyphens in ways that are useful and consistent.

The hyphen has three broad roles:

- as part of a word's spelling (the spelling hyphen);
- as a means of linking words that belong together in a sentence (the syntactic hyphen);
- to mark the division of a word that has to be split at the end of a line of print.

▪ The last of these is largely confined to printing practice, and we can ignore it here. Most word-processing programs cater for lines of different length, making it unnecessary to divide words in this way at all. If you are interested in the subject, you can look out a dictionary that deals with this aspect, such as the *Oxford Spelling Dictionary*.

▪ **The spelling hyphen** is used to form compound words (i.e. words made from other words put together, such as *house-plant* and *table-lamp*). But in this role it is much less common than it used to be, and tends to be used only when there is some special need, for example when the compound is a long one or when letters come awkwardly together, e.g. *free-for-all*, *multi-ethnic*, and *right-handed*.

▪ Straightforward noun compounds are much more often spelt either as two words (*boiling point*, *credit card*, *focus group*, *garden party*) or as one. This is true when several consonants come together, which used to be a reason for putting in a hyphen (*database*, *earring*, *breaststroke*, *radioisotope*).

▪ But you often need a hyphen when the words making the compound have a grammatical relationship with one another, e.g. *dive-bomb* (based on 'to bomb by making a dive'), *house-warming* (based on 'warming the house'), *punch-drunk* (based on 'drunk from a punch').

There are two cases in which a compound spelt as two words is made into a hyphenated form or a one-word form:

- when a verb phrase such as *take off and climb down* is made into nouns (*take-off, climbdown*);
- when a noun compound is made into a verb (e.g. *a date stamp* but *to date-stamp*).

A spelling hyphen is also used:

- to join a prefix ending in a vowel (such as *co-* and *neo-*) to another word (e.g. *co-opt, neo-realism*), although one-word forms are becoming more usual (*cooperate, neoclassical*);
- to separate a prefix from the main word in order to avoid confusion, e.g. to distinguish *re-cover* (= provide with a new cover) from *recover* and *re-sign* (= sign again) from *resign*;
- to join a prefix to a name or designation, e.g. *anti-American, ex-president*;
- to stand for a common second element in all but the last word of a list, e.g. *two-, three-, or fourfold*.

A syntactic hyphen is used to clarify meanings in groups of words when the associations are not clear or when there are several possible associations:

Few people these days can afford to buy hard-covered novels.

The meeting was attended by fifty-odd people.

The effect of these changes was to reduce disease-carrying pests.

They seem to have a couldn't-care-less attitude.

- You should also use a hyphen to clarify the meaning of a compound that is normally spelt as separate words, when it is used before another noun:

Some journals are published quarterly, with the object of providing up-to-date findings.

Notice that when the compound comes after the verb, and not before the noun, you can spell it as separate words:

Some journals are published quarterly, with the object of providing findings that are up to date.

- You do not need a hyphen in a combination of adverb ending in *-ly* and adjective qualified by it, even when it comes before the noun: *a highly competitive market, abundant recently published material*.
- But when the adverb does not end in *-ly*, you normally need a hyphen in order to make the meaning clear: *a well-known woman, an ill-judged remark*.

Omission marks (...)

Omission marks (also called *ellipsis*) are a series of dots (usually three) to show that something has been left out. There are two main uses:

- to show that a word or words have been omitted from a quotation so as to make it shorter or more convenient:

Others ... comforted themselves with the homely proverb, that, being hanged at all, they might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb.

In the original version (Dickens, *Barnaby Rudge*, chapter 53), the quotation began

Others had been desperate from the beginning, and comforted themselves [etc.].

- to mark an interruption at the end of a sentence, either to show that a speaker did not finish it or to leave the conclusion to the reader's imagination. This use is most common in stories and narratives:

'If I don't pee I'll ...'

You can also use a dash for this type of omission:

There's so many folk it's more like a party. With lots of beer and home-made bread and cheese and ham and some of my mother's special cakes and -

- **Notice that** an omission that comes at the end of a sentence still has three full stops, not four, and you don't add a full stop if you have used a dash. This is because the sentence has not been finished: but the next sentence (if there is one) begins with a capital letter in the normal way.

Capital letters Capital letters

Capital letters are used to spell proper names, i.e. names of people and places, e.g. *London, Concorde, the English Channel*

Some words have capital initial letters even though they are not proper names. The rules for these were given above.

Avoiding common punctuation errors

The following are punctuation errors that people often make. The list cannot be exhaustive, and it is a good idea to add your own recurring problems so that you have a personalized checklist.

There are references to other parts of the book for further information in some cases.

Using too many commas

Do not use commas when you don't need to. As a general rule they mark the pauses you would make in speech, and if there is no pause there is often no need for a comma. Too many commas in a piece of writing make it disjointed and distract the reader. If you find yourself using a lot of commas it may mean you need to rephrase your sentence:

By last night, the Defense Secretary, William Perry, said, there would be over 200 tactical aircraft in the area.

This sentence contains one aside ('William Perry') within another ('the Defense Secretary ... said'). Rather than juggle these commas, it would be better to reorder the sentence:

By last night there would be over 200 tactical aircraft in the area, Defense Secretary William Perry said.

One comma instead of four!

Separating two main clauses with a comma

(the 'comma splice')

Main clauses coming together in the same sentence should not be separated by a comma:

X God has us here only on loan, we are transitory in this vale of tears.

If you want to keep the comma, you need a linking word such as *and*. Otherwise, use a semicolon if the two parts balance or a colon if the second part leads on from the first (see above).

✓ God has us here only on loan, and we are transitory in this vale of tears.

or

✓ God has us here only on loan; we are transitory in this vale of tears.

Alternatively, split the sentence into two:

✓ God has us here only on loan. We are transitory in this vale of tears.

Putting a comma between subject and verb

It's often tempting to put a comma between the subject and verb of a sentence when the first part is longer than usual. This is incorrect:

X Those with the smallest incomes and no other means, should get most support.

✓ Those with the smallest incomes and no other means should get most support.

Tip

If your punctuation seems awkward it's often a sign that you should rephrase. Here you could say:

✓ Most support should go to those with the smallest incomes and no other means.

In fact this way of casting the sentence makes the essential point, about where the support should go, much better.

Here is another example:

X Complete and utter oblivion, is the usual fate of a crackpot.

✓ Complete and utter oblivion is the usual fate of a crackpot.

Again there is the option of rephrasing the sentence:

✓ The usual fate of the crackpot is complete and utter oblivion.

Putting a comma before a *that* clause

When a clause introduced by *that* comes after a verb such as *say*, *know*, *insist*, or *argue*, you should not put a comma before *that* (which is a conjunction in this role):

X Many observers have argued, that some form of planning is essential.

- ✓ Many observers have argued that some form of planning is essential.

But you can have a pair of commas if an aside comes before the *that* clause:

- ✓ The report stated, for example, that science should be taught to all pupils in some form or other.

Omitting one comma from a pair of separating commas

This is a very common error, especially in longer sentences that have other commas. Remember that a pair of commas mark off something that is not part of the main statement in a sentence, and so you need both, just as you need both round brackets or both dashes to separate words from their surroundings.

X The year is bound to involve lots of changes, all of which, I believe will be positive for everyone, (comma omitted after *believe*, probably because the writer was nervous of having three commas close together; but they are needed)

- ✓ The year is bound to involve lots of changes, all of which, I believe, will be positive for everyone.

X English life, while very pleasant is rather bland.

- ✓ English life, while very pleasant, is rather bland.

X He has chosen, instead to face one of two possible scenarios.

X He has chosen instead, to face one of two possible scenarios.

- ✓ He has chosen, instead, to face one of two possible scenarios, (two commas)

or

- ✓ He has chosen instead to face one of two possible scenarios. (no commas)

or

- ✓ Instead, he has chosen to face one of two possible scenarios. (*instead* at the beginning, followed by a comma)

Putting quotation marks in the wrong place in relation to other punctuation

Remember that sentence punctuation comes inside quotation marks in direct speech;

‘Dad?’ she said. ‘Did you say there aren’t any other houses?’

But when the quotation is not a full sentence of speech but a short phrase or group of words contained within the structure of the sentence, the quotation marks go inside the sentence punctuation:

Only in Britain could it be thought a defect to be ‘too clever by half’.

Using quotation marks in indirect speech

You only use quotation marks when you are giving the exact words someone else has said or written. If you are using indirect speech, i.e. the type that can be introduced by a word like *that*, *if*, or *whether* after the reporting verb, you should not use quotation marks:

✓ ‘Max, can I borrow your leather jacket for a couple of weeks?’ asks Cordy.

X Cordy asks Max if ‘he can borrow his leather jacket for a couple of weeks.’

✓ Cordy asks Max if he can borrow his leather jacket for a couple of weeks.

Using too many dashes

Dashes are informal in tone and produce a loose sentence structure. In everyday writing this is often more natural and acceptable, but the effect can be too casual for more formal writing.

It is often better to use pairs of commas instead of pairs of dashes, and semicolons or colons instead of single dashes.

Confusing singular and plural forms in possessives (’s and s’)

Remember that a word ending in a letter other than -s forms a possessive by adding ’s, whether it is singular or plural:

>the city’s cathedral

>women’s rights

>the oncoming car’s headlights (one car)

You add an apostrophe without an -s when a plural noun already ends in -s:

>the bosses’ offices

>the oncoming cars’ headlights

Using an apostrophe in plural nouns (the ‘grocer’s apostrophe’)

An apostrophe should not be used to form an ordinary plural:

X a pound of tomato’s

X a pair of handle’s

Using an apostrophe in *yours, hers, theirs, etc.*

You do not use an apostrophe in these cases:

X a friend of our’s

✓ a friend of ours

Confusing *it’s* and *its*

Use *it’s* (with an apostrophe) to mean ‘it is’ or ‘it has’:

>It’s raining.

>It’s been raining.

Use *its* (without an apostrophe) as a possessive word (meaning ‘belonging to it’):

The cat was licking its paws.

Omitting hyphens that are needed to clarify the meaning

Hyphens are used much less than they used to be in ordinary spelling. But sometimes a hyphen is needed to make the meaning clear and avoid another possible meaning:

He would be in charge of a group of French-speaking tourists.

When I was a small-boat owner, I saw the little creature on several occasions:

It is important to re-view the films every so often.

For more examples, see above.

Glossary of the Terms Used

abbreviation a shortened form of a word or phrase, including initialisms (*BBC*, *TUC*, etc.), shortenings (*Apr.*, *Sat.*, etc.), contractions (*Mrjnr*, etc.), and acronyms (*Nato*, *nimby*, etc.). Acronyms are treated as words in their own right. See separately.

acronym See **abbreviation** above.

adjective a word that describes another word, e.g. *blue*, *horrible*, *pleasant*

adverb a word that qualifies a verb or adjective, e.g. *quickly*, *very*. A word such as *only* can be an adjective (as in *the only one*) and an adverb (as in *I only asked*).

capital letter a large form of a letter, e.g. A,B,C, used chiefly to begin a sentence, for the first letters of proper names, and in abbreviations

clause a group of words that contains a verb and forms part of a sentence. A main clause makes sense by itself whereas a subordinate clause is dependent on the rest of the sentence to make sense. In the sentence *She was a child when her mother died*, *she was a child* is a main clause and *when her mother died* is a subordinate clause.

complex sentence a sentence that contains a subordinate clause, i.e. one beginning with *because*, *if*, *which*, etc. See **subordinate clause** below.

compound sentence a sentence with two parts joined by a linking word such as *and* or *but*. See above.

consonant any of the letters *b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, z*. The letter *y* is a consonant when it is sounded as in *year* and *yoke*, but is a vowel in words such as *rhythm* and *tyre*.

contraction See **abbreviation** above.

direct speech speech that quotes the actual words used: see **indirect speech** below and above.

indirect speech speech given in a form that reports what someone has said without quoting the actual words, e.g. *She said I was right* as distinct from *You are right, 'she said*. See above.

inflection a change to the ending of a word to make it fit its grammatical context, e.g. *-ed* and *-ing* in verbs or *-s* and *-es* forming plurals of nouns

initialism See **abbreviation** above.

intonation the changes of pitch and tone in ordinary speech, which help to clarify the meaning, e.g. indicating that a group of words is a question, and show the speaker's attitude main clause See **clause** above.

noun a noun that names a person or thing, e.g. *house*, *George*, *happiness*

paragraph a distinct piece of writing beginning on a new line (often intended that is set in from the margin) and conveying a single idea or theme

past participle a form of a verb used with *he* or *have*, such as *killed*, *burnt*, or *spoken*, or as a kind of adjective, as in *the burnt cakes*

phrase a group of words that forms part of a sentence, not usually containing a verb or making complete sense by itself

possessive a word that indicates ownership or a similar relation, e.g. a noun as in *the boys' room* or *London's river*, or a word such as *my*, *her*, *hers*, *their*, *theirs*

prefix a number of letters added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning, e.g. *re-* in *remarry* and *un-* in *unhappy*

preposition a word such as *in*, *on*, or *over*, which stands before a noun as in *the book on the table*.

pronoun a word such as *I*, *he*, *me*, and *us* which is used instead of a noun. Possessive pronouns are words such as *mine* and *ours*.

proper noun a noun that refers to one particular person, place, or thing and is spelt with a capital initial, e.g. *Europe*, *Titanic*, *Shakespeare*

relative clause a clause beginning with *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*, or sometimes *that*, e.g. *There are many people who dislike this music*. See above.

sentence a group of words that make a statement or exclamation or ask a question, beginning with a capital letter and ending in a full stop

shortening See **abbreviation** above.

simple sentence a sentence that contains one verb and subject, e.g. *The trees are tall*

subordinate clause a part of a sentence that contains a verb but cannot stand by itself, e.g. one beginning with *if*, *because*, or *which*. See **clause** above.

syllable a part of a word that can be pronounced separately, e.g. *but* and *ter* in *butter*

verb a word that describes an action or state, e.g. *become*, *move*, *remain*, *take*

vowel any of letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and sometimes *y* (as in *rhythm*: see **consonant** above)

=====

Punctuation Terms

Short List in Russian

1. Точка Point

Казалось бы очень понятный и определенный знак препинания. По-английски слово “точка” звучит следующим образом: “Period”, “Point”, “Full-stop”. Изучив и проанализировав материалы нескольких грамматических справочников и статей об этом знаке пунктуации, выяснены следующие факты:

Точка употребляется в конце повествовательных предложений: I like chess.

После слов латинского происхождения, сокращенных до одной буквы: i. t. = idest = that is = то есть.

В аббревиатурах: M. A. = Master of Arts.

При сокращении слов: Co. = Company.

После инициалов: H. E. Elliot.

После сокращения названий месяцев: Feb. = February.

В десятичных дробях целое число отделяется от дроби точкой: 0.25.

Основные случаи, когда точка не ставится, следующие:

После символов: \$, %, ?

После порядковых числительных, если они пишутся в сокращении: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th

После названий химических элементов, если они пишутся в сокращении: O (oxygen).

Точка не ставится в конце заголовков: в названиях произведений, очерков, статей, сочинений.

Примечание

Есть случаи, когда возможно употребление сокращений и с точкой и без неё:

Если сокращенное слово оканчивается на ту же букву, что и исходное слово:

Dr. или Dr = Doctor

Mr. или Mr = Mister

При сокращении названий стран: USA или U.S.A.

При сокращении названий организаций: BBC или B.B.C.

2. Восклицательный знак Exclamation mark

Основное назначение восклицательного знака состоит в обозначении повышенной эмоциональности. Как оказалось, эта его функция не единственна. Если рассмотреть эмоции, то восклицательный знак служит средством выражения.

Радости: “Celeste! Celeste!” she cried.

Восхищения: You have the most beautiful hair I have ever seen!

Избытка чувств (после междометий): Oh! Aw!

Сочувствия: “Tch – tch – tch!”

Сильного смущения: Mr. James! I really couldn’t!

Резкого приказа: Don’t jump, Cynthia!

Возмущения: What do you do!

Категорического отказа сделать что-либо: I won’t go home!

Негодования: I a witch!

Восклицательный знак после обращения часто показывает, что говорящий делает усилие с целью привлечь к себе внимание: Hildy! Hey, Brunhilda!

Если восклицательный знак ставится после одного или двух слов, то следующее предложение можно начинать с маленькой буквы.

В отличие от русского языка, в английском языке восклицательный знак не ставится после обращения в начале письма. В этих случаях употребляется запятая, например:

Dear Rose, Дорогая Роза!

I have just... Я только что...

Восклицательный знак может стоять после одного слова, нескольких слов или в конце предложения.

3. Вопросительный знак Question mark

Вопросительный знак ставится в конце вопросительных предложений. Эта истина известна всем. В специальных, общих, альтернативных и расчленённых вопросах он служит дополнительным средством передачи вопросительного характера этих предложений, поскольку основными средствами в английском языке являются лексические и структурные показатели (например, вопросительные слова, особый порядок слов). Однако при отсутствии таких показателей только вопросительный знак, стоящий в конце предложения, придаёт ему вопросительный характер:

There were a few who didn't call you carrots?

Вопросительный знак в конце эллиптического предложения часто служит для выражения удивления, недоумения: Me write?

После вопроса, переданного в косвенной речи и являющегося дополнительным придаточным предложением, ставится не вопросительный знак, а точка, как и в русском языке:

He asked where his red pencil was.

Однако, как и в русском языке, в конце косвенного вопроса ставится вопросительный знак, если главное предложение является вопросительным: Do you know when he will come?

4. Двоеточие Colon

Этот знак употребляется:

1. Для раздела двух предложений, из которых во втором более подробно даётся информация о содержании первого. Часто двоеточие означает “то есть”.

2. Richards work is unsatisfactory: his spelling is careless and writing is bad.

При перечислении чего-либо, т.е. как и тире, двоеточие употребляется перед перечисляемыми однородными членами, которым предшествует обобщающее слово:

My sister finds all school subjects easy: French, History, Maths.

3. Двоеточие не употребляется, если обобщающее слово стоит после перечисляемых однородных членов. В этом случае, ставится тире.

Двоеточие используется для того, чтобы отметить введение какого-либо иллюстративного или поясняющего материала: цитат, списков, объяснений.

Цитата: “The words of a comic song: "Paddington groan...”

Прямая речь: Phyllis said: "Do you want me to play something for you?"

Речь персонажа про себя: One thought kept whirling about in her head: Will I see him before he leaves?

4. Двоеточие используется для деления и уяснения адреса написанного в один ряд: John Jones: The Elms: Stroud Lane: Pains wick: Gloss.

5. Type Dash

Тире помогает разобраться в структуре и содержании предложения, прерывая его, чтобы привлечь внимание читателя.

Функция тире подобна функции запятых и скобок – поместить дополнительную информацию.

Вторая функция тире – вводить драматическую или ироническую паузу.

Третья – отделять список или перечень от слов, которые следуют за ними.

Тире ставится также перед перечисляемыми однородными членами или после них, если они употребляются с обобщающими словами: We bought some new crockery – cups, plates...

Тире употребляется для обозначения на письме длительной паузы с целью произвести эффект: Roger was sitting upright in his chair – bed.

Неожиданный поворот мыслей также может быть отражен на письме с помощью тире: What on earth – I mean, who are you?

Тире способствует усилению эмоциональной выразительности сказанного, произведению большего эффекта на читающего: ...a plan to set the stage – for what?

В середине предложения тире может обозначать паузу в речи, вызванную волнением говорящего: “I – err – mean,” said Bill (или стремлением найти подходящее слово).

В конце предложения тире является показателем незавершённости высказываемой мысли: I tried to call you, but –

Примечание:

В английском языке тире не употребляется для передачи реплик в диалоге собеседников или между словами автора и прямой речью, как в русском языке.

6. Многоточие Dots. Эллипсис Ellipsis

В произведениях современных английских и американских писателей в конце незавершенного по смыслу предложения вместо многоточия чаще встречается тире. Для того чтобы подчеркнуть, что за пределами предложения остаётся многое, о чем должен догадаться читатель, автор иногда, вместо многоточия, ставит два тире. Тем не менее, традиционно, многоточие используется в следующих случаях:

В конце незаконченного по смыслу предложения: “ Apparently you ladies don’t realize this is private room,” he said, “and you’re interrupting a dinner party which isn’t...” Как видно из приведенного примера, многоточие завершается точкой, которая обозначает конец повествовательного предложения. Восклицательные и вопросительные предложения заканчиваются в таких случаях соответствующим пунктуационным знаком, следующим за многоточием.

Многоточие используется так же, чтобы показать колебания или волнение говорящего: “I mean... my brother’s I really glad to see you!”

Еще один вариант использования многоточия – показать, что данный текст составляет сокращенную версию оригинала.

7. Точка с запятой Semi-colon

Самым распространённым случаем использования в предложениях точки с запятой является разделение этим знаком предложений, входящих в состав сложносочинённого предложения, при отсутствии сочинительных союзов: We entered the hall; lights blazed in every corner; the festival had began.

Со словами – so, therefore, however, nevertheless, besides, then, otherwise, соединяющими предложения: Do the work well; then I will pay you.

Точка с запятой употребляется в распространенном простом предложении, содержащем много запятых, для членения его на смысловые группы.

Иногда этот знак препинания усиливает значимость слова, следующего за ним, и тем самым помогает почувствовать состояние героя.

Точка с запятой ставится так же в тех случаях, когда части предложения, разделяемые этим знаком, одинаково важны, имеют, как правило, одного субъекта высказывания, тесно связаны по смыслу друг с другом: Lieutenant Fremont will not come to this house any more; he will not be invited; and you will not see him again.

8. Апостроф Apostrophe

Знак апострофа показывает на пропуск одной или нескольких букв в слове. Апостроф употребляется:

1. Для образования сокращенных глагольных форм: I am = I’m I have = I’ve I shall = I’ll Do not = don’t и т.д.

2. Для обозначения притяжательного падежа существительных:

Обозначающих лица или животных:

a boy's book

horses' shoes

В выражениях, обозначающих период времени:

an hour's walk

В названиях частных домов, магазинов, фирм и т. п. Со значением принадлежности:

I'm going to the baker's.

В фамилиях знаменитых авторов допускается употребление 's:

Dickens's novels.

В классических названиях:

Augustus's palace,

Midas's gold

Venus's beauty. –

Такие формы в наше время встречаются только в поэзии или в официальных записях.

“Jesus' name – в такой форме может употребляться только молящимися, а в религиозных повествованиях более правильная форма будет такая “Jesus's home”.

Исключения:

For conscience' sake Для успокоения совести

For goodness' sake Ради бога

For Jesus' sake Ради Иисуса

В этих 3-х устоявшихся образах включающих в себя слово “sake” (ради, для) апостроф остается.

В других образах, в которые входит слово “sake”, правила постановки апострофа обычные:

For Charles's sake.

For the Princess's sake.

Это ужасно, но некоторые предпочитают писать:

“For the sake of”.

Избегая “For peace' sake” и “For peace's sake”: пишут

“For the sake of peace”.

Апостроф не употребляется: canst, couldst, mightst, shouldst, wouldst.

Hers, of hers, theirs, of theirs, ours, of ours, yours, of yours.

9. Скобки круглые (квадратные) Parenthesis (brackets)

В скобки заключают вводную часть предложения, которая содержит добавочную информацию или пояснения, не связанная с другими членами предложения и совершенно самостоятельна. При ее изъятии смысл предложения не меняется: My sister (and she is past thirty) has only just got married.

В скобки может быть заключено одно или несколько вводных предложений, содержащих дополнительные сведения.

Скобки, как правило, употребляются для выделения пояснений, содержащих цифры или перевод иностранных слов: Our highest score (10 goals to nil) came in our last match.

Квадратные скобки служат для еще большего сдвига фокуса повествования, их следует употреблять только для добавлений или комментариев к авторскому тексту. А так же, если заключенное в скобки слово не является частью оригинала (первоначального текста).

Квадратные скобки употребляются, когда объяснение (толкование) является дополнением цитаты.

Иногда в скобки заключают вопросительный и восклицательный знак. Если это сомнение автора, то знак вопроса и восклицательный знак берутся в круглые скобки. Если восклицательный и вопросительный знак означают редакторский комментарий, то они берутся в квадратные скобки.

10. Звёздочка Asterisks

Звёздочка употребляется для первой сноски (внизу страницы), если сносок много, то иногда употребляется знак †. В книгах или статьях, имеющих много сносок, лучше сосредоточить в конце главы те сноски (примечания), которые обеспечивают дополнительную информацию или ссылки на автора. Но если сноски, например перевод иностранных слов, необходимы сразу в процессе чтения, то их лучше выносить в конец страницы.

11. Кавычки Quotation marks

Вступительные кавычки, в отличие от русского языка, ставятся не внизу, а на уровне верхнего среза “строки”:

They said, “The ship has just arrived.” В английском языке существует два вида кавычек: одинарные ‘...’ и двойные “...”. Возможно одинаковое употребление и тех и других кавычек, но использовать на письме нужно какой-либо один вид кавычек. Когда же ставятся кавычки?

Для обозначения начала и конца прямой речи и цитаты.

Для выделения названий книг, газет, журналов, пьес, фильмов и т.д. С той же целью может быть использован курсив.

Иногда для выделения названий кораблей, гостиниц, домов.

Для выделения слова, которое употреблено не в своем обычном смысле: I don’t want to hear any “dirty” words coming from you.

12. Дефис Hyphen

Дефис должен быть короче, чем тире, либо не отделяться пробелами от слов. Основное назначение дефиса состоит в соединении двух и более слов в одно составное:

a man-eating tiger

three – year-old

Используется дефис при переносе слов.

В сложных словах, второй элемент которых пишется с заглавной буквы:

Anglo-Saxon

В числительных до ста forty–five

В сочетании числительного с существительным для образования прилагательного: a two-year contract

Чтобы разделить две одинаковые буквы в приставке/суффиксе и основе:

co-operate

После co: co-pilot; после non: non-combatant.

Перед like: sheep-like.

После self: self-interest.

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Answers to Questions About Apostrophes

by Mark Nichol

Here are three questions from readers about use of apostrophes to mark possession or plurality, followed by my responses.

1. When I have a list of people who all possess something, how do I handle the apostrophe(s)? Which of the following sentences is correct?

“Today is John, Mary, and my second anniversary with the company.”

“Today is John’s, Mary’s, and my second anniversary with the company.”

“Today is John, Mary’s, and my second anniversary with the company.”

“Today is John’s, Mary’s, and my second anniversary with the company” is correct, because the possessive (or, more accurately, genitive) function of my covers only itself, and each of the names needs its own possessive markers — they can’t share one. (Even “Today is John and Mary’s second anniversary with the company” works only if they joined as a single unit; by contrast, “Today is John and Mary’s second wedding anniversary” is correct because it implies that they united as a couple.)

2. Which of the following options regarding the apostrophe s is correct?

“This view of Smith regarding the relation between rationality and social contexts is inspired by Marx’s philosophy.”

“This view of Smith’s regarding the relation between rationality and social contexts is inspired by Marx’s philosophy.”

The apostrophe plus s is correct: This is an example of the possessive, or genitive, case; the view “belongs” to Smith, so it should be treated as if you

wrote “Smith’s view” (One could also write, “This view from Smith . . .,” but the possessive form reads better.)

3. Recently, there was a headline in the Los Angeles Times that read, “The what if’s of Iraq.” Is the apostrophe in if’s correct?

No. It should read, “The what ifs of Iraq” (or, better yet, what-ifs), just as one would refer to more than one no as nos (not no’s) and a list of recommendations as “dos and don’ts” (not don’t’s). The editors probably thought that “what ifs” looks odd, but they violated the rule “Minimize exceptions”: They wouldn’t (one hopes) insert a second apostrophe in don’ts, so why put an extraneous one in “what ifs”?

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Supplement 2:

Punctuation

Practice 1 – Exercises with key

Abridged from: Academic Studies English. Support material & exercises for 'Grammar, part III. Punctuation & Capitalization'. 1999. 58 pp.

Exercise 1: End Stops

Provide periods and end stops for these sentences.

1. The bus arrives at 3:25 pm AST
2. The view from the bridge was inspiring, the river was a dark blue ribbon against the velvet green valley.
3. What kind of person would speak to a child like that
4. Boy what luck
5. Please close the window in the dining room
6. Mr and Mrs Lincoln were married on Wed Nov 12, weren't they
7. Is 12:00 am midnight or noon
8. Don't you dare do that
9. Why is the sky blue
10. The house collapsed

Exercise 2: End Stops and Commas

Add commas, end stops, and any other punctuation necessary.

1. Moncton New Brunswick is his birthplace
2. Armistice Day November 11 1918 marked the end of the First World War
3. Does my vacation start on July 26 and end on August 15
4. His mail was forwarded to 10 Elm Street Fraser Ontario P0G 1G0
5. A narrow winding dusty road is not an easy place to drive
6. The campers cooked supper made a fire and sang songs

7. You can travel to Montreal on the train by bus or in Charles car
8. It was clear that he was afraid that he was angry and that he wanted revenge
9. I really like the idea so I'll go along with it
10. She was tall graceful and charming but her English was terrible
11. When did your friend Carol write that article for the local paper
12. Well the real story goes something like this
13. Yes I will help you with that project
14. Will you give time or will you give money to our campaign
15. Suddenly the wind died and all was quiet
16. During her early years she worked as a journalist in Calgary Alberta
17. On Tuesday June 27 1992 Pearl turned twenty-one
18. Your rent is due by April 31 and if you don't pay I will have to evict you.
19. The company knew of course that she would not be rehired
20. While I was eating the cat scratched at the door.

Exercise 3: Commas in dates and addresses

1. John Lennon was born in Liverpool England in 1940.
2. On August 28 1965 the town of Bonneville PEI celebrated its centennial.
3. The House of Commons met on September 12 last year.
4. Send a cheque or money order to Suite 13 2 Lang St Elmira Ontario.
5. Parker Bott now lives at 45 Wascana Road in Albert County New Brunswick
6. Our tickets are booked for Monday June 14.
7. Sutter's Crossing will be our new home in Nova Scotia.
8. The property taxes on 14 Victoria Avenue in Arva are due in August 1992.
9. Christmas can be celebrated on December 25 or January 6.
10. Monday will be the 26th of May.

Exercise 4: Commas in a Series

1. Have you ever eaten country foods like buffalo musk ox beaver or muskrat?
2. He willed his property including houses shops vacant lots and warehouses to his only son.

3. Bottles of French Italian and Thousand Island dressing sat in neat rows.
4. Do prefer red yellow green or orange peppers in your salad?
5. Miles addressed the letters stamped them and put them in the box.
6. Breakfast includes a choice of bread and butter toast and jam or bagels and cream cheese.
7. The suspect hung his head and looked at his shoes then sniffled a bit and finally cleared this throat.
8. Food allergies can cause rashes breathing difficulties or upset stomach.
9. Prizes were awarded to first second third and honourable mention.
10. The 78 Ford Mustangs 86 Buick Skylarks and 69 Pontiac Venturas were the best cars in the show.

Exercise 5: Commas in Compound Sentences

1. Everyone has heard of love at first sight but he fell in love at first apple pie.
2. The train rolled out of the station and we were off on our vacation.
3. John check the water level in the well and quickly discovered the problem.
4. This is a good book but his last one was better.
5. Either John or Jill have the information that you need.
6. John has the information and if not, Jill will get it for you.
7. Paul is a good student for he is always focused.
8. We are constantly upgrading our computers yet we are always out-of-date.
9. We ate well over the holidays and each of us gained three pounds in two days.
10. She told him to stop whining or she would have to leave.

Exercise 6: Commas with Introductory Elements

1. Lately he's been really hard to track down.
2. Due to the heavy fog the plane from St. John's will be delayed.
3. Gently but firmly she directed his attention to the problem.
4. Yes I will definitely be there.
5. Before lunch wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
6. Oh well I'm sure he didn't mean it as an insult.
7. As a result the committee will have to meet again next week.
8. Kenny is it fair to judge her that way?

9. Wow Jeff you really can cook a terrific pot of chili!
10. After the last incident with the police chief it would be better to be polite.
11. Because he was late he missed the best part of the meeting.
12. Until you are absolutely sure you shouldn't say anything at all.
13. If I were you I would get that assignment done early.
14. First tell me about yourself.
15. As soon as the order is ready send it to me by registered mail.

Exercise 7: Commas with Restrictive and Non-restrictive Phrases and Clauses

1. For your canoe trip you need bags that are waterproof.
2. For hiking you need sturdy boots which are expensive.
3. Our Field Berry Jam which is made with wild raspberries costs \$4.99 a bottle.
4. Everyone who reads the book will be shocked.
5. Marlene in a fit of laughter shook pepper and salt on her eggs.
6. Children who come to school without breakfast have difficulty learning.
7. Children who are usually easy to handle are my chief concern in this job.
8. The job believe it or not is really quite interesting.
9. Students who plan to write their GED need good writing skills.
10. We planned the workshops for Sundays which are usually quiet days.

Exercise 8: Commas with Adjectives

1. I like cold clear winter nights.
2. The sun orange and hazy rose behind a wooded ridge.
3. She wore a light yellow cotton dress topped with a soft velvety hat.
4. Albert was a grumpy old man at the age of twenty-two.
5. She makes the richest chocolate cheesecake.
6. The real estate agent advertised the house as a peaceful country home.
7. The garden beautiful and neat stretched back to the river.
8. He positioned a heavy straight chair near the window.
9. It was a pretty small bonus for so much extra work.
10. Witches are supposed to have sharp pointy noses and crooked boney fingers.

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1. Mark my words you will be surprised.

2. His hands were clean his conscience was not.
3. His attitude improved moreover he began to see success
4. Your ideas are great in other words we'll use them right away.
5. He knows too much his days are numbered.
6. The days were hot dry and scorching but after the middle of August it got cooler.
7. Her flight made stops in Toronto Ontario Chicago Illinois and Boise Idaho.
8. The meetings were scheduled for Tuesday November 16 Tuesday December 9 and Friday January 21.
9. He watched he waited he acted appropriately.
10. Sit down and drink your milk the calcium is important for good healthy bones.

Exercise 10: Colons and Apostrophes

1. The YMCAs morning session offers three programs swimming badminton and archery.
2. Wed welcomed Charles suggestions our groups creativity had run dry.
3. Her letters of complaint began with "Dear Mr. Know-it-all" and ended with a vulgar threat.
4. Its good to be at the airport at 615 for a 7 o'clock flight.
5. Before you come, can you pick up popcorn pop chips and dip at Colemans?
6. These vitamins contain high levels of vitamin A vitamin C and niacin.
7. The ladys best qualities are these grace courtesy warmth and honesty.
8. Ellen was smart in one way she always listened to her bosses instructions.
9. Cant you stop making excuses for Besss failures and her husbands abuse.
10. They bought many red blue yellow pink green.

Exercise 11: Quotation Marks

1. Answer these questions truthfully said the lawyer.
2. Her client replied I am always truthful.
3. You may be innocent sighed her lawyer but you are holding something back.
4. Her voice shook, but she added are you kidding

5. Sir added William I beg you to forgive my lack of enthusiasm but Simon said we cannot afford this project.
6. The report says that most residents aren't in favour of the landfill.
7. He ran to the window and shouted police.
8. Her latest article the history of charlotte county ends with this quote our community has grown larger but independence is still our watchword.
9. Her natural insecticides are a witches brew of roots, leaves, and berries.
10. Send in the clowns was written in the 1970s.

Exercise 12: Comma Review

1. Supply the missing commas.
2. Be sure to get bread butter peanut butter and jam.
3. I want you to clean the windows dust the furniture wash the dishes and do the laundry.
4. Americans and Canadians share the same language and food preferences.
5. I'm not speaking to her so you will have to tell her.
6. When the moon is full police often report higher criminal activities.
7. She bit into a jalepeno pepper and started to cry because it was really hot.
8. Carol listen to me or you will be sorry.
9. The rescuers combed the woods the riverbank and the fields
10. First answer the door because its likely Will the electrician.
11. Frightened by his odd behaviour she locked the door and called the po-lice.
12. The cheetah is by far the fastest cat.
13. You do know the capital of Canada don't you?
14. Paul searched high and low for the perfect gift for Sue and her mother.
15. In addition to your next of kin who will benefit from your will?
16. Unless you learn the comma rules your writing will be hard to read.

Exercise 13: Comma Review

Insert commas where necessary.

1. Caffeine which is present in coffee tea and chocolate is a stimulant.
2. My only brother who lives in Calgary wrote and published a novel.
3. While he was playing the horn sounded.
4. That ball team in case you haven't noticed hasn't won a game in weeks.

5. He gave us three reasons none of which we liked.
6. Susan my boss works in the next office.
7. I am discouraged yet I can't stop searching.
8. They skated for hours on the outdoor rink and then came in for coffee.
9. We invited the man who has just moved in next door.
10. We spoke to Mark Hemmings father who has just returned from Spain.
11. He wasn't dishonest just stupid.
12. Clara smiled sweetly which was unusual for her.
13. On Friday morning services will be held in the chapel.
14. Everyone knows that July 1 1867 was a memorable day for Canada
15. Students who cheat hurt only themselves.
16. The college which admits anyone over 25 has a good reputation.
17. We will instead offer even better sales.
18. Uncle Phil a farmer raises cattle near Rose Hill Manitoba.
19. Will you speak at the meeting or won't you?
20. A strong flexible language will survive without government legislation.

Exercise 14: More on Quotation Marks

1. He published a short article The Birds of Summer and earned \$50.
2. Watch out shouted the lifeguard
3. Do it again Mommy shouted Lily I love it.
4. Did she really write I am not coming home
5. We will win the game we will go to the championship!
6. Her work was good however her attitude needed improvement
7. Carol wrote Dear Sir at the top of the paper and then she stopped.
8. Oh darn said Pooh as he licked his paw this honey is starting to spoil.
9. The guest brought lots of food hot dogs bagels chocolate milk and pop.
10. We'll grant the loan moreover we'll arrange for an inspection.
11. Her sister in law recreated a Civil War battle on the front lawn.
12. Please replace all the sheets that are stained torn or worn out.
13. My cousin Jim is a technician for Air Canada.
14. His parents paid the bill in cash nickels dimes quarters and pennies.
15. The club included Bill a lawyer Angela a doctor Mel a violinist and Paula a housewife.

Exercise 15: Punctuation Review

Punctuate the following sentences correctly, using all the punctuation marks you have studied.

1. Were Tony Lisa and Cathy there also
2. No I dont want to stay home unless we rent a movie
3. Garths grandfather was born December 16 1902 in Belfast Ireland
4. Its wonderful said John To see you again so soon
5. The babys name is John Theodore Weston II but we call him J T
6. Jack would you drop off these library books on your way to work
7. I wrote a letter to Mr Hall to ask if there were any job openings.
8. Send your reply to Angus McAllister 123 Scottsdale Drive St Stephen N B
9. Wow What a scorcher
10. Peggy does pen and ink drawings oil painting and charcoal sketches
11. First she rearranged the furniture not ten minutes after she arrived
12. He owns a blue wool jacket but prefers to wear the soft brown leather vest
13. Toward the end of the day its difficult to concentrate on work
14. Dont go near that hot wire the fire fighter shouted
15. The contest winners are as follows Marty Arnold Shawna Feeney Helen Charles and Francoise James

Exercise 16: Punctuation Review

Insert all punctuation marks required.

1. Luke signed his contract on March 26 1996 although he had been hired a week earlier
2. After he cuts all the hay hell start the tractor and well haul it to the barn
3. The supplies that you will need for this course are pens pencils white-out metal rulers dictionaries and loose leaf paper
4. Send this invoice to 123 Centre St Mainville New Bruswick but don't include that letter
5. Before leaving the building you should do the following close the windows
turn off the computer tidy your desk and activate the answering machine
6. Do you know if she is eligible and if she is eligible can she start the job tomorrow

7. His boss Jackson Short has written a new book called Into the Wasteland
8. Thunder struck the house the fire started immediately
9. Yes Ill go to the conference but I will not take Janices project with me
10. When they read the minutes of the meeting they realized that John Smith the director Freida Hucks the treasurer Allan Jardin the secretary and the salesmen had all attended
11. Laughingly he suggested I have never seen so much dirt why dont you sell it by the bushel
12. I am going Martin said to ask you a difficult question but you dont have to answer it
13. Wow my heart was in my throat
14. My only brother who lives in Winnipeg is coming to visit
- 15 They awarded two prizes one for bravery and one for excellence
16. My landlord said that he would fix it or he would buy a new one
17. Barb was the only blonde blue eyed child in the class more than one half of the rest had brown hair and brown eyes
18. Our work is finished here unless something unforeseen happens
19. I lost my wallet but I didnt worry because there was nothing important in it

Exercise 17: Punctuation Review

1. The whole town is upset it seems the bank was robbed yesterday.
2. He claims that a rusty battered old space craft landed in his yard.
3. The reporter unkindly and coldly asked him what were you thinking
4. Betty Ann Martha Phil and Jim brought everything corn a pot butter and salt.
5. Is anyone contented contented with life with love or with home
6. Vanessa hates writing her essays show it
7. Shrieking with fear the children leaped from wrecked bus just before it sank.
8. We checked the prices bus costs \$52 train costs \$79 plane costs \$189.
9. Education is essential said Mrs. Asa the presidents wife for everyone here.
10. I can believe her but for most of the last year she has lied from time to time.

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ANSWER KEY

Note to facilitators and learners:

The answers provided here are not necessarily the only correct versions. In some cases, commas are optional; in others, there may be more than one meaning to a sentence. In some instances, commas, dashes or brackets could be used. Some sentences in these exercises are correct as written.

Exercise 1: End Stops

Provide periods and end stops for these sentences.

1. The bus arrives at 3:25 pm A.S.T.
2. The view from the bridge was inspiring! The river was a dark blue ribbon against the velvet green valley.
3. What kind of person would speak to a child like that?
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5. Please close the window in the dining room.
6. Mr and Mrs Lincoln were married Wed Nov 12, weren't they?
7. Is 12:00 a.m. midnight or noon?
8. Don't you dare do that!
9. Why is the sky blue?
10. The house collapsed.

Exercise 2: End Stops and Commas

Punctuate the following sentences by adding commas, end stops, and any other punctuation where necessary.

1. Moncton, New Brunswick, is his birthplace
2. Armistice Day, November 11, 1918, marked the end of the First World War.

3. Does my vacation start on July 26 and end on August 15?
4. His mail was forwarded to 10 Elm Street, Fraser, Ontario, P0G 1G0.
5. A narrow, winding, dusty road is not an easy place to drive! (or .)
6. The campers cooked supper, made a fire, and sang songs.
7. You can travel to Montreal on the train, by bus, or in Charles' car.
8. It was clear that he was afraid, that he was angry, and that he wanted revenge. It was clear that he was afraid that he was angry and that he wanted revenge. (*Depending on the meaning, this sentence is correct as written.*)
9. I really like the idea, so I'll go along with it.
10. She was tall, graceful, and charming, but her English was terrible.
11. When did your friend Carol write that article for the local paper?
12. Well, the real story goes something like this.
13. Yes, I will help you with that project.
14. Will you give time, or will you give money to our campaign?
15. Suddenly, the wind died, and all was quiet.
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17. On Tuesday, June 27, 1992, Pearl turned twenty-one.
18. Your rent is due by April 31, and if you don't pay, I will have to evict you.
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1. John Lennon was born in Liverpool, England, in 1940.
2. On August 28, 1965, the town of Bonneville, PEI, celebrated its centennial.

3. The House of Commons met on September 12 last year.
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5. Parker Bott now lives at 45 Wascana Road in Albert County, New Brunswick
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2. He willed his property including houses, shops, vacant lots, and warehouses to his only son.
3. Bottles of French, Italian, and Thousand Island dressing sat in neat rows.
4. Do prefer red, yellow, green, or orange peppers in your salad?
5. Miles addressed the letters, stamped them, and put them in the box.
6. Breakfast includes a choice of bread and butter, toast and jam, or bagels and cream cheese.
7. The suspect hung his head and looked at his shoes, then sniffled a bit, and finally cleared this throat.
8. Food allergies can cause rashes, breathing difficulties, or upset stomach.
9. Prizes were awarded to first, second, third, and honourable mention.
10. The 78 Ford Mustangs, 86 Buick Skylarks, and 69 Pontiac Venturas

were the best cars in the show.

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1. Everyone has heard of love at first sight, but he fell in love at first apple pie.
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5. Either John or Jill have the information that you need.
6. John has the information, and, if not, Jill will get it for you.
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8. We are constantly upgrading our computers, yet we are always out-of-date.
9. We ate well over the holidays, and each of us gained three pounds in two days.
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2. Due to the heavy fog, the plane from St. John's will be delayed.
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4. Yes, I will definitely be there.
5. Before lunch, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
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7. As a result, the committee will have to meet again next week.
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9. Wow, Jeff, you really can cook a terrific pot of chili!
10. After the last incident with the police chief, it would be better to be polite.
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12. Until you are absolutely sure, you shouldn't say anything at all.
13. If I were you, I would get that assignment done early.
14. First, tell me about yourself.
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Non-restrictive Phrases and Clauses**

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2. For hiking, you need sturdy boots, which are expensive.
3. Our Field Berry Jam, which is made with wild raspberries, costs \$4.99 a bottle.
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6. Children who come to school without breakfast have difficulty learning.
7. Children, who are usually easy to handle, are my chief concern in this job.
8. The job, believe it or not, is really quite interesting.
9. Students who plan to write their GED need good writing skills.
10. We planned the workshops for Sundays, which are usually quiet days.

Exercise 8: Commas with Adjectives

1. I like cold, clear winter nights.

2. The sun, orange and hazy, rose behind a wooded ridge.
3. She wore a light, yellow dress topped with a soft, velvety hat. (*the dress was light-weight*)
4. Albert was a grumpy old man at the age of twenty-two.
5. She makes the richest, chocolate cheesecake. (*When a comma is used "richest" refers to the cheesecake. Without a comma, it describes the chocolate.*)
6. The real estate agent advertised the house as a peaceful, country home.
7. The garden, beautiful and neat, stretched back to the river.
8. He positioned a heavy, straight chair near the window.
9. It was a pretty small bonus for so much extra work.
10. Witches are supposed to have sharp, pointy noses and crooked, boney fingers.

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1. Mark my words; you will be surprised.
2. His hands were clean; his conscience was not.
3. His attitude improved; moreover, he began to see success
4. Your ideas are great; in other words, we'll use them right away.
5. He knows too much; his days are numbered.
6. The days were hot, dry, and scorching; but after the middle of August, it got cooler.
7. Her flight made stops in Toronto, Ontario; Chicago, Illinois; and Boise Idaho.
8. The meetings were scheduled for Tuesday, November 16; Tuesday, December
- 9; and Friday, January 21.
9. He watched; he waited; he acted appropriately. (*Commas would also*

be correct, depending on the desired effect.)

10. Sit down and drink your milk; the calcium is important for good healthy bones.

Exercise 10: Colons and Apostrophes

1. The YMCA's morning session offers three programs: swimming, badminton, and archery.

2. We'd welcomed Charles' suggestions: our group's creativity had run dry.

3. Her letters of complaint began with "Dear Mr. Know-it-all:" and ended with a vulgar threat.

4. It's good to be at the airport at 6:15 for a 7 o'clock flight.

5. Before you come, can you pick up popcorn, pop, chips, and dip at Coleman's?

6. These vitamins contain high levels of vitamin A, vitamin C, and niacin.

7. The lady's best qualities are these: grace, courtesy, warmth, and honesty.

8. Ellen was smart in one way: she always listened to her bosses' instructions.

9. Can't you stop making excuses for Bess's failures and her husband's abuse.

10. They bought many: red, blue, yellow, pink, green.

Exercise 11: Quotation Marks

1. "Answer these questions truthfully," said the lawyer.

2. Her client replied, "I am always truthful."

3. "You may be innocent," sighed her lawyer, "but you are holding something back."

4. Her voice shook, but she added, "Are you kidding?"

5. “Sir,” added William, “I beg you to forgive my lack of enthusiasm, but Simon said *that* we cannot afford this project.”
6. The report says that most residents aren’t in favour of the landfill.
7. He ran to the window and shouted, “Police!”
8. Her latest article “The History of Charlotte County” ends with this quote: “Our community has grown larger, but independence is still our watchword.”
9. Her natural insecticides are a “witches brew” of roots, leaves, and berries.
10. “Send in the Clowns” was written in the 1970s.

Exercise 12: Commas

Supply the missing commas.

1. Be sure to get bread, butter, peanut butter, and jam.
2. I want you to clean the windows, dust the furniture, wash the dishes, and do the laundry.
3. Americans and Canadians share the same language and food preferences.
4. I’m not speaking to her, so you will have to tell her.
5. When the moon is full, police often report higher criminal activities.
6. She bit into a jalepeno pepper and started to cry because it was really hot.
7. Carol, listen to me, or you will be sorry.
8. The rescuers combed the woods, the riverbank, and the fields.
9. First, answer the door because it’s likely Will, the electrician.
10. Frightened by his odd behaviour, she locked the door and called the police.
11. The cheetah is by far, the fastest cat.

12. You do know the capital of Canada, don't you?
13. Paul searched high and low for the perfect gift for Sue and her mother.
14. In addition to your next of kin, who will benefit from your will?
15. Unless you learn the comma rules, your writing will be hard to read.

Exercise 13: Commas

Insert commas where necessary.

1. Caffeine, which is present in coffee, tea, and chocolate, is a stimulant.
2. My only brother, who lives in Calgary, wrote and published a novel.
3. While he was playing, the horn sounded.
4. That ball team, in case you haven't noticed, hasn't won a game in weeks.
5. He gave us three reasons, none of which we liked.
6. Susan, my boss, works in the next office.

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(Depending on the meaning, either is correct)

7. I am discouraged, yet I can't stop searching.
8. They skated for hours on the outdoor rink and then came in for coffee.
9. We invited the man who has just moved in next door.
10. We spoke to Mark Hemmings' father, who has just returned from Spain.
11. He wasn't dishonest, just stupid.
12. Clara smiled sweetly, which was unusual for her.
13. On Friday, morning services will be held in the chapel.

On Friday morning, services will be held in the chapel.

14. Everyone knows that July 1, 1867, was a memorable day for Canada
15. Students who cheat hurt only themselves.
16. The college, which admits anyone over 25, has a good reputation.
17. We will instead, offer even better sales.
18. Uncle Phil, a farmer, raises cattle near Rose Hill, Manitoba.
19. Will you speak at the meeting, or won't you?
20. A strong, flexible language will survive without government legislation.

Exercise 14: Colons, Semicolons, Quotation Marks

1. He published a short article "The Birds of Summer" and earned \$50.
2. "Watch out," shouted the lifeguard!
3. "Do it again, Mommy," shouted Lily. "I love it."
4. Did she really write, "I am not coming home"?
5. We will win the game; we will go to the championship!
6. Her work was good; however, her attitude needed improvement.
7. Carol wrote, "Dear Sir" at the top of the paper, and then she stopped.
8. "Oh darn," said Pooh as he licked his paw. "This honey is starting to spoil."
9. The guest brought lots of food: hot dogs, bagels, chocolate milk, and pop.
10. We'll grant the loan: moreover, we'll arrange for an inspection.
11. Her sister-in-law recreated a Civil War battle on the front lawn.
12. Please replace all the sheets that are stained torn or worn out.
13. My cousin Jim is a technician for Air Canada.
14. His parents paid the bill in cash: nickels, dimes, quarters, and pennies.

15. The club included Bill, a lawyer; Angela, a doctor; Mel, a violinist; and Paula, a housewife.

Exercise 15: All Punctuation Marks

Punctuate the following sentences correctly, using all the punctuation marks you have studied.

1. Were Tony, Lisa, and Cathy there also?
2. No, I don't want to stay home unless we rent a movie.
3. Garth's grandfather was born December 16, 1902, in Belfast, Ireland.
4. "It's wonderful," said John, "to see you again so soon."
5. The baby's name is John Theodore Weston II, but we call him J. T.
6. Jack, would you drop off these library books on your way to work. or (?)
7. I wrote a letter to Mr. Hall to ask if there were any job openings.
8. Send your reply to Angus McAllister, 123 Scottsdale Drive, St. Stephen, NB. (*The correct postal abbreviation is now NB, not N.B.*)
9. Wow! What a scorcher!
10. Peggy does pen and ink drawings, oil paintings, and charcoal sketches.
11. First, she rearranged the furniture--not ten minutes after she arrived.
12. He owns a blue wool jacket but prefers to wear a soft brown leather vest.
13. Toward the end of the day, it is difficult to concentrate on work.
14. "Don't go near that hot wire," the fire fighter shouted.
15. The contest winners are as follows: Marty Peterson, Shawna Feeney, Helen Marks, and Francoise Leblanc

Exercise 16: All Punctuation Marks

Insert all punctuation marks required.

1. Luke signed his contract on March 26, 1996, although he had been hired a week earlier.
2. After he cuts all the hay. he'll start the tractor, and we'll haul it to the barn.
3. The supplies that you will need for this course are pens, pencils, white-out, metal rulers, dictionaries, and loose leaf paper.
4. Send this invoice to 123 Centre St., Mainville, New Bruswick, but don't include that letter.
5. Before leaving the building, you should do the following: close the windows, turn off the computer, tidy your desk, and activate the answering machine.
6. Do you know if she is eligible and, if she is eligible, can she start the job tomorrow?
7. His boss Jackson Short has written a new book called Into the Wasteland.
8. Thunder struck the house; the fire started immediately.
9. Yes, I'll go to the conference, but I will not take Janice's project with me.
10. When they read the minutes of the meeting, they realized that John Smith, the director; Freida Hucks, the treasurer; Allan Jardin, the secretary; and the salesmen had all attended.
12. Laughingly, he suggested, "I have never seen so much dirt! Why don't you sell it by the bushel?"
13. "I am going," Martin said, " to ask you a difficult question, but you don't have to answer it."
- 14 Wow, my heart was in my throat.
15. My only brother, who lives in Winnipeg, is coming to visit.
- 16 They awarded two prizes: one for bravery and one for excellence.

17. My landlord said that he would fix it or he would buy a new one.
18. Barb was the only blonde, blue-eyed child in the class; more than one half of the rest had brown hair and brown eyes.
19. Our work is finished here unless something unforeseen happens.
20. I lost my wallet, but I didn't worry because there was nothing important in it.

Exercise 17: All Punctuation Marks

1. The whole town is upset; it seems the bank was robbed yesterday.
2. He claims that a rusty, battered, old space craft landed in his yard.
3. The reporter unkindly and coldly asked him, "What were you thinking?"
4. Betty Ann, Martha, Phil, and Jim brought everything: corn, a pot, butter, and salt.
5. Is anyone contented--contented with life, with love, or with home?
6. Vanessa hates writing; her essays show it.
7. Shrieking with fear, the children leaped from wrecked bus, just before it sank.
8. We checked the prices: bus costs, \$52; train costs, \$79; plane costs, \$189.
9. "Education is essential," said Mrs. Asa, the president's wife, "for everyone here."
10. I can believe her, but for most of the last year, she has lied from time to time.

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Supplement 3:

Punctuation

Practice 2 – Tasks & exercises with key

Abridged from: A. Burt. *A Guide for Better Punctuation*. L.: Stanley Thornes Publisher, 1991. 135 pp.

Full stops

Each completed statement requires a full stop at the end.

The small news item below from *The Sunday Times* (note the date) will provide us with a two-paragraphed example of completed statements. Read the article carefully, noting where the full stops come. Make sure you can see the logical basis for punctuating the item as it has been punctuated.

Ship ahoy in back garden

A family from Selsey, near Chichester, were woken at 3.30 a.m. yesterday to find a 300-ton Danish coaster in the back garden of their beach-front home. Oliver Graham-Jones, 71, a vet, peered from his bedroom window and saw a hull with flashing lights looming a few feet away. "The crew were a bit quiet about the whole thing and I think they were certainly embarrassed," he said. A crewman later said he thought he was in France. The unladen Platessa, en route from Falmouth to Hook of Holland, had gone through a gap in the sea wall. The ship was refloated on the afternoon tide.

The Sunday Times, 1 April 1990

You can, of course, re-cast the whole item into *differently constructed* sentences. The first paragraph could quite easily become four sentences:

A family from Selsey, near Chichester, were woken at 3.30 a.m. yesterday. They found a 300-ton Danish coaster in the back garden of their beach-front home. Oliver Graham-Jones, 71, a vet, peered from his bedroom window. He saw a hull with flashing lights looming a few feet away.

Moreover, you could break these four sentences down into many more smaller sentences. Stylistically it will make the item very boring but it will help to show that sentences are self-contained completed statements.

Selsey is near Chichester. The Graham-Jones family lives in Selsey. They were woken yesterday at 3.30 a.m. Their home is a beach-front house. In their back garden they found a Danish coaster. It weighed 300 tons . . .

Given the same information, no two writers would express themselves in exactly the same way. As a writer, you can control the amount of information and detail you want to put into each sentence that you write. However, when each sentence is complete, remember to use an 'end stop' (a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark) as a guide to your reader.

A common error is to string together completed statements with commas instead of using full stops to separate them.

In **Exercise 1**, five full stops should be substituted
for carelessly used commas.

1. I am hungry, is there anything to eat?
2. Although the house looked very dilapidated, it was a bargain at \$30,000.
3. The cake should be cooked for three hours in a slow oven, don't be tempted to open the oven door before the cake is cooked.
4. The BBC wishes to apologise to Mrs Brown and her family for the comments made by the quiz-show presenter and very much regrets the embarrassment caused.
5. Laughing uncontrollably he staggered from the room.
6. I have an eccentric cousin who insists on having exactly two hundred cornflakes for breakfast each morning, you must meet him.
7. Ben bit his lip, anxious not to say more than he should.
8. If Mr Benzie refuses to apologise, there is nothing you can do.
9. He is an idiot and no-one can deny it.
10. I need help, I need it urgently, I am desperate.

Exercise 2.

*Use five full stops to make sense of this
carelessly punctuated paragraph. Be very careful.*

I plan to get up promptly at 7 o'clock each morning, after opening all my bedroom windows and stripping my bed. I will open vigorous stretching exercises, breathing deeply, for ten minutes, I will then have a shower, dry

myself briskly, and dress, breakfast will be a frugal meal, after fresh grapefruit and herb tea, I plan to jog to the town centre and back, if I can keep up this routine, and I see no reason why I shouldn't, I should be quite fit and quite slim by Christmas.

Exercise 3.

Rewrite each of these sentences as two short complete statements and punctuate accordingly.

1. Although my grandfather is old, he is still very active.
2. I'll arrange for you to be transferred to Hong Kong< as you really dislike this area.
3. There's just been a news flash that there's been a terrible accident in the English Channel.
4. Cherrill thoroughly enjoyed the weekend that she spent at Pontins.
5. The rumour that the poll tax has been abolished isn't true.

Exercise 4.

Restore the sentence boundaries in this extract from an article by Brian Bell printed in *The Times Educational Supplement*.

- by 9.30 a.m. Wayne was already flagging tired and listless, he blinked a lot and often rubbed his hand over his face he struggled on without either interest or enthusiasm
- by early afternoon the sun was shining brightly through the classroom windows Wayne sat hunched forward over his desk supporting his head in his arms as he struggled to keep himself awake by 3 p.m., head cradled in his arms, he was asleep
- at 14, Wayne is one of thousands of youngsters up and down the country who spend their days in school teetering on the edge of exhaustion late nights, 24-hour television, satellite TV, the video revolution may all play a part but the most tired pupils in schools are, surprisingly, not those whose leisure pursuits keep them awake but rather those with part-time jobs which leave them tired and unable to concentrate
- at 14 Wayne, with parental knowledge, begins work at 4 a.m. during the winter, if there are difficulties with snow, he may start work even earlier he is late for school most mornings after delivering milk for four or five hours and earning \$3.50

- while there are nowhere near as many children 'on the milk' as there are 'on the papers', there are enough to give cause for concern it is illegal for children to deliver milk at the time it is delivered but a 'blind*eye' is frequently turned on such breaches
- the milk float in question is not the familiar slow battery powered vehicle this one is a flat-bed, diesel truck and the round is big, around 300 gallons or 100 crates the boys hang on, rain, hail or shine, to the bar at the rear of the vehicle and hop off nimbly with a full bottle carrier when the truck slows

Exercise 5.

Combine each of these groups of short sentences into one statement.

You may change the order of the sentences.

- 1) Jennifer is good at mathematics. Robert prefers history.
- 2) We opened the door. The cottage was deserted. We felt frightened.
- 3) The cat scratched her ear frantically. I felt concerned. There was something wrong.
- 4) Few people know him well. He is shy. He is hard to get to know. He wants to be friendly. It is worth persevering.
- 5) Emily Bronte wrote *Wuthering Heights*. Her pen-name was Ellis Bell. She had two sisters. They wrote novels. They used pen-names.

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Question marks

A sentence which is a question requires a question mark at the end of it. Note that a question mark has its own built-in full stop and the sentence will not require another one.

(+) Are you coming?

~~X~~ Are you coming?.

Note the difference between:

Are you happy?

He asked me if I was happy.

The first sentence is a direct question, where we are given the speaker's actual words. The second sentence is an indirect question (a form of statement), where a report is given of what was said. The first sentence requires a question mark; the second sentence requires a full stop.

Exercise 6.

Rewrite the following indirect questions as direct questions.

Punctuate carefully.

- 1) He wondered if I would like to appear in 'Neighbours'.
- 2) She asked me why I was three hours late.
- 3) I was asked for my name and address.
- 4) He questioned my sincerity.
- 5) I asked him what he was going to give me for Christmas.

Exercise 7.

Rewrite these direct questions as indirect questions.

- 1) 'Can you hear me at the back?' the speaker asked the audience.
- 2) 'Have you tidied your bedroom yet, Matthew?'
- 3) 'Are you allergic to penicillin?', Dr Jones asked, looking over his glasses at his new patient.
- 4) 'Can you give me a hand on Sunday demolishing my garage?' my neighbour inquired.
- 5) 'Will you marry me, Kate?' whispered Mike.

Exercise 8.

Ten of these sentences are direct questions.

Write them out, correctly punctuated.

- 1) He asked me if I had a large spanner he could borrow.
- 2) Have you got a large spanner I can borrow.
- 3) I wonder if you would be interested in our special offer.
- 4) Can I interest you in our special offer.
- 5) What is the time.
- 6) She asked me the time.
- 7) I couldn't believe she would wear that hat.
- 8) Are you going to wear that hat.
- 9) I asked him where he was going on holiday.
- 10) Where are you going on holiday.
- 11) Do you know the answer or are you bluffing.
- 12) I challenged him directly as to whether he knew the answer or was merely bluffing.
- 13) I asked if he were certain.

- 14) Are you certain.
- 15) We don't know why she left so suddenly.
- 16) Why did she leave so suddenly.
- 17) We questioned him closely as to his motives.
- 18) Why did you behave as you did.
- 19) Was it snowing when you left Newcastle.
- 20) I wonder if it was snowing when he left Newcastle.

Exercise 9.

Use full stops and question marks where appropriate.

- 1) It is so cold for July
- 2) May I ask how you know my name
- 3) Will you be paying by cheque
- 4) Am I taller than you
- 5) Isn't that my pen
- 6) I wonder if my parents will be coming
- 7) I've finished my homework
- 8) Do you remember meeting Robert at the concert
- 9) I have to go to the dentist on Monday
- 10) How do you do

Exercise 10.

*Advertisements are often written in a deliberate punchy style
that flouts all the conventions of traditional sentence
construction and punctuation.*

- 1) In pairs, rewrite the text of this advertisement in full sentences, correctly punctuated. (Your version will be longer than the one here.)
 - 2) Compare the two versions. Which do you consider makes the more persuasive appeal? Why?
- Ever considered buying a villa in Spain? Because you should. And now. Property's cheap. Cheaper than you think. If you've an eye for a good investment. And this is where we come in. Write to us now. Without delay. Today not tomorrow. We'll rush you details. Of *your* dream house. All prices. Varied locations. We handle the legal side. Interested?

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Exclamation marks

Exclamation marks should be used very sparingly indeed or they become tiresome to the reader and their effectiveness is lost. There are four cases which we shall look at in a moment when exclamation marks must be used. In all other cases, it is worth asking yourself (when tempted to use an exclamation mark for emphasis) whether it is really necessary. Surprisingly often, you will find that it is not needed at all and that the sentence is quite capable of speaking for itself. Keep exclamation marks in reserve for occasions when their special note of urgency is needed.

It is exclamations that need exclamation marks, not every command or heartfelt statement. Note that the following sentences are sufficiently emphatic without exclamation marks.

- 1) I vow I will never touch a cigarette again.
- 2) Time yourself carefully in Paper One.
- 3) You are the most marvellous man I have ever met.
- 4) Clean your teeth thoroughly after each meal.
- 5) I wish I could have my life all over again.

Here are the four instances where you must use exclamation marks.

Emphatic commands

'Be quiet at the back there!' yelled the irate teacher.

Vehement wishes

'God bless you, ma'am!' breathed the starving woman.

All brief expressions of strong feeling

Hear! Hear! (agreement)

Help! (panic)

Ugh! (disgust)

Hooray! (joy)

Good heavens! (astonishment)

Note: If the brief expression is part of a longer sentence, then there are two ways of punctuating it.

Good heavens! We didn't recognise you!

Good heavens, we didn't recognise you!

Remember that an exclamation mark, like a question mark, has its own built-in full stop. Whatever follows must begin with a capital letter.

Exclamatory sentences

An exclamatory sentence beginning in one of three following ways always requires an exclamation mark at the end.

What a . . . ! (What a lovely day!)

What . . . ! (What big teeth you have!)

How . . . ! (How brave of you!)

You have to distinguish between **exclamatory sentences** beginning with *how* and *what* and **questions** beginning with *how* and *what*, so do pay attention to the sense.

What is your name? What a name!

How clever is she? How clever!

Exercise 11.

Punctuate these sentences appropriately, by using full stops, question marks and exclamation marks.

- 1) You should be careful to keep doors and windows locked
- 2) Look out
- 3) What have you done
- 4) How long it is
- 5) How long is it
- 6) I do enjoy horror films
- 7) We are delighted that you are back with us
- 8) I'm on fire
- 9) What a terrible moment
- 10) How ridiculous
- 11) I thought she asked you what you thought
- 12) How did you know what to do
- 13) How clever of you to know what to do
- 14) I feel very sorry for Pauline
- 15) What a marvellous morning
- 16) Stand and deliver
- 17) What very loud music
- 18) I asked her if she knew the answer
- 19) Do you know the answer
- 20) Sit down immediately

Exercise 12.

Punctuate this extract from Christopher Sergal's dramatized version of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, using full stops, question marks and exclamation marks (and capital letters) to restore the sentence boundaries. You can check your version against Christopher Sergal's by turning to the back of the book.

Jem Who did one thing to help Tom Robinson
Miss Maudie His friends, for one thing, and people like us we exist, too people like Judge Taylor people like Heck Tate start using your head, Jem did it ever strike you that Judge Taylor naming Atticus to defend Tom was no accident that Judge Taylor might have had his reasons
Scout S'right, Jem usually the court appoints some new lawyer - one who is just startin'

Miss Maudie You're beginning to realise a little more to it than you thought (Pressing) whether Maycomb knows it or not, we're paying your father the highest tribute we can pay a man we trust him to do it right

Scout Then why did he get beat

Miss Maudie (snorting): Miss Stephanie talks nonsense maybe he didn't get an acquittal, but he got something I was sitting in court waiting, and as I waited, I thought - Atticus Finch won't win, he can't win, but he's the only man in these parts who can keep a jury out so long in a case like this. And I thought to myself, take note of this time and this place it's 1935 and it's Maycomb, Alabama, and we're making a step - it's just a baby-step, but it's a step

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Abbreviations and contractions

MRS T MOST UNPOPULAR PM IN HISTORY!

MRS THATCHER is now the most unpopular Prime Minister in the history of opinion polls.

Fewer than one in four of those questioned in the latest Gallup poll said they were satisfied with her performance.

And Tory hopes of winning the next General Election are sinking along with their leader's popularity.

The poll puts Labour 24.5 per cent ahead of the Tories - the biggest

Labour lead recorded by Gallup since the pioneers of polling began.

Labour has been more than 20 points ahead only twice before.

And on both occasions - in 1963 and 1971 - it went on to win the next election.

The plunge in Mrs Thatcher's popularity . . .

Daily Mirror, 6 April 1990

The above extract from the *Daily Mirror* makes use of universally understood abbreviations in its headline:

MRS T MOST UNPOPULAR PM IN HISTORY

Let us look now at the conventions governing abbreviations and contractions. You will see that sometimes the initial letter of key words are used, sometimes the first and last letters, sometimes the first part of a word, and so on. It is important to use the accepted abbreviated form. Some dictionaries list abbreviations and contractions in an appendix.

Words and phrases are abbreviated according to a number of conventions.

Mrs. T. (Missis Thatcher)

P.M. (Prime Minister)

G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education)

Dr. (Doctor)

etc. (etcetera)

approx. (approximately)

Cpl. (Corporal)

- **Note that** capital letters only are used in the abbreviated form of some words and phrases:

CFCs (Chlorofluorocarbons)

P.T.O. (Please turn over)

- **Similarly** some abbreviated forms are *never* written in capital letters.

e.g. (example given)

- **Capital letters** can also usefully distinguish two forms:

P.M. (Prime Minister)

p.m. (post meridiem = after noon)

You may already have noticed in your general reading as well as in your reading of the text above that sometimes full stops are used to indicate abbreviations and sometimes they are not. It has actually been perfectly acceptable for some time to omit the full stops in such abbreviations as Mr, Mrs, Dr, Rd, where the word has been shortened to its first and last letters.

(+) Mr. Brown

(+) Mr Brown

However, modern typing practice (and printing practice too, as you can see in this book) is to omit full stops with all abbreviations and this is having its effect, although more slowly, on hand-written practice also. It may be wise to continue to use full stops with abbreviations in handwritten work for a little longer if you are preparing for external examinations. Some examining boards are more traditional in their practice than others.

On the other hand, it is interesting to note that two very modern additions to our vocabulary are *never* used with full stops in their abbreviated form: CFCs and pic. Have a close look at a few different newspapers and periodicals to see where they print BBC or B.B.C., Mrs Thatcher or Mrs. Thatcher, 17 Oct or 17th Oct., am or a.m. This will indicate the general trend.

CAUTIONARY NOTES BEFORE WE PASS

ON TO CONTRACTIONS

If your sentence ends with a full stop indicating an abbreviation, you won't need another one to show that the sentence is finished. The single full stop will do double duty.

(+) We met promptly at 7 p.m.

X We met promptly at 7 p.m..

Items in a list of abbreviations must, of course, be separated by commas in the usual way whether full stops have been used to indicate the abbreviations or not.

In a remarkable career, Sir Mark Genius has been Chairman of the B.B.C., the C.B.I., I.C.I., and British Rail.

Do take care when you use the abbreviation **etc.** It's a lazy device in most cases and is usually better avoided, but if you must use it, spell and punctuate it correctly.

(+) **etc**

(+) **etc.**

X e.t.c.

X e.c.t.

Words and phrases can be shortened in a less drastic way than in the abbreviations we have just been examining. If just a few letters are omitted, an apostrophe is used to show where this has happened.

In some contractions, two words are combined into a new form and an apostrophe indicates the missing letters.

it's (it is/it has)

who's (who is/who has)

he'd (he had/he would)

they're (they are)

you've (you have)

isn't (is not)

don't (do not)

wouldn't (would not)

didn't (did not)

- **Be very careful with** the placing of the apostrophe. Its function is to indicate the omitted letter or letters, not to show where the two words have been joined. In some words the apostrophe *appears* to perform this second function but do not be misled or you may begin to use the apostrophe in the wrong place with contractions incorporating 'not'.

(+) didn't **X** did'nt

(+) wouldn't **X** would'nt

Apostrophes are also used:

- In shortened words and phrases

o'clock (of the clock) - never used in its full form now!

- In poetry to enable the line to scan

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
 And all that beauty, all that weath e'er gave,
 Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Thomas Gray, 'An Elegy in a Country Churchyard'

- In mispronounced words when first or last letters are omitted
 'Arry's bin thinkin' an' flunkin'.
 'E's 'ad a 'ard time in 'arrow.
- In dates where the century is understood
 I left South Africa in '76.
- In certain rare adjectival constructions
 I always was a poor, weak, one-idea'd creature.
 Mrs Yeobright in Hardy's *The Return of the Native*
 Usually one adds -ed to a noun used adjectivally like this but after a vowel it would look ugly.
- In plurals of abbreviations
 Only ten M.P.'s were present.
- In plurals of letters, numbers, and symbols
 Dot your i's and cross your t's.
 Form your 6's and 9's more carefully.
 Write the Δ's and □'s in red.
- To avoid confusion
 It is best not to use so many 'but's'.

Exercise 24.

Use 20 apostrophes where necessary

- 1) Ive forgotten his name but its on the tip of my tongue.
- 2) Hes been worrying so much that hell fail this examination.
- 3) Theyve said theyre coming at nine oclock.
- 4) Ang your at on the ook in the all.
- 5) Well be leaving Exeter in 98.
- 6) Its a great pity youve not met before.
- 7) The terraced garden and the japonicad porch looked beautiful.
- 8) "The sunshine is a glorious birth: But yet I know, whereer I go. That there hath passd away a glory from the earth."
- 9) Alls well that ends well.
- 10) You re absolutely right.

Exercise 25.

Use apostrophes where necessary (15 altogether)

- 1) You had better mind your ps and qs when Aunt Emily comes to stay.
- 2) For many years the 3Rs have been much neglected.
- 3) N.C.O.s are asked to report immediately.
- 4) In the 1960s everything was so much cheaper.
- 5) Take care with bs and ds; they are easily confused.
- 6) The ♀s and Δs signify women and girls.
- 7) They've ordered ten JCBs.
- 8) The under-12s will benefit from the new legislation.
- 9) Sheila always uses continental 7s.
- 10) I always enjoy writing capital Qs.
- 11) Your ys and js are too similar.

Exercise 26

20 apostrophes are needed here

- 1) He doesn't expect to pass the examination and he's thoroughly depressed.
- 2) Don't go too near the edge of the platform.
- 3) It's quite natural for a monkey to eat bananas.
- 4) Who's been using my toothbrush?
- 5) I'm sure it's more difficult than he says.
- 6) At ten o'clock everyone's going to be rushing for the Liverpool train.
- 7) They're both very hardworking and I'm quite sure they'll both get As.
- 8) Hell do you credit.
- 9) We're anxious to canvass everyone in the area.
- 10) You shouldn't use pencil for this kind of work.
- 11) It's been a long time since they've visited London.
- 12) Your father won't recognise you after all this time now that you've lost all your teeth.

Before we leave contractions and abbreviations, let us briefly examine some commonly confused **homophones**:

IT'S and ITS

WHO'S and WHOSE

THEY'RE, THEIR, THERE
YOU'RE, YOUR

Even if you have a word processor with a spelling check, you won't find it much help with these, so let's sort them out now.

IT'S and ITS

IT'S (contraction = **IT IS/IT HAS**)

It's been a long term. (=It has)

It's not fair. (=It is)

ITS (possessive adjective (like **HIS**))

The dog wagged **its** tail.

Don't judge a book by **its** cover.

Exercise 27.

It's or its?

- 1) . . . very kind of you.
- 2) I know . . . overdue.
- 3) The cat waves . . . tail with venom.
- 4) . . . been snowing all day.
- 5) He claims . . . a question of principle.
- 6) Edward says . . . at the bottom of the lake.
- 7) The car has had . . . engine completely overhauled.
- 8) . . . echoes could be heard all over York.
- 9) . . . always been his ambition to stand for Parliament.
- 10) . . . a long lane that has no turning.

Exercise 28.

It's or its?

- 1) . . . never too late to learn to punctuate.
- 2) There's a sting in . . . tail.
- 3) You could see . . . tracks all over the garden.
- 4) And there the snake shed ... skin.
- 5) . . . too good to be true.
- 6) What's . . . weight?

- 7) . . . entirely up to you.
- 8) My watch has lost. . . second hand.
- 9) That elastic has lost. . . stretchiness.
- 10) . . . always raining.

WHO'S and WHOSE

WHO'S (contraction) = **WHO IS/WHO HAS**

Who's there? (=Who is)

Who's been smoking in here? (=Who has)

WHOSE (relative adjective)

The driver **whose** leg was amputated has had to take early retirement.

WHOSE (interrogative adjective)

Whose disgusting shoebag is this?

Exercise 29.

Who's or whose?

- 1) . . . coming with me?
- 2) Mr Cooper is a man . . . teaching skills are well known.
- 3) . . . books are these?
- 4) The farmer.. . haystacks were destroyed is not insured.
- 5) Gary doesn't yet know. . . able to come.
- 6) . . . the Brain of Britain?
- 7) . . . writing is this?
- 8) I don't know.. . more nervous, the cast or the audience.
- 9) The winner. . . entry was correct won J5.
- 10) . . . been using my hairbrush?

THEY'RE, THEIR, THERE

THEY'RE (contraction) = **THEY ARE**

They're coming up the drive. (= They are)

THEIR (possessive adjective) = belonging to them

The twins have lost their cat.

THERE (adverb of place)

I'll drive you **there**.

THERE (impersonal adverb)

There is no point in coming.

There are all sorts of possibilities.

Exercise 30.

They're, their or there?

- 1 . . . coming to stay for the weekend.
- 2 My aunt and uncle are selling . . . car.
- 3 I hope . . . not serious.
- 4 . . . addicted to 'Neighbours', as far as I can see.
- 5 . . . is no objection as far as the committee is concerned.
- 6 Have you been . . . before?
- 7 I know . . . furious with you.
- 8 . . . are blackfly all over the runner beans!
- 9 Remember that. . . are two sides to every argument.
- 10 My parents are so set in . . . ways.

YOU'RE and YOUR

YOU'RE (contraction = You are)

You're in disgrace. (= You are)

YOUR (possessive adjective = belonging to you)

I hear you've lost your bus pass? (= the bus pass that belongs to you).

Exercise 31.

You're or your?

- 1) . . . not serious, are you?
- 2) Everybody agrees that. . . the best person for the job.
- 3) Could I borrow . . . pen for a moment?
- 4) . . . sister has lost a lot of weight, hasn't she?

- 5) I like . . . boyfriend.
- 6) . . . always so calm!
- 7) . . . tax demand is on the kitchen table.
- 8) I hope . . . in a good mood before I tell you the news.
- 9) . . . shoes need mending.
- 10) . . . absolutely right.

=====

COMMAS

There are nine different circumstances in which you should use commas, and a number of other circumstances where you are free to use your own judgement and discretion. We will examine each of these in turn, with exercises as we go. At the end of the section there will be mixed practice exercises on the use of commas. Remember that there must always be a reason for using any punctuation mark; it is not a random affair.

Rather than disrupt the flow of a sentence with too many commas, modern practice has moved towards economy in such matters. Do not omit the compulsory ones, but be sparing with the optional ones.

Lists

Commas are used to separate items in a list. *This is one of the most familiar of all the uses of the comma.*

>**I bought bacon, eggs, mushrooms, bread and coffee.** (list of nouns)

>**Kay is pretty, intelligent, kind and popular.** (list of adjectives)

>**We coaxed, bribed, threatened and finally used physical force.** (list of verbs)

>**I plan to do the washing, slip down town, have lunch and then renew my car insurance.** (list of statements)

Look at this splendid list of names taken from marriage licence documents 1685-1851 by Mr John Rayment.

Names in fiction

Sir, There should be no need to invent names for fiction (letters, March 13, 15, 25). Truth can be much stranger. In the index to the marriage licence documents at Chelmsford are some of the most remarkable, taken from the period 1685 to 1851.

Take your pick from:

Ann Uncle, Hannah Hollyhock, Christian Garment, Mary Deadley, Pherphosa Cook, Martha Dreamer, Lovely Lucas, Eneigh Glover, Isaac Turpentine, Isaac Ugley, Samuel Prig, Elizabeth Duplex, Orpheus Coote, Martha Sinsack, Ann Horred, Mary Hogsflesh, Harselious Key, Mary Puddenfoot, Mary Voice, Jane Jealous, Bathsheba Bitterney, Lydia Hulk, Elizabeth Fuel, Affable Yardley, Deborah Instance, William Springbarley, An Oinitem, Avis Phick, Richard Simperingham, Enough Nottage, Robert Terrible, Mary Cabbage, Samuel Prim, Ann Orphan, Jane Righteous, Tryphena Stocking, Jane Ablatap, Mary Mixture, Mary Shirliff, Mary Fred, Hannah Physic, Mary Echo, Ann Quixlye, and a couple –

Artimidorus Cromwell Russell to Avarilla Aphora Armstrong.

These people really existed or so the documents lead us to believe - and I could find many more.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN L. RAYMENT,

President of the Essex Society for Family History.

The Times, 11 April 1989

The commas make it quite clear how many people are being named by keeping each set of names distinct.

- Incidentally, it is quite correct (despite what you may have been taught when you were younger) to use a comma before 'and' in a list. Indeed, there are occasions when you must do so to avoid confusion. Look at this sentence.

The four firms concerned were Smith and Stephens, Boultons, Tuckers and Kays and Jones.

If you are not familiar with the names of the firms, it is quite impossible to be sure of the names of the third and fourth firms in the list.

1st firm - Smith and Stephens

2nd firm - Boultons

3rd firm - Tuckers? Tuckers and Kays?

4th firm - Kays and Jones? Jones?

Just one comma is needed to make all clear, and, since the purpose of punctuation is to make your meaning clear to your reader, you must use a comma here before 'and'.

1) The four firms concerned were Smith and Stephens,
Boultons, Tuckers, and Kays and Jones.

2) The four firms concerned were Smith and Stephens,
Boultons, Tuckers and Kays, and Jones.

There are those who would recommend always using a comma with 'and' so that this kind of confusion is automatically avoided. They would also claim that there is another advantage in using a comma with 'and': the last two items are kept apart by the comma and there is no suggestions that there might be a special connection between them.

Read the two pairs of examples below. Which sentence in each pair do you prefer?

We bought flour, raisins, cooking oil, bread and butter.

We bought flour, raisins, cooking oil, bread, and butter.

For breakfast we had sausages, mushrooms, eggs, baked beans and bread and butter.

For breakfast we had sausages, mushrooms, eggs, baked beans, bread, and butter.

Remember that, unless it is essential to avoid confusion, the use of a comma before 'and' is a matter of personal taste.

Exercise 32.

*Read this news item from **The Independent** and look closely at the commas used in each of the three paragraphs. Which of these statements is correct?*

Commas are used to separate items in a list in:

- a) each of the three paragraphs
- b) the first paragraph only
- c) the first and second paragraphs only
- d) the first and third paragraphs only

Conquered by the Classics

THEY came, they saw, they were conquered. A report by HM Inspectors

on "Effective Learning and High Standards in Classics" fairly bubbled with enthusiasm for what they found in the classrooms of 20 schools in England.

Clear objectives, high expectations, mutual respect and teachers setting examples of scholarship and intelligent involvement indicated that something is definitely going right.

The custodians of learning added: "It was at times exhilarating to observe the confidence and excitement with which pupils drew on previous experiences to develop cognitive strategies for acquiring new learning." Sounds Greek but, we believe, this is HMI-speak for a very good lesson.

The Independent, 5 April 1990

Exercise 33.

*Restore the commas needed to separate items in lists in these extracts from **First Steps in Counselling** by Ursula O'Farrell.*

- a) Posture nervous movements inability to relax inappropriate laughs or smiles all these can indicate the emotional state of our clients more accurately than spoken words.
- b) Perhaps one of the hardest parts of listening, in the counselling setting, is dealing with silences. In our everyday conversations, silences rarely occur, and, when they do, are often causes of embarrassment. We hurry to fill the gap we search frantically for a phrase or topic to re-start the conversational engine which has stalled we even have phrases such as 'angels passing' or 'someone walking on my grave' to cloak the quiet moment to drown the silence. In the counseling setting, silences can be seen in a different light as they can be most productive if handled correctly.
- c) The client's recording of events or reactions is the main clue we have about the situation which is causing difficulty or unhappiness. This recording sets the scene fills in the background and reflects how the client sees the situation how he chooses to describe it and how much he wishes to reveal.

Exercise 34.

*Restore the commas needed to separate listed items in these extracts from **Stress and Relaxation** by Jane Maddens.*

- a) The 'fight or flight' response is important for all animals when life is threatened, but we are unlike them in that we can produce these physical and chemical changes for situations that do not require vigorous physical activity. A car driver fuming at traffic delays a mother exasperated by her children frustrating committee meetings being late for an appointment a row with a boss an income-tax demand may all produce the same response as those for a threat to life.
- b) Individuals experiencing temporary fear joy aggression or grief will convey messages to other people by their posture. Sometimes these postures are transferred to others: in a research project to assess the posture of schoolchildren, it was found that where the school principal was dominating aggressive and feared by the children the majority of them had round backs as did many of the teachers. Where the school principal was brisk and alert and the atmosphere was of eager activity, many of the children had hollow backs.

=====

Asides

Commas are used to mark off short asides. Some examples will illustrate this point.

Children are very demanding, **I quite agree.**

Well, I'm sorry.

Could you pass the gravy, **please.**

You've met Terry O'Leary before, **haven't you?**

Exercise 35.

Put commas around the asides in the following sentences:

- 1) His behaviour I regret to say has been deplorable.
- 2) As you will know there is very little that can be done.
- 3) It's a nice recipe isn't it?
- 4) In fact the outcome was quite different from what we had expected.
- 5) To put the story in a nutshell he packed his bags and was gone by the morning.
- 6) I hope or rather I expect to see him next Sunday.
- 7) Please can you help me?

- 8) Children love sandy beaches don't they?
- 9) In conclusion the Chairman thanked all members of the Committee for their hard work throughout the year.
- 10) He knew however that he could get home in time.

Addressing people

Commas are used to mark off names of people spoken to.

This use of commas is very similar to the last one. Here are some examples of commas marking off names. Notice a pair of commas is sometimes needed.

Good morning, Mrs Jones.'

'Margaret, can you spare a moment?'

'I think, Mrs Cooper, that it would be best to say no more!'

Terms of address, such as sir, madam, ladies and gentlemen, are punctuated in the same way.

'Your Honour, I am guilty.'

'Please bear with me, ladies and gentlemen, while we adjust the microphone.'

'Can I help you, madam?'

Exercise 36.

Use commas where they are needed

- 1) 'Good morning Mr Evans. Do come in.'
- 2) 'Yes my love. You are quite right,' he murmured.
- 3) 'I am quite convinced Upper 3 that you can do better than this,' said Mrs Hayman.
- 4) 'Anna and Matthew supper is ready!'
- 5) 'Mrs Thompson you're quite a stranger!'
- 6) I object most strongly sir to the tone of yesterday's editorial.
- 7) 'Doctor do come in.'
- 8) 'Are we ready ladies?' asked Canon Green gently.
- 9) 'Ladies and gentlemen our speaker has been delayed.'
- 10) 'Karen I should like you to meet Miss Holborn.'

Phrases in apposition

A pair of commas is used around a phrase in apposition.

Consider these two sentences:

Prince Charles was married in 1981.

The Queen's eldest son was married in 1981.

These two statements could be combined very easily.

Prince Charles, the Queen's eldest son, was married in 1981.

The Queen's eldest son, Prince Charles, was married in 1981.

Prince Charles and the Queen's eldest son refer to the same person and are grammatically interchangeable. Whichever phrase you put second is said to be in apposition to the first. Take care to enclose the phrase in apposition with a pair of commas if it occurs mid-sentence. It is a very common error to omit the second comma.

Exercise 37.

Use commas around the phrases in apposition.

- 1) I wish my boyfriend Matt Streat had not had his ear pierced.
- 2) Do you know the Lord Mayor Edward Hallett personally?
- 3) Sonia Blackheath the Chancellor of the Exchequer has resigned.
- 4) Everyone loves our two cats Blackie and Sooty.
- 5) Graham Green's biographer Norman Sherry will be autographing copies of Volume 1 in Dillons on Thursday.
- 6) My best friend Mary has an off-beat sense of humour.
- 7) In her case, it's no coincidence that her fiance Louis Cooper happens to be rich.
- 8) The occasion her parents' golden wedding anniversary was a splendid excuse for a grand family reunion.
- 9) Isca Water a newly privatised company has had tremendous problems with pollution.
- 10) I will have you know that my son your husband has never been spoilt at any time of his life.

=====

Participles

Commas are used to mark off phrases beginning with participles. Don't let the term participle alarm you. Here are some examples of phrases beginning with participles being marked off by commas from the rest of the sentence.

She hesitated, **looking wistfully around the room.**

Walking nervously towards the house, she once again rehearsed what she had to say.

(*Looking* and *walking* are both present participles.)

The fox, **hunted remorselessly to its death**, never had a chance.

Beaten though they were, the first eleven felt quite pleased with their efforts.

(*Hunted* and *beaten* are both past participles.)

These phrases which offer additional information are very much like asides; they are separate from the main structure of the sentence. You will 'feel' this if you read the examples aloud, pausing at the commas.

Take great care when using a pair of commas

- Note that the first comma should be placed immediately before the participle.

(+) She knocked at the door one last time and then, shrugging her shoulders, turned away.

X She knocked at the door one last time, and then shrugging her shoulders, turned away.

As a double check, the sentence should read smoothly if the phrase between the commas is omitted.

- Be careful not to omit the second comma of the pair. It is easily done.

Exercise 38.

*Place commas where they are needed
to mark off these participial phrases.*

- 1) She paced around the room biting her fingernails anxiously.
- 2) Subdued at last the tiger slept.
- 3) Celia posted the letter and then putting the matter entirely out of her mind strode away.
- 4) Not believing in miracles any more I must accept my fate.
- 5) Refusing help the old man slowly made his way home.
- 6) The young husband dried the last plate and placing it with the others in the china cupboard smiled smugly.

- 7) Exhausted by the long wait for the bus they sank into the upholstered seats gratefully.
- 8) The headmaster questioned both lads watching their reactions very shrewdly.
- 9) Sipping her sherry Deirdre at last made up her mind.
- 10) Mr Brown's secretary slipping quietly into the office passed her employer a large sealed envelope.

Adverbial clauses

Commas are sometimes needed with subordinate adverbial clauses.
Look at these two sentences.

Although he was very tired, he walked all the way home.

He walked all the way home **although he was very tired.**

A comma is not needed in the more straightforward second sentence where the main clause comes first and the subordinate clause follows.

In the first sentence we have the subordinate clause first. The slight pause that the comma affords alerts the reader to the importance of the main clause which follows.

If the subordinate clause is placed in the middle of the main clause then a pair of commas is needed.

He walked, although he was very tired, all the way home.

Exercise 39.

Use commas only where they are essential

- 1) As he was tired Shaun decided to go home early.
- 2) Shaun decided to go home early as he was tired.
- 3) Shaun decided as he was tired to go home early.
- 4) Mr White is retiring early because he is not in the best of health.
- 5) Because he is not in the best of health Mr White is retiring early.
- 6) If you accept our invitation to come for Christmas we shall all be delighted.
- 7) He paid his debts although he was not very happy about it.
- 8) When Matthew sat the entrance examination he was very nervous at first.
- 9) Wherever you go you will see the same thing.
- 10) Unless you complain officially about the noise nothing will be done.

- 11) At last Mr Wilson agreed that if the doctor insisted he would take a holiday.
- 12) As her boyfriend was behaving so abominably Lydia decided to give him up.
- 13) Amelia spring-cleaned the flat while her flat-mate was away.
- 14) I always open the window as soon as I get home.
- 15) After she posted the letter she started to cry.

Adjectival clauses

Commas are used with non-defining adjectival clauses. Look at these two sentences. The use of a comma can affect the meaning quite dramatically.

Kate went to the disco with her boyfriend, who has red hair.

Emma went to the disco with her boyfriend who has black hair.

Who has more boyfriends currently, Kate or Emma?

The comma provides the vital clue.

Kate went to the disco with her boyfriend, **who has red hair**.

The words in bold type qualify the word 'boyfriend' and offer the sort of additional information that could be bracketed or even omitted as far as her friends are concerned. (They would all know that her boyfriend has red hair.) Kate clearly has one boyfriend (is not two-timing him) and this non-defining adjectival clause tells us **more** about him. **Use a comma**, as you would for an aside.

Emma went to the disco with her boyfriend **who has black hair**.

Here the words in bold print tell us more about her 'boyfriend' but they don't give us extra information which could be omitted rather, they supply vital information **which identifies which boyfriend Emma was with that evening**. This defining adjectival clause **defines**. **Don't use a comma**. (A pause would ruin everything.)

Exercise 40.

Commas are needed in four of the sentences below:

- 1) I go to the hairdresser who has a salon on the corner of the Parade.
- 2) The children who wanted ice-cream queued at the lefthand counter; the children who wanted lemonade queued at the right-hand one.
- 3) The house which is one of the nicest in the road has belonged to my aunt for thirty years.

- 4) Have you read the book that everyone is talking about?
- 5) This hat which I bought in a jumble sale two years ago is my husband's favourite.
- 6) The shop which is run by a dragon of a woman never has anything in stock that anybody wants.
- 7) The boy who was making a nuisance of himself was warned by the policeman who had dealt with him before.
- 8) Do you know the lady who has moved next door?
- 9) The twins who were suntanned and relaxed had just got back from the Canary Islands.
- 10) The lorry which had been belching fumes all the way from London finally broke down when it reached Guildford.

Direct speech

Commas are used in the punctuation of direct speech. Look carefully at how commas have been used in these three sentences.

'I am appalled/ she said, 'at your behaviour.'

'I am appalled at your behaviour,' she said.

She said, 'I am appalled at your behaviour.'

A comma marks the change from speech to narrative and from narrative to speech each time. Sometimes other punctuation marks are used as you will see in the section on inverted commas but the general point can be made now that some form of punctuation is **always** necessary.

Exercise 41.

Use commas where they are needed (10 altogether)

- 1) 'I've missed the bus again' moaned Louise.
- 2) The little girl said wistfully 'We've never been abroad.'
- 3) 'Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents' grumbled Jo.
- 4) 'I very much regret' said the headmaster 'having to announce that the school will be closed all next week while asbestos is being removed from the corridors.'
- 5) The policeman took out his notepad and said 'Can you give me full details of what happened as you turned the corner, madam?'
- 6) 'I'm sorry to interrupt your conversation' said Miss Brewster 'but there has been an urgent telex from Hong Kong.'

7) 'Don't forget to lock the back door when you go out' said Alan's mother 'and make sure nothing is left switched on.'

Pauses

Commas are used to mark a pause in a long sentence. Personal taste (within reason) dictates very largely where these commas should be placed. For example, it *does* help to read the sentence below aloud and to see where you would pause in speech. Long sentences do not necessarily require commas but in practice the reader is often helped by them.

Georgette Heyer made a point of not re-reading *Vanity Fair* while she was writing *An Infamous Army*, and when she did turn to it afterwards she was shocked at Thackeray's lack of research as revealed in his assumption that the gunfire of the battle could be heard in Brussels.

Jane Aiken Lodge, *The Private World of Georgette Heyer*

Exercise 42.

*Use just one comma in the best possible place
to introduce a pause in this long sentence*

We decided we would try to get tickets for the final performance of 'Swan Lake' at the Royal Opera House in three weeks' time although we knew in our heart of hearts that we had very little chance of success at such short notice.

Exercise 43.

*Read the following passage carefully to yourself.
At which two or three points might a comma prove helpful?*

The unexpected news of his death stunned the family and all who knew him partly because he had been so exuberantly fit and healthy for his age and partly because he had been so full of plans for this first year of his retirement. Over three hundred grieving friends and relations packed the village church for the funeral service and mourned him in an eloquent silence which was broken only by the stifled sobs of his grey-haired daughters and by the poignantly fullthroated birdsong in the trim churchyard. He was later quietly and sadly laid to rest in a sunny corner of the tiny graveyard in his beloved village in his adopted county of Devon as he would have wished.

The remaining uses of the comma are also very much a matter of personal style and preference. Let us now look at these discretionary uses.

Optional uses of the comma

Letter lay-outs

Most handwritten letters are laid out traditionally and most typed letters are fully blocked, but both forms are acceptable for both handwritten and typed letters.

Exercise 44.

Study the two examples which follow and in pairs discuss the differences in punctuation, positioning and paragraphing between the two lay-outs.

Traditional layout

8 Long Bank Road,
PENZANCE,
Cornwall,
PE5 9AB
31st August, 1991

The Managing Director,
Thomas Tackers Ltd,
PLYMOUTH,
Devon,
PL2 8TS

Dear Sir,

It is now some weeks

I had hoped

In the circumstances

.....

Yours faithfully,

Anne Prior (Mrs)

Note: 1) Use a comma, if you wish, after house number.

2) Substitute a full stop for the comma, if you wish, after 'Cornwall' and 'Devon'.

Fully blocked layout

8 Long Bank Road
PENZANCE
Cornwall
PE5 9AB
31 August 1991

The Managing Director
Thomas Tackers Ltd
PLYMOUTH
Devon
PL2 8TS

Dear Sir

It is now some weeks..... .

I had hoped..... .

In the circumstances..... .

Yours faithfully

Anne Prior (Mrs)

- Note:** 1) The writer's address and the date can be placed in the top right-hand corner but is kept 'blocked' as here and not sloped.
2) The recipient's address can be put at the foot of the letter, after the signature, but is kept on the lefthand side.

Exercise 45.

*This letter from **The Times** is set out slightly differently again
to suit the format required on the Letters Page*

- 1) Copy out the letter, setting it out according to the traditional layout form
- 2) Copy out the letter, setting it out according to the fully blocked form.

Note: You will need the address of *The Times*:

1 Pennington Street, LONDON E1 9XN

Assume the date is 1 6 June 1 991.

Metaphorical mix-up

From Mr Eric Chisholm

Sir, Could I offer a further contribution to the list of mixed metaphors (letters, June 6, 10, 14, 17)?

After years of indecision on a council project, the chairman of the relevant local authority committee encouraged the members to more positive action by reminding them that they had stood on the edge of a precipice for far too long - it was time to take a major step forward!

Yours faithfully,

ERIC CHISHOLM,

33 Willow Road,

Charlton Kings,

Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

The Times

To avoid confusion

Earlier in this section, we noticed that the comma has sometimes to be used with 'and' in a list to avoid confusion. There are often situations involving 'and' where the reader must be protected from making the wrong connections.

Last Friday I drove ten miles to see my aunt and my fan-belt broke. There is a possibility that the reader will momentarily assume that you planned to see your aunt and your fan-belt. He will hesitate when that doesn't make sense and tackle the sentence again. A comma after 'aunt' would have avoided the confusion because it clarifies meaning. Anticipate any possible misinterpretation by your reader and punctuate considerably.

Here is another example:

The wine-glass had been left on the terrace. It was empty and full of red ants crawling excitedly in the stickiness.

There is an uneasy moment when the reader learns that the glass is empty and full at the same time. A comma after 'empty' removes any difficulty.

Number

Modern mathematical practice is to leave a small space instead of the comma when writing out a large number.

$$1\ 760\ 000 = 1,760,000$$

Emphasis

A comma, since it invites the reader to pause momentarily, helps to give emphasis to what follows. On the occasions where such emphasis is required, a comma can be used at a point in the sentence where it would not normally be used.

He accepted my offer, quickly.

Out of context, we cannot understand why he accepted the offer so quickly but that he did so is made very clear by the comma.

=====

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES 46-88

on the Punctuation problems

Exercise 46.

15 commas are needed in the following sentences.

Some sentences can be left as they are.

- 1) Henry an experienced cyclist found the route comparatively easy.
- 2) Although we had very little to offer them we felt we had to invite them to stay for supper.
- 3) Nobody knows if it was ever found again.
- 4) Harriet insisted however that there was nothing wrong.
- 5) James asked 'What are we having for supper tonight Mum?'
- 6) I have packed Wellington boots plimsolls sandals walking-shoes flip-flops and slippers.
- 7) Overcome by emotion she sobbed.
- 8) 'Good morning everyone. Do sit down' intoned Mr. Weaver.
- 9) Before I answer that question I should like to make this further point.
- 10) The stamps which have faulty perforations may be worth a lot of money. (Not all the stamps have faulty perforations.)

Exercise 47.

Use commas where required in the following sentence

- 1) Anna plays the piano guitar descant recorder treble recorder and flute.
- 2) I must apologise ladies and gentlemen for the delay in starting.
- 3) My neighbour Mrs Greenham is a delightful person.
- 4) 'We're going on holiday next week' said Mrs Prince.
- 5) Laughing uncontrollably Christine ran out of the classroom.

- 6) 'We haven't got any cotton-wool in stock' said the shop assistant apologetically.
- 7) If you insist on washing up I shall feel obliged to help.
- 8) Jane's mother who is extremely house-proud washes her dustbins every week.
- 9) Madam there must be some mistake.
- 10) Crouched close over his work Stephen peered through thick-lensed spectacles.

Exercise 48.

Insert commas where needed. (20 essential commas, 2 optional ones.)

- 1) The kitten a beautiful tabby was quite enchanting.
- 2) Yes I do agree with you Simon.
- 3) Belfont House which is open to the public every day except Christmas Day is well worth seeing.
- 4) If you are free on Tuesday let's go together.
- 5) I hear moreover that he is a very selfish man.
- 6) We have visited Italy Greece France Spain Norway and Sweden in the last five years.
- 7) The school which is a co-educational comprehensive has a splendid reputation.
- 8) Bent double under the weight the slave staggered forward.
- 9) You must know' he said 'that we are all relying on you.'
- 10) Already today I have written five letters tidied the house weeded the strawberry bed and prepared lunch.

Exercise 49.

Punctuate the following, using commas, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks and capital letters where necessary

- 1) have you met my mother-in-law Mrs Allen
- 2) what a frightful experience for you all
- 3) 'now we shall never know' mr cobley said in conclusion 'whether the treasure a priceless collection of precious stones was ever on board the *santa veronica*'
- 4) help

- 5) the friend who has helped me most since i have been ill is my next-door neighbour brenda carter
- 6) cauliflower cabbage brussels sprouts and purple-sprouting broccoli should be planted now
- 7) as they rounded the bend they saw the horrifying sight before them
- 8) smiling nervously william shook mr thorpe's hand
- 9) did you see all the instalments of *bridesheadrevisited*
- 10) 'sugar' the old lady exclaimed

Exercise 50.

Use commas where necessary.

(18 essential commas, 4 optional ones.)

- 1) 'I know' said John Brown 'that you will have a lot to say to each other.'
- 2) Mrs. Jackson despite her earlier objections is now quite happy with the scheme.
- 3) The chess team from my school has played ten matches has lost five won three and drawn two.
- 4) The bird a fledgeling had been badly mauled by the cat.
- 5) Although Louise rarely refers to her childhood I believe she had a very unhappy time at home.
- 6) Miranda's house was sold in fact within six weeks.
- 7) Mr. Brown Gary's been sick.
- 8) The trip to Brighton was exhausting expensive time-consuming and a total disaster.
- 9) The group of students whispering softly moved slowly around the cathedral.
- 10) Jennifer will consider the venture very carefully before committing herself will need to discuss the details with her accountant and will be in touch with you in about a fortnight.
- 11) The instructions were clear concise and helpful.

Exercise 51.

- 1) Add commas where you think they are needed to this paragraph from Anita Brookner's *Look at Me*.
- 2) In pairs, justify the decisions you have made. (Remember your version may differ from your partner's where optional commas have been used.)

- 3) Turn to the back of the book, and compare your version and your partner's version with the original punctuation. Would you now wish to modify the way you punctuated the passage or do you prefer your version to Anita Brookner's one?

'But first of all we must do something about your appearance' Alix would say and this meant sitting me down at her dressing table and dabbing at me with blushers and eye shadows and then turning me round and showing me to Nick. He would reward me with his hard speculative gaze which brought more colour to my cheeks although when I was turned round again to inspect myself in the mirror I would be horrified to see my clean brown face so smudged and as I watched my new slightly crooked dark red lips utter some words I was quite surprised that my new enlarged eyes could register such pain. I became quite firm on the matter of my appearance and wiped and scrubbed all the colour off raising my dripping face in their bathroom to find Nick leaning curiously against the door jamb. I would brush past him and go back into the bedroom to do my hair only to find Alix at her dressing table turning her head from side to side to study the back of her neck anchoring her chignon with pins and combs settling her pearly studs in her ears and stubbing out her cigarette. Myself quite forgotten.

Exercise 52.

*Read the extract from Solitude by Anthony Storr
and then answer the questions that follow*

Modern psychotherapists, including myself, have taken as their criterion of emotional maturity the capacity of the individual to make mature relationships on equal terms. With few exceptions, psychotherapists have omitted to consider the fact that the capacity to be alone is also an aspect of emotional maturity.

One such exception is the psychoanalyst, Donald Winnicott. In 1958, Winnicott published a paper on 'The Capacity to be Alone' which has become a psychoanalytic classic. Winnicott wrote:

It is probably true to say that in psychoanalytical literature more has been written on the *fear* of being alone or the *wish* to be alone than on the *ability* to be alone; also a considerable amount of work has been done on the withdrawn state, a defensive organiza-

tion implying an expectation of persecution. It would seem to me that a discussion on the positive aspects of the capacity to be alone is overdue.

In Chapter 1, I referred to Bowlby's work on the early attachment of the human infant to its mother, and to the sequence of *protest*, *despair*, and *detachment*, which habitually occurs when the infant's mother is removed. In normal circumstances, if no disastrous severance of the bond between mother and child has occurred, the child gradually becomes able to tolerate longer periods of maternal absence without anxiety. Bowlby believes that confidence in the availability of attachment figures is gradually built up during the years of immaturity; more particularly during the period from the age of six months to five years, when attachment behaviour is most readily elicited. However, sensitivity to the presence or absence of attachment figures continues until well into adolescence. Many middle-class English children who had experienced total security in early childhood have had their expectations rudely shattered when sent to boarding school at the age of seven or eight.

Solitude, Anthony Storr

1. Why has a pair of commas been used around 'including myself' (para 1)?
2. Why is there a comma after 'psychoanalyst' (para 2)?
3. Is it true or false to say that the main function of the comma in the sentence starting 'It is probably true ...' (para 3) is to introduce a pause in an otherwise long sentence?
4. Why has a comma been used after 'despair' (para 4)?
5. How would the meaning of the sentence be altered if a pair of commas was used to enclose 'who had experienced total security in early childhood' (para 4)?

INVERTED COMMAS

Inverted commas are also known as **speech marks** and **quotation marks**. Their use around quotations and titles is dealt with later in this

section. It is their use in the punctuation of direct speech (words actually spoken) that presents most difficulty.

Exercise 53.

Punctuate these sentences

- 1) have you always been a vegetarian the young reporter asked.
- 2) you need a haircut said his mother bluntly.
- 3) how dare you say i'm fat Shaun's young sister cried.
- 4) Kate has failed her driving test again whispered Becky discreetly to the waiting friends.
- 5) Ian goes back to America on Friday Anna told us glumly.

Narrative first, speech second

Exercise 54.

Punctuate these sentences

- 1) The invigilator said calmly stop writing now
- 2) Claire smiled at the stray cat and whispered would you like some milk
- 3) Both parents said together no, you can't go to the fair
- 4) The young man said here is my pedlar's licence
- 5) Mr MacBean hesitated and then asked despairingly how do I know that you are telling the truth

Interrupted narrative

Exercise 55.

Punctuate the following

- 1) does anybody want to buy a ticket Alison shouted for the Jason Donovan concert in Birmingham
- 2) if you haven't got your science overall with you snapped the irate chemistry teacher then you won't be doing science today
- 3) before the matinee announced Mrs. King we'll have a picnic lunch in Covent Garden
- 4) i've been dieting now for four weeks pouted Claire and I've lost only half an ounce
- 5) why don't you have supper with us suggested Matthew and then let me run you home

Interrupted speech

Exercise 56.

Add inverted commas, commas, full stops and capital letters.

Note that there are two spoken sentences each time.

- 1) thank you so much for your help said mrs greenham it has been much appreciated
- 2) i am sorry that you are leaving us said juliet quietly i do hope you will like the new job
- 3) it's difficult to be sure about what happened the police constable said we shall have to investigate further
- 4) we shall begin with some revision exercises miss jones said in the second half of the lesson i shall want to start something new
- 5) i'm going in now said john it's too cold for gardening today
- 6) the children have washed up the breakfast things announced their father now they're going to Hoover the sitting room
- 7) i'm off to bed now smiled ann-marie i've got to be up early in the morning
- 8) when you've both finished your homework you can play for a little while their mother said i want you in bed by nine o'clock
- 9) we apologise for the loss of your picture announced anna ford meanwhile we shall have some music
- 10) your letter came yesterday said the woman it was a great relief

Exercise 57.

Add inverted commas where they are needed

How long have you had Snowy? asked Aunt Gladys.

We were given him about five months ago, answered her nephew. A friend of mine asked if we could take him over.

He said he would gladly give us the hutch and a supply of oats and hay. We thought about it for a bit and then said we'd love to have him.

Do rabbits need a lot of attention? asked his aunt.

No. They're really very easy pets, he said. I clean Snowy's hutch out once a week. I feed him once a day and, whenever it's sunny, I let him out of his hutch and he scampers around the garden.

Does he eat the vegetables?

I chase him off!

He's a dear little thing, smiled Aunt Gladys. Perhaps I ought to get a rabbit too.

Exercise 58.

*Punctuate and set out correctly the following extract
from **Across the Barricades** by Joan Lingard*

the dog who was sitting on the garden path, saw her first and got up with a welcoming bark mr blake looked up from his weeding sadie anything wrong no he came to the gate you dont look your usual bouncy self its just that ive got the sack and mrs mcconkey is dead mrs mcconkey kept the shop near us i see i wanted someone to talk to so i thought i'd come and see you come in they sat in the kitchen Sadie rested her folded arms on the kitchen table we always used to make fun of mrs mcconkey she sighed we would shout names at her when we were small and run like blazes before she get hold of us she never did because she was too fat and now shes dead aye its bad sadie theres no denying it scarcely a day goes by without somebody getting killed but when its a person you know its not so easy to take its not easy at all said sadie

Exercise 59.

There is a punctuation error in each of the following sentences. Write out each sentence correctly punctuated. (Look carefully at commas, inverted commas, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks and capital letters.)

- 1) 'I think I'll go now', said Mrs Jones.
- 2) 'You know very well,' answered my mother 'that I always answer letters.'
- 3) 'I'm delighted that you can come' smiled Mrs Thompson.
- 4) 'Am I late,' asked Nicola?
- 5) The twins said, 'all our friends get more than fifty pence a week pocket money.'
- 6) 'Is anyone at home?' Called the milkman.
- 7) 'Sophie has passed English language.' boasted her proud mother.
- 8) Mr Bennet retorted immediately 'Well, in that case, you can walk!'
- 9) 'Help!' Cried the drowning man.
- 10) 'This exercise is not so easy as I thought' commented Lydia.

Exercise 60.

*Punctuate this extract from **The Silver Sword** by Ian Serraillier*

theres been a mistake and ive come to explain said ruth in polish this is jan its all his fault i want to speak for him the interpreter translated who is the other child said captain greenwood my sister bronja said ruth she has noth-

ing to do with this but i had to bring her along as i had nowhere to leave her were on our way to Switzerland and are camping by the mill-stream i see whats the boy's full name said captain greenwood only jan - thats the only name of his we know said ruth jan have you any parents said captain greenwood the grey cat and jimpy but they're dead and ruths my mother now said jan sullenly captain greenwood could make nothing of this ruth did her best to explain a situation she did not fully understand herself we take it then that you have no parents but that this young lady ruth balicki aged eighteen sister of edek balicki is your guardian said captain greenwood.

Exercise 61.

Punctuate:

what do you feel are your main weaknesses miss meloy asked i know my spelling is pretty awful and i'm always making punctuation mistakes replied geoffrey you need plenty of practice then his teacher said that can be arranged easily enough are you prepared to do extra homework i am very willing replied geoffrey

Exercise 62.

Punctuate:

- 1) i mustnt forget to buy more flour muttered aunt elsie.
- 2) it is never too late said mr wilkens firmly to learn to punctuate
- 3) uncle fred asked james quietly do you know what has happened to your garden shed
- 4) i promise that youll have a square meal this evening smiled their mother well have roast chicken with two vegetables followed by chocolate pudding and cream will that satisfy you
- 5) excuse me have you lost your purse no i havent but thank you for asking

Exercise 63.

*Punctuate this extract from **In Custody** by Anita Desai.*

will you print my poems if i send them to you - the remaining ones in the sequence no who wants to read your poems murad said at once abruptly i have enough poems for the issue already as soon as i sent out the circular announcing it contributions started pouring in poems poems poems everybody writes them i tell you he complained plucking at his hair in mock distress

Exercise 64.

Enclose all the titles with inverted commas.

(Not every sentence contains a title.)

- 1) Antony and Cleopatra and Romeo and Juliet are the two Shakespeare texts we shall be studying.
- 2) The whole class enjoyed The Mill on the Floss.
- 3) I must read the whole of Tennyson's In Memoriam.
- 4) Prince Hal finally has to reject Falstaff and his friendship.
- 5) Do you read The Sunday Times or The Observer?
- 6) I am replying to your advertisement in last night's Evening Express.
- 7) Hamlet is usually portrayed as a pale-faced young man in black velvet.
- 8) I don't read Dandy any more now that I'm ten.
- 9) Panorama will be screened later this week.
- 10) Anna Karenina was a splendid film.

Exercise 65.

In pairs, discuss the use of inverted commas in the following extract from an article published in The Sunday Times.

Mixed-up mongrels make work for pet psychiatrists

As the British pet population grows, so do the queues at the pet psychiatrists, or 'pet behaviour consultants' as they prefer to be called.

'People have lost their ability to communicate with their dogs/ explains John Rogerson, who runs a clinic in Co. Durham. 'People have become much more selfish, and just as they find they have increasing problems in communicating with each other, so it is with their pets.'

David Appleby, who runs Dog Help, a mobile service in the Midlands, reckons one in five dogs has a behavioural problem. Most problems with dogs, he says, are related to aggression, directed at owners, other humans or other dogs.

But 'separation anxiety', which can lead to dogs destroying the home, howling and losing control of their bodily functions, is another common reason for referral.

Most behavioural difficulties, the psychiatrists believe, stem from a conflict of concepts. The owner takes a parental role, treating the dog as a wilful child. But the dog views the people he lives with as part of his pack. Problems are most common where a dog feels he is the dominant member of the pack. A human who threatens this dominance is met with aggression.

For example, an estimated 85% of attacks take place in the bedroom, when the owner tries to go to bed. From a puppy, a dominant dog has become accustomed to taking the best place to sleep.

Dominant dogs learn the rules of dominance in three other areas of activity while in the litter: grooming, feeding and playing. It is the dominant puppy which gets groomed by the others, is fed first and gets to keep the rag doll.

'Dogs are often fed first, allowed to sleep on the master's bed while the master never sleeps in the dog's place, always get groomed and always gets to keep the toys. No wonder they feel they are dominant/ explains John Fisher, of Greengarth Clinic in Bookham, Surrey.

Part of his treatment of dominant dogs involves the owner standing in the dog's basket so the dog realises who is the master. Other therapies involve the owner taking all the toys away and bringing them out only under his control. After play, they are locked away again - as a way of indicating who is in charge.

Hugh Thompson

The Sunday Times, 28 May 1989

POSSESSIVE APOSTROPHES

Exercise 66.

Rewrite in a form which requires an apostrophe.

For example: the smile of a mother > a mother's smile

- 1) the questions of the pupils
- 2) the response of the audience

- 3) the roar of the crowd
- 4) the hop of a frog
- 5) the fragrance of the flowers
- 6) the enthusiasm of the boy
- 7) the bright dresses of the women
- 8) the voices of the policemen
- 9) the evidence of the witnesses
- 10) the tail of the mouse

Exercise 67.

Rewrite in a form requiring the apostrophe

- 1) the antennae of the butterflies
- 2) the paw of the cat
- 3) the waiting room for ladies
- 4) the games of children
- 5) the headlights of the car
- 6) the hands of the clock
- 7) the wigs of the footmen
- 8) the decision of the manager
- 9) the wife of the ambassador
- 10) the wives of the aldermen

Exercise 68.

Use apostrophes where necessary.

(Some sentences will not require any.)

- 1) Joan Perkins is the brides sister.
- 2) After a moments thought he shook his head.
- 3) The firm of Pinder and Tuckwell is a well-established ladies and gentlemens outfitter.
- 4) The Members Tent was overcrowded as usual.
- 5) The complaints of the parents were taken quite seriously by each form mistress.
- 6) The childrens toys were scattered all over the floor.
- 7) Mr Briggs adores gentlemens relish.
- 8) The princesses suitors were called in one by one.
- 9) Have you read Jan Morriss latest novel?
- 10) The Citizens Advice Bureau will be able to help.

Exercise 69.

Use apostrophes where necessary

- 1) Mr Harriss son is the brides first cousin.
- 2) I will tell you how the plan works in a years time.
- 3) Why not join the Booklovers Club?
- 4) I must apologise for the piles of clothes and books on all the chairs.
- 5) The workmens response to the crisis was magnificent.
- 6) The Headmasters Conference strongly criticised the report although it was accepted by the Teachers Union.
- 7) He visited every builders merchant in the town.
- 8) The childrens doctor had found nothing wrong.
- 9) It is all in a days work.
- 10) There are blackberries at the bottom of her garden and weeds in mine.

Exercise 70.

There are five deliberate errors in the use or omission of the possessive apostrophe in the following passage. In pairs, identify the five errors.

Mrs Hodge, for heavens' sake sit down and relax. Have you met John's aunt, Mrs Moss? Of course, I was forgetting, Muriel's daughter introduced you at the Adamsons party. Yes, isn't she overpowering! One of lifes leaders. Too true. She's President of the Philatelists' Club, Chairman of the Townswomens' Guild, Vice Chairman of the Birdwatchers Circle and Secretary of the Disabled Children's Society. She's never at home, you know. She's always on the go, never a moment's peace. Not really one of my friends though.

Exercise 71.

*Five possessive apostrophes have been omitted from this article from **The Sunday Times**.*

In pairs decide where the five missing apostrophes are needed.

Davys lamp loses its spark

Miners are worried that the governments Health and Safety Executive is planning to replace the Davy lamp, their historic symbol, with a "less accurate" electronic meter.

They say draft plans to sweep away laws that give Nacods, the pit

deputies union, control over safety in the pits will also mean the lamp being replaced with an electronic methanometer — what miners call the "electric canary".

The Davy lamp was invented by Sir Humphry Davy in 1815 to trace lethal, odourless methane gas. The first lamp was tested on New Years day, 1916, at Hebburn Colliery, Tyne and Wear. An updated version of the lamp is still in use.

Experts say the new monitor, which looks like a cricket umpires light meter, can read methane levels with an accuracy and speed that the Davy lamp cannot.

The Sunday Times, 16 April 1989

COLONS AND SBMI-COLONS

Exercise 72.

Replace commas by colons where appropriate

- 1) I think I have remembered everything, string, nails, plywood, hammer and pliers.
- 2) Do pack all the toilet gear you require, shaving brush, razor, toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shampoo and deodorant.
- 3) All my tools were stolen from the boot, jack, foot pump, spanners, levers and tyre gauge.
- 4) All the paraphernalia of home-dressmaking lay spread around her, scissors, thread, pins, french chalk, pattern pieces, seam binding and buttons.
- 5) As I struggled for breath in the water, the main events of my life seemed to pass before my eyes, my miserable childhood, my grammar-school days, those halcyon years at university, marriage, children and now this!
- 6) I must insist you follow these instructions to the letter, go straight there, speak to no one on the way, leave the moment the meeting is over and return here as quickly as you can.
- 7) You can use this pesticide with all the brassicas, broccoli, sprouts, cabbage and spring greens.
- 8) Every single item of cutlery was stolen, knives, forks, dessert spoons, dessert forks, serving spoons, serving forks and all the teaspoons.

9) Judith enjoys all school subjects, Latin, French, English, maths, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, history and divinity.

10) We visited some literary shrines, the Bronte vicarage at Haworth, the churchyard at Stoke Poges, Jane Austen's cottage at Chawton, Gilbert White's rectory at Selbourne and, of course, Stratford.

Exercise 73.

Colons have been wrongly used in five of these sentences.

Can you identify the errors and correct them?

- 1) Here are: apples, pears, plums, gooseberries and bananas.
- 2) We picked a huge bunch of flowers: daffodils, tulips, irises and hyacinths.
- 3) We visited: Brussels, Paris, Rome, Lisbon and Seville.
- 4) I felt threatened by the pile of bills in my letter tray: a gas bill, an electricity bill, a rate demand, a telephone bill and a repair bill.
- 5) I shall never forget his advice: 'Be pleasant to everyone and trust nobody.'
- 6) We looked at the contents of his pockets arranged neatly on the desk top: sweet papers, a chewed rubber, matches, string, a grubby handkerchief and the catapult.
- 7) She planned: to clean the living room, to write her letters and to do an hour's gardening.
- 8) All the furniture was neatly stacked: chairs, tables, wardrobes, beds and kitchen cupboards.
- 9) We have many birds in the garden at the moment: blue-tits, great-tits, chaffinches, siskins, robins and blackbirds.
- 10) Jane Austen wrote six novels: *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*.
- 11) I know: that no-one can do everything.
- 12) Please reply: as soon as possible.

Exercise 74.

Use semi-colons instead of commas to separate the items in these lists.

- 1) There is much in the painting I could criticise: the composition is jumbled, with no focal point, the perspective is wrong, the brushwork is messy and unpleasing, and the subject has not been carefully and accurately observed.

2) I would make the following recommendations: the exterior of the house needs to be repointed, all external paintwork needs to be painted, the roof needs to be reslated as a matter of some urgency, the chimney stack should be made safe, the interior of the house needs to be redecorated throughout, and all internal woodwork should be treated as there is widespread evidence of woodworm activity.

3) She planned to plant the garden with all her favourite plants and shrubs: cream and golden honeysuckle with its beautiful fragrance, deep red antirrhinums with dark green slender leaves, an abundance of rose bushes, especially the old varieties with fragrant blooms, red, white and pink geraniums, she had to have those, and lastly marigolds, sturdy, shaggy, cheerful and golden, opening with the sun and closing regretfully in its absence.

4) My greatest regrets are these: that I did not know my parents, that I wasted so many years when I might have learnt much, that I did not take many of the opportunities that were offered to me to advance my career, and that I now dwell on the past to a disproportionate extent!

Exercise 75.

In five of these sentences, the semi-colon has been used inappropriately.

Identify the errors and correct them.

1) Alice was conscientious and able; she deserved to pass the examination.

2) The rabbit had been sadly neglected; it was in a wretched state.

3) Thinking that there was an intruder; Shaun grabbed a stick and rushed indoors.

4) Mrs Croal unpacked her shopping slowly; only to hear Karen at the door.

5) John opened the drawer; it was empty.

6) I will mark this set of books; Mrs Sims will be coming to supper tomorrow.

7) In fact; we shall all be there.

8) The wedding invitations have all been sent out; two hundred guests are expected.

9) I left immediately; I knew what had to be done.

10) I shall have to pay the bill; although I have no money to spare at the moment.

=====

HYPHENS. PASHES. BRACKETS.
OBLIQUES

Exercise 76.

In pairs, discuss the computer-set divisions of words in this short article. Which divisions seem to you to be sensible and which do you dislike and why?

1,400 city smokers died last year

EXETER has the second lowest figures for smoking-related deaths in the country.

But last year 1,400 people still died in the area because of their addiction to the evil weed.

And local Community Physician, Dr Dilwyn Morgan, says the current figures cannot be a cause for complacency. In the second of a series of papers on preventing ill-health, he points out that smokers still risk death from lung cancer and diseases of the heart and blood vessels.

'In terms of absolute numbers coronary heart disease is the major killer among smoking-related diseases,' he says. 'Research has shown that the rewards for stopping smoking are immediate and substantial.'

His paper will be presented to the health authority tomorrow.

A survey on this age group showed that one in seven 11-year-olds had experimented with cigarettes; 18 per cent of 15-year-old boys and 27 per cent of the same-age girls smoked every week.

Dr Morgan also highlights other problems connected with smoking:

- Recent increases in the numbers of women dying of lung cancer.
- Absence from work because of recurrent chest infections.
- Smoking mothers double the risk of having a small baby.
- The aggravation of asthma in sufferers exposed to other people's

smoke.

He commends the health authority for recognising that cigarette smoking is a serious public health hazard.

Express and Echo, 5 March 1990

Exercise 77.

Read this short article from The Independent and in pairs discuss which words have been hyphenated to form compound adjectives and which have been hyphenated for other reasons.

Question of degree

ARE THE Scottish universities weakening in their defence of the four-year degree as the prospect of student loans draws nearer? Perish the thought.

The eight have, however, issued a statement reaffirming the value they attach to the three-year General or Ordinary degree available to undergraduates in Scotland.

The principals now wish to see this kind of broad-based degree given more prominence in its own right, rather than being seen as a truncated Honours degree. The curriculum is distinct from the early years of an Honours course, they say, adding that the General degree had proved of particular interest to mature students or those who intended to pursue further vocational studies.

With departments in Scottish universities preparing fall-back positions in case the three-year Honours degree seeps across the border, could this be an ingenious device to hold the line?

The Independent, 5 April 1990

Exercise 78.

Use hyphens where necessary

- 1) Lydia had a catch me if you can look in her eyes.
- 2) The scheme was well intentioned but ill conceived.
- 3) The poor child has been over protected all his life.

- 4) The wide eyed wonder and overwhelming amazement of the tiny boy on Christmas Day were very touching.
- 5) You should forward the doctor's signing off certificate as soon as you receive it.
- 6) The local candidate won in a three cornered fight.
- 7) The bereaved mother was naturally low spirited and depressed for months after the accident.
- 8) I can't find the nail scissors anywhere.
- 9) We decided to give Timothy a silver napkin ring for a christening present.
- 10) His couldn't care less attitude was infuriating to his parents and teachers alike.

Exercise 79.

*Write as words correctly punctuated.
(This is also a useful spelling exercise!)*

1. 99 99th	2. 88 88th	3. 41 41st	4. 55 55th	5. 73 73rd
6. 27 27th	7. 62 62nd	8. 44 44th	9. 37 37th	10. 96 96th

Exercise 80.

Add hyphens where they are needed

- 1) My uncle was killed in the 1 939 45 war.
- 2) The Salisbury Portsmouth service is much improved.
- 3) It is m m more than m m my life is w w worth.
- 4) The Paris Melbourne race is cancelled.
- 5) The Exmouth Starcross ferry may be saved.
- 6) The Edinburgh London link up is a fruitful one.
- 7) The only car he can afford is in the J50 J75 price range.
- 8) Those who scored 80 100 per cent are excused from homework.
- 9) What a d d dreadful experience!
- 10) The London Manchester express has been derailed.

dashes

Exercise 81.

*Introduce a dash into each of the sentences below
to add a dramatic pause.*

- 1) The drawer was empty.
- 2) His jealousy knew no bounds and was quite murderous.
- 3) I looked at his long, pale face, with its cold eyes, and at his receding chin, and he reminded me very suddenly and very vividly of a fish.
- 4) I shall never marry.
- 5) What more need I say than that I give you my word?
- 6) In crawled a very shamefaced, very wet and very bedraggled small cat.
- 7) You are, sir, quite simply a liar.
- 8) One thing and one thing only has caused his downfall drink.
- 9) The answer to that question, madam, is never.
- 10) The reason for my long life,' quavered the centenarian, 'is undoubtedly my love of women.'

Exercise 82.

Use nine dashes in the following hesitant speech

'Mildred, if we are frank you must realise that is to say the fact is let me start again and say you've been very kind we don't deny we don't want that is nobody wants to hurt you.'

Exercise 83.

*Use dashes to mark off interpolations or
introduce afterthoughts in the sentences below*

- 1) Your opinion however sincerely held could cause great offence.
- 2) The Managing Director to my horror he's a J.P. is an alcoholic.
- 3) She won the cup again this year would you believe it?
- 4) The owner believe it or not once worked for Harrods.
- 5) The Scotsman a keen golfer too antagonised all who came near him.
- 6) Do you know I waited it must have been for at least twenty minutes and no-one would serve me.
- 7) Write him a letter common courtesy will demand an apology and you will feel better about it.
- 8) Give him every chance he's a busy man to make amends.
- 9) The same thing happened to me I know it's hurtful.

10) There's no need to be anxious rather the reverse about what the outcome will be.

Exercise 84.

*Read the article from **The Independent** and in pairs answer these questions on dashes and hyphens used in the article*

CFC substitutes 'cause warming'

Substitutes for chlorofluorocarbons - the industrial gases attacking the earth's protective ozone layer - are powerful greenhouse gases which are likely to play a part in global warming unless their use is restricted.

The world's leading chemical companies are spending millions of pounds developing alternatives to CFCs which do much less or no harm to the ozone layer.

But three articles in the latest issue of the science journal *Nature* suggest that if these chemicals take over much of the old CFC market, and their production then continues to rise gradually, they will become important greenhouse gases in the next century, helping to alter climate and raise temperatures.

CFCs, which are used in refrigerators and as solvents and foam blowers, are being phased out under the Montreal Protocol. Their use as aerosol propellants has almost ended in many countries because of pressure from environmentalists and consumers.

The protocol calls for a 50 per cent cut in production by the end of the century, but it is now recognised that this will not save the ozone layer. Many countries, including Britain, are calling for a total phase-out by 2000.

The articles in *Nature* look at the impact of two types of CFC substitute, hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). HCFCs are in widespread use and being marketed as substitutes, even though they attack the ozone layer - albeit with less than one tenth the strength of CFCs, according to the research published yesterday. HCFCs will have to be phased out within the next 30 years.

Concern is focusing on HFCs, the next generation of substitutes soon

to go into production which are seen as long-term CFC replacements. They do no harm to the ozone layer because they contain no chlorine, but like CFCs and HCFCs they are strong greenhouse gases.

According to scientists from Du Pont, the American chemicals giant, and a US research company, the global warming effect of HFC 134a is about a quarter that of CFC 11. HFC 134a is the front running substitute for CFCs in refrigeration.

Dr Keith Shine, of Reading University's Meteorology Department, says the research shows that 'ozone friendliness' does not imply 'greenhouse friendliness'. If the HCFCs and HFCs took over slightly less than half the market for CFCs, then grew by 2.5 per cent a year, they would be responsible for about a tenth of global warming in the next century.

By Nicholas Schoon

The Independent, 5 April 1990

- 1) What is the function of the pair of dashes in the first paragraph?
- 2) Why is the hyphen used in the last paragraph?
- 3) Explain the function of the hyphen in *phase-out* (end of paragraph five).
- 4) Why is the dash used in paragraph six?
- 5) Find an example of a compound adjective in the article.

=====

Obliques

The oblique (short for 'oblique stroke') is a useful punctuation mark in certain very restricted instances. It is used when space is limited, such as in questions on official forms and so on. It is only rarely correct to use obliques in essays and other pieces of extended writing.

- Obliques can neatly separate alternative items or various forms.

The god Neptune/Poseidon emerged from the sea.

(The god has a Latin name and a Greek name)

Use 100g cocoa/drinking chocolate.

Please list interests/hobbies/recreations.

As you will see in the above examples, the oblique can be a useful, concise device in notes, or on official forms, or in recipes, etc. It is not to be recommended for use in more formal writing, except as used in the first example.

- Obliques are used to separate items in a list (e.g. lists of destinations or ports of call).

**The train travels via Exmouth/Topsham/Polsloe Bridge/
St James's Halt/Exeter Central/Exeter St David's.**

- Obliques can be used with certain combinations of figures.

Date of birth: 9/8/37

(This is a useful way of recording dates where space is limited, such as on a form.)

My telephone number is 03982/31085.

(Here the oblique divides the dialling code from the number itself. Alternatively, the dialling code could be bracketed or a hyphen could be used.)

- Obliques are traditionally used in certain abbreviations,

c/o Mrs Abrahams (care of)

T/A Owls' Retreat Tutorial Services (trading as)

a/c (account)

Exercise 88.

Use 10 obliques where appropriate on this form

Name (Mr Mrs Miss Ms):

Date of birth:

Address:

Telephone number (day evening):

Qualifications (academic professional):

Previous posts held (indicate whether full part-time):

Present post:

Other relevant experience training:

Hobbies interests recreational activities:

Names and addresses of two referees:

(Write NA where a question is not applicable.)

ANSWERS to Exercises 1-88

Exercise 1

- 1) . . . hungry.
- 3) . . . oven.
- 6) . . . morning.
- 10) ...he lp . . .urgently.

Exercise 2

. . . morning. . . .minutes. . . .dress.
. . . meal. . . .back.

Exercise 3

- 1) My grandfather is very old. He is still very active.
- 2) I'll arrange for you to be transferred to Hong Kong. You really dislike this area.
- 3) There has just been a news flash. There's been a terrible accident in the English Channel.
- 4) Cherrill thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. She spent it at Pontins.
- 5) The abolition of the poll tax has been rumoured. The rumour isn't true.

Exercise 4

By 9.30a.m. Wayne was already flagging. Tired and listless, he blinked a lot and often rubbed his hand over his face. He struggled on without either interest or enthusiasm.

By early afternoon the sun was shining brightly through the classroom windows. Wayne sat hunched forward over his desk supporting his head in his arms as he struggled to keep himself awake. By 3p.m., head cradled in his arms, he was asleep.

At 14, Wayne is one of thousands of youngsters up and down the country who spend their days in school teetering on the edge of exhaustion. Late nights, 24-hour television, satellite TV, the video revolution may all play a part but the most tired pupils in schools are, surprisingly, not those whose leisure pursuits keep them awake but rather those with part-time jobs which leave them tired and unable to concentrate.

At 14 Wayne, with parental knowledge, begins work at 4a.m. During the winter, if there are difficulties with snow he may start work even earlier. He is late for school most mornings after delivering milk for four or five hours and earning £ 3.50.

While there are nowhere near as many children 'on the milk' as there are 'on the papers' there are enough to give cause for concern. It is illegal for children to deliver milk at the time it is delivered but a 'blind eye' is frequently turned on such breaches.

The milk float in question is not the familiar slow battery-powered vehicle. This one is a flatbed, diesel truck and the round is big, around 300 gallons or 100 crates. The boys hang on, rain, hail or shine, to the bar at the rear of the vehicle and hop off nimbly with a full bottle carrier when the truck slows.

Brian Bell, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 4 August 1989

Exercise 5

(Suggested answers)

- 1) Jennifer is good at mathematics but Robert prefers history.
- 2) After opening the door of the deserted cottage, we felt frightened.
- 3) I felt concerned that something was wrong when the cat scratched her ear frantically.
- 4) He is shy and hard to get to know and few people know him well but he wants to be friendly and it is worth persevering.
- 5) Emily Bronte (pen name Ellis Bell) who wrote *Wuthering Heights* had

two sisters who also wrote novels and used pen-names.

Exercise 6

(Suggested answers)

- 1) 'Would you like to appear in "Neighbours"?' he asked.
- 2) 'Why are you three hours late?' she demanded.
- 3) 'What is your name and address?' they asked.
- 4) 'Do you mean what you are saying?' he asked.
- 5) 'What are you going to give me for Christmas?' I asked.

Exercise 7

(Suggested answers)

- 1) The speaker asked the audience if he could be heard at the back.
- 2) His mother asked Matthew whether he had tidied his room yet.
- 3) Dr Jones looked over his glasses at his new patient and asked whether he was allergic to penicillin.
- 4) My neighbour wanted to know if I would give him a hand demolishing his garage on Sunday.
- 5) Mike proposed to Kate in a whisper.

Exercise 8

- 2) 'Have you got a large spanner I can borrow?'
- 4) 'Can I interest you in our special offer?'
- 5) 'What is the time?'
- 8) 'Are you going to wear that hat?'
- 10) 'Where are you going on holiday?'
- 11) 'Do you know the answer or are you bluffing?'
- 14) 'Are you certain?'

16) 'Why did she leave so suddenly?'

18) 'Why did you behave as you did?'

19) 'Was it snowing when you left Newcastle?'

Exercise 9

1) . 3) ? 5) ? 7) . 9)

2) ? 4) ? 6) . 8) ? 10)

Exercise 11

1) • 5) ? 9) ! 13) ! 17) !

2) ! 6) . 10) ! 14) . 18) .

3) ? 7) • 11) • 15) ! 19) ?

4) ! 8) ! 12) ? 16) ! 20) .

Exercise 12

Jem Who did one thing to help Tom Robinson?

Miss Maudie His friends, for one thing, and people like us. We exist, too.

People like Judge Taylor. People like Heck Tate. Start using your head, Jem. 'Did it ever strike you that Judge Taylor naming Atticus to defend Tom was no accident? That Judge Taylor might have had his reasons?'

Scout S'right, Jem. Usually the court appoints some new lawyer - one who is just startin'.

Miss Maudie You're beginning to realise a little more to it than you thought. (Pressing). Whether Maycomb knows it or not, we're paying

your father the highest tribute we can pay a man. We trust him to do it right.

Scout Then why did he get beat?

Miss Maudie (snorting): Miss Stephanie talks nonsense! Maybe he did-

n't get an acquittal but he got something. I was sitting right in court waiting, and as I waited, I thought - Atticus Finch won't win, he can't win, but he's the only man in these parts who can keep a jury out so long in a case like this. And I thought to myself, take note of this time and this place. It's 1935 and it's Maycomb, Alabama, and we're making a step - it's just a babystep, but it's a step.

Exercise 13

- 1) Names and proper nouns
- 2) At beginning of a sentence
- 3) For pronoun I
- 4) First word and 'Brownie' in title
- 5) At beginning of direct speech
- 6) Eye-catching emphasis at beginning of article.

Exercise 14

In . . . country. Springs . . . nails.

Although . . . village. For . . . die. There . . . all.

Exercise 15

- a) Paragraph 1 . . . myself. . . . anon.
.. us. . . . shoulders.

Paragraph 2 . . . Walpole. (Whole paragraph is one sentence.)

Paragraph 3 . . . robin.

Paragraph 4 . . . bell? . . . pull.

.. architecture? . . . bullfinch.

.. and so on.

- b) 11 times

Exercise 16

- 1) Thursday
- 2) Industrial Revolution
- 3) Portsmouth Channel Islands
- 4) England Queen Elizabeth
- 5) Mrs. Brown Harriet
- 6) Spanish.
- 7) Owen Cader Idris
- 8) Ombudsman Prime Minister
- 9) Wednesday March
- 10) Council Preservation Rural England

Exercise 17

- 1) God
- 3) Bible
- 4) Father, God, Son, God, Holy Spirit, Persons, Holy Trinity
- 5) Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Islam

Exercise 18

- 1) *A Village by the Sea*
- 2) *An Inspector Calls*
- 3) *Daily Telegraph*
- 4) *The Rise and Fall of the Smoking Habit*
- 5) *The Archers*
- 6) *Mathematics for the General Student*
- 7) *Jaws*

Exercise 19

Never. . .

Love. . .

For. . .

Silently. . .

I . . . I . . .

1 . . .

Trembling. . .

Ah,. . .

Soon . . .

A . . .

Silently. . .

H e ...

Exercise 20

'Must I go . . . ?'

'You must. . . '

He pleaded, 'All. . . '

'Put me down,' he sobbed. 'Put. . . '

Exercise 21

Rose Cottage,

6 The Green,

Friary Park,

Cheshire, SK8 3EY

Monday, 20th August

Dear John,

We all enjoyed reading your letter. What a marvellous holiday in the United States you must have had! We all envy you horribly.

Is there any chance that we may see something of you at Easter? Do let us know if you can manage to spend a few days at least with us.

Fiona got good grades in her 'A' levels, I am glad to say, and she's now sure of her place at Queen Mary College (that's London University). Her geography result was better than we expected.

We're off on holiday next Saturday for three weeks on the Isle of Wight. We had to book our passage on the car ferry way back in March!

With every best wish,

Alison

Exercise 24

- 1) I've . . . it's . . .
- 2) He's . . . he'll . . .
- 3) They've . . . they're . . . o'clock.
- 4) 'Ang . . . 'a t . . . 'ook . . . 'all. (Hang, hat, hook, hall)
- 5) W e 'll...'98.
- 6) It's . . . you've . . .
- 7) . . . japonica'd (i.e. covered in japonica)
- 8) . . . where'er . . . pass'd . . .
- 9) All's

10) You're

Exercise 25

- 1) p's q's 2) 3R's 3) N.C.O.'s 4) 1960's 5) b's d's 6) 0's A's
7) JCB's 8) under-12's 9) 7's 10) Q's 11) y's j's

Exercise 26

- 1) ... doesn't.. he's 2) Don't 3) I t 's ... 4) Who's ... 5) I'm ... it's ...
6) ... o'clock .. everyone s 7) They're ... I'm ... they'll ... A's
8) H e 'll... 9) We're ... 10) ... shouldn't. ... 11) It's ... they've ...
12) ... won't. ... you've ...

Exercise 27

- 1) It's 3) its 5) it's 7) its 9) It's
2) it's 4) It's 6) it's 8) Its 10) It's

Exercise 28

- 1) It's 3) its 5) It's 7) It's 9) its
2) its 4) its 6) its 8) its 10) It's

Exercise 29

- 1) Who's 3) Whose 5) who's 7) Whose 9) whose
2) whose 4) whose 6) Who's 8) who's 10) Who's

Exercise 30

- 1) They're 3) they're 5) There 7) they're 9) there
2) their 4) They're 6) there 8) There 10) their

Exercise 31

- 1) You're 3) your 5) your 7) Your 9) Your
2) you're 4) Your 6) You're 8) you're 10) You're

Exercise 32

c is correct

Exercise 33

- a) Posture,. . . movements,. . . relax,. . . smiles,
- b) . . . gap,. . . stalled,. . . moment,
- c) . . . scene, background, (optional) . . . situation,. . . it, (optional)

Exercise 34

- a) . . . delays,. . . children,. . . meetings,. . . appointment,. . . boss,
- b) . . . fear, joy, aggression, (optional) . . . dominating, aggressive, (optional)

Exercise 35

- 1) . . . , I regret to say,. . .
- 2) As you will know,
- 3) . . . , isn't it?
- 4) In fact,. . .
- 5) To put the story in a nutshell,. . .
- 6) . . . , or rather I expect,. . .
- 7) Please,. . .
- 8) . . . , don't they?
- 9) In conclusion,. . .
- 10) . . . , however,. . .

Exercise 36

- 1) . . . , Mr. Evans.
- 2) . . . , my love.
- 3) . . . , Upper 3 , . . .
- 4) Anna and Matthew,...
- 5) Mrs. Thompson,. . .
- 6) . . . , sir,. . .
- 7) Doctor,. . .
- 8) . . . , ladies
- 9) Ladies and gentlemen,
- 10) Karen,. . .

Exercise 37

- 1) , Matt Streat, 2) , Edward Hallett, 3) , the Chancellor of the Exchequer,
- 4) , Blackie and Sooty 5) , Norman Sherry, 6) , Mary,
- 7) , Louis Cooper, 8) , her parents' golden wedding anniversary,
- 9) , a newly privatised company, 10) , your husband,

Exercise 38

- 1) . . . , biting her fingernails anxiously. 2) Subdued at last,. . .
- 3) . . . , putting the matter entirely out of her mind,
- 4) Not believing in miracles any more,. . .
- 5) Refusing help,. . . 6) . . . , placing it with the others in the china cupboard,. . .
- 7) Exhausted by the long wait for the bus,. . .
- 8) . . . , watching their reactions very shrewdly.
- 9) Sipping her sherry,. . . 10) . . . , slipping quietly into the office,. . .

Exercise 39

- 1) As he was tired, Shaun decided to go home early.
- 3) Shaun decided, as he was tired, to go home early.
- 5) Because he is not in the best of health, Mr White is retiring early.

- 6) If you accept our invitation to come for Christmas, we shall all be delighted.
- 8) When Matthew sat the entrance examination, he was very nervous at first.
- 9) Wherever you go, you will see the same thing.
- 10) Unless you complain officially about the noise, nothing will be done.
- 11) At last Mr Wilson agreed that, if the doctor insisted, he would take a holiday.
- 12) As her boyfriend was behaving so abominably, Lydia decided to give him up.
- 15) After she posted the letter, she started to cry.

Exercise 40

Commas are needed in the following sentences: 3, 5, 6, 9.

Exercise 41

- 1) ... again,'
- 2) ... wistfully, 'We've ...
- 3) ... presents',
- 4) ... regret,' said the headmaster, 'having ..
- 5) ... said, 'Can ...
- 6) ... conversation,' said Miss Brewster, 'but
- 7) ... go out,' said Alan's mother, 'and ...

Exercise 42

... in three weeks' time,
although ...

Exercise 43

... knew him, partly ...
... service, and mourned ...
... Devon, as he would have wished.

Exercise 45

Traditional layout

33 Willow Road,
Charlton Kings,
CHELTENHAM,
Gloucestershire
June 16th, 1991

The Editor,
The Times,
1 Pennington Street,
LONDON
E1 9XN

Dear Sir,

(Paragraphing as in printed version)

Yours faithfully,

Eric Chisholm

(ERIC CHISHOLM) (optional)

Fully-blocked layout

33 Willow Road

Charlton Kings

CHELTENHAM

Gloucestershire

16 June 1991

The Editor

The Times

1 Pennington Street

LONDON

E1 9XN

Dear Sir

Could I offer

After years of indecision

Yours faithfully

Eric Chisholm

(ERIC CHISHOLM) (optional)

Exercise 46

1) , an experienced cyclist, 2) to offer them,

4) , however, 5) James asked, 'What. . . tonight, Mum?'

6) boots, plimsolls, sandals, walking-shoes, flip-flops, (optional)

7) . . . emotion, 8) ' . . . , everyone. Do sit down,' . . .

9) question,

Exercise 47

1) piano, guitar, descant recorder, treble recorder, (optional)

- 2) , ladies and gentlemen, 3) , Mrs Greenham,
 4) . . . next week,' 5) Laughing uncontrollably, 6) . . . in stock',
 7) washing up, 8) , who is extremely house-proud,
 9) Madam, 10) work,

Exercise 48

- 1) , a beautiful tabby, 2) Yes, . . . , Simon. 3) , which is open . . . Day,
 4) Tuesday, 5) , moreover, 6) Italy, Greece, France, Spain, Norway,
 (optional).
 7) , which is . . . comprehensive, 8) weight,
 9) ' . . . know/ he said, 'that. . . '
 10) letters,. . . house,. . . bed, (optional).

Exercise 49

- 1) Have you met my mother-in-law, Mrs Allen?
 2) What a frightful experience for you all!
 3) 'Now we shall never know', Mr Cobley said in conclusion, 'whether
 the treasure, a priceless collection of precious stones, was ever on board
 the *Santa Veronica*.'
 4) Help!
 5) The friend who has helped me most since I have been ill is my next-
 door neighbour, Brenda Carter.
 6) Cauliflower, cabbage, brussels sprouts, (optional) and purple-sprouting
 broccoli should be planted now.
 7) As they rounded the bend, they saw the horrifying sight before them.
 8) Smiling nervously, William shook Mr Thorpe's hand.
 9) Did you see all the instalments of *Brideshead Revisited*?
 10) 'Sugar!' the old lady exclaimed.

Exercise 50

- 1) ' . . . know,' said John Brown, 'that. . . '
 2) , despite her earlier objections,
 3) matches,. . . five, three (optional)
 4) , a fledgeling, 5) childhood, 6) , in fact, 7) Mr Brown,
 8) exhausting, expensive, time-consuming, (optional)
 9) , whispering softly, 10) herself, accountant (optional)
 11) clear, concise (optional)

Exercise 51

- c) appearance, Alix would say, hard speculative gaze, cheeks, smudged,

appearance, colour off, hair, dressing table, neck, combs, ears,

Exercise 52

- 1) The commas enclose an aside.
- 2) The comma introduces a phrase in apposition to 'psychoanalyst'.
- 3) False. The comma introduces a phrase in apposition to 'withdrawn state'.
- 4) The comma separates an item in a list.
- 5) Commas around the clause would dilute the meaning, and would make the reference to 'total security in early childhood' seem *incidental*, instead of being *vital* as a contrast to the shock of being sent to boarding school at so young an age.

Exercise 53

- 1) 'Have . . . vegetarian?' the . . .
- 2) 'You . . . haircut,' said . . .
- 3) 'How . . . fat!' Shaun's . . .
- 4) 'Kate . . . again,' whispered . . .
or 'Kate . . . again!' whispered . . .
- 5) 'Ian . . . Friday,' Anna . . .

Exercise 54

- 1) The . . . calmly, 'Stop . . . now.'
- 2) Clair . . . whispered, 'Would . . . milk?'
- 3) Both . . . together, 'No, . . . fair!'
or Both . . . together, 'No, . . . fair.'
- 4) The . . . said, 'Here . . . licence.'
- 5) Mr MacBean . . . despairingly, 'How . . . truth?'

Exercise 55

- 1) 'Does . . . ticket,' Alison shouted, 'for . . . Birmingham?'
- 2) 'I f . . . you,' snapped the irate chemistry teacher, 'then . . . today.'
- 3) 'Before . . . matinee/ announced Mrs King, 'well. . . Garden.'
- 4) 'I've . . . weeks,' pouted Claire, 'and . . . ounce.'
- 5) 'Why . . . us,' suggested Matthew, 'and . . . home?'

Exercise 56

- 1) 'Thank . . . help,' said Mrs Greenham. 'I t . . . appreciated.'
- 2) 'I . . . us,' said Juliet quietly. 'I . . . job.'
- 3) 'It's . . . happened,' the police constable said. 'We . . . further.'
- 4) 'We . . . exercises,' Miss Jones said. 'In . . . new.'
- 5) 'I'm . . . now,' said John. 'It's . . . today.'

- 6) 'The . . . things,' announced their father. 'Now . . . room.'
- 7) 'I'm . . . now,' smiled Ann-Marie. 'I've . . . morning.'
- 8) 'When . . . while,' their mother said. 'I . . . o'clock.'
- 9) 'We . . . picture,' announced Anna Ford. 'Meanwhile . . . music.'
- 10) 'Your . . . yesterday,' said the woman. 'I t . . . relief.'

Exercise 57

'How . . . Snowy?' asked Aunt Gladys.

'We . . . ago,' answered her nephew. 'A friend . . . love to have him.'

'Do . . . attention?' asked his aunt.

'No . . . pets/ he said. 'I . . . garden.'

'Does . . . vegetables?'

'I . . . off!'

He's . . . thing,' smiled Aunt Gladys. 'Perhaps . . . too.'

Exercise 58

The dog, who was sitting on the garden path, saw her first and got up with a welcoming bark. Mr Blake looked up from his weeding.

'Sadie! Anything wrong?'

'No.'

He came to the gate. 'You don't look your usual bouncy self.'

'It's just that I've got the sack and Mrs McConkey is dead. Mrs McConkey kept the shop near us.'

'I see.'

'I wanted someone to talk to. So I thought I'd come and see you.'

'Come in.'

They sat in the kitchen. Sadie rested her folded arms on the kitchen table.

'We always used to make fun of Mrs McConkey,' she sighed. 'We would shout names at her when we were small and then run like blazes before she could get hold of us. She never did because she was too fat. And now she's dead.'

'Aye, it's bad, Sadie, there's no denying it. Scarcely a day goes by without somebody getting killed, but when it's a person you know it's not so easy to take.'

'It's not easy at all,' said Sadie.

Exercise 59

- 1) now',
- 2) answered my mother,'
- 3) can come,' smiled Mrs Thompson.

- 4) late?' asked Nicola.
- 5) said, 'All
- 6) home?' called
- 7) language,' boasted
- 8) immediately, 'Well,
- 9) 'Help!' cried
- 10) thought,' commented

Exercise 60

'There's been a mistake and I've come to explain,' said Ruth in Polish.

'This is Jan. It's all his fault. I want to speak for him.'

The interpreter translated.

'Who is the other child?' said Captain Greenwood.

'My sister Bronia,' said Ruth. 'She has nothing to do with this, but I had to bring her along as I've nowhere to leave her. We're on our way to Switzerland

and are camping by the mill-stream.'

'I see. What's the boy's full name?' said Captain Greenwood.

'Only Jan - that's the only name of his we know,' said Ruth.

'Jan, have you any parents?' said Captain Greenwood.

'The grey cat and Jimpy, but they're dead, and Ruth's my mother now,' said Jan, sullenly.

Captain Greenwood could make nothing of this. Ruth did her best to explain a situation she did not fully understand herself.

'We take it then that you have no parents, but that this young lady, Ruth Balicki, aged eighteen, sister of Edek Balicki, is your guardian/ said Captain Greenwood.

Exercise 61

'What. . . weaknesses?' Miss Meloy asked.

'I know my spelling is pretty awful and I'm always making punctuation Mistakes', replied Geoffrey.

'You need plenty of practice then/ his teacher said. 'That can be arranged easily enough. Are you prepared to do extra homework?'

'I am very willing/ replied Geoffrey.

Exercise 62

1) 'I mustn't. . . flour/ muttered Aunt Elsie.

2) 'I t . . . late', said Mr Wilkens firmly, 'to . . . punctuate.'

3) 'Uncle Fred', asked James quietly, 'do . . . shed?'

4) 'I . . . you'll. . . evening,' smiled their mother. 'Well have roast chicken with two vegetables, followed by chocolate pudding and cream. Will that satisfy you?'

5) 'Excuse me. Have you lost your purse?'

'No, I haven't but thank you for asking.'

Exercise 63

'Will you print my poems if I send them to you - the remaining ones in the sequence?'

'No. Who wants to read your poems?' Murad said at once, abruptly. 'I have enough poems for the issue already. As soon as I sent out the circular announcing it, contributions started pouring in. Poems, poems, poems. Everybody writes them, I tell you/ he complained, plucking at his hair in mock distress.

Exercise 64

1) 'Antony and Cleopatra' 'Romeo and Juliet'.

2) 'The Mill on the Floss'.

3) In Memoriam'.

4) —

Exercise 66

1) the pupils' questions

2) the audience's response

3) the crowd's roar

4) the frog's hop

5) the flowers' fragrance

5) The Sunday Times' 'The Observer' 6) the boy's enthusiasm

6) 'Evening Express'

7) the women's bright dresses

7) —

8) the policemen's voices

8) Dandy'

9) the witnesses' evidence

9) Tanorama'

10) the mouse's tail

10) 'Anna Karenina'

Exercise 67

1) the butterflies' antennae 2) the cat's paw 3) the ladies' waiting room

4) the children's games 5) the car's headlights 6) the clock's hands

7) the footmen's wigs 8) the manager's decision

9) the ambassador's wife 10) the aldermen's wives

Exercise 68

1) bride's 2) moment's 3) ladies' and gentlemen's 4) Members'

5) - 6) children's 7) gentlemen's 8) princesses' 9) Morris's

10) Citizens'

Exercise 69

1) Harris's bride's 2) year's 3) Booklovers' 4) - 5) workmen's
6) Headmasters' Teachers' 7) Builders' 8) children's
9) day's 10) –

Exercise 70

heaven's sake (apostrophe misplaced)
Adamsons' party (apostrophe omitted)
life's leaders (apostrophe omitted)
Townswomen's Guild (apostrophe misplaced)
Birdwatchers' Circle (apostrophe omitted)

Exercise 71

Davy's... government's.. deputies'... New Year's ...
umpire's ...

Exercise 72

1) everything: 2) require: 3) boot: 4) her: 5) eyes: 6) letter:
7) brassicas: 8) stolen: 9) subjects: 10) shrines:

Exercise 73

1) Here are apples ... 3) We visited Brussels ...
7) She planned to clean ... 11) I know that no-one ...
12) Please reply as soon ...

Exercise 74

1) ... point;... wrong;... unpleasing;
2) ... repointed;... painted;... urgency;... safe;... throughout;
3) ... fragrance;... leaves;... blooms;... those;
4) ... parents;... much;... career;

Exercise 75

3) Thinking that there was an intruder,
4) Mrs Croal unpacked her shopping slowly,
6) I will mark this set of books. Mrs. Sims will be coming to supper to-morrow.
7) In fact, we
10) I shall have to pay the bill although I have no money to spare at the moment.

Exercise 78

- 1) catch-me-if-you-can 2) well-intentioned ill-conceived
- 3) over-protected 4) wide-eyed 5) signing-off 6) three-cornered
- 7) low-spirited 8) — 9) — 10) couldn't-care-less

Exercise 79

- 1) ninety-nine ninety-ninth 2) eighty-eight eighty-eighth
- 3) forty-one forty-first 4) fifty-five fifty-fifth
- 5) seventy-three seventy-third 6) twenty-seven twenty-seventh
- 7) sixty-two sixty-second 8) forty-four forty-fourth
- 9) thirty-seven thirty-seventh 10) ninety-six ninety-sixth

Exercise 80

- 1) 1939-45 2) Salisbury-Portsmouth 3) m-m-more m-m-my w-w-worth
- 4) Paris-Melbourne 5) Exmouth-Starcross 6) Edinburgh-London
- 7) £ 50- £ 75 8) 80-100 per cent 9) d-d-dreadful 10) London-Manchester

Exercise 81

(Suggested answers)

- 1) The drawer was - empty.
- 2) His jealousy knew no bounds and was quite - murderous.
- 3) I looked . . . and very vividly - of a fish.
- 4) I shall - never marry.
- 5) What. . . give you - my word.
- 6) In crawled . . . very bedraggled - small cat.
- 7) You are . . . simply - a liar.
- 8) One . . . downfall - drink.
- 9) The answer . . . is - never.
- 10) The . . . undoubtedly - my love of women.

Exercise 82

'Mildred, if we are frank - you must realise - that is to say - the fact is - let me start again and say - you've been very kind - we don't deny - we don't want - that is - nobody wants to hurt you.'

Exercise 83

- 1) - however sincerely held -
- 2) - to my horror he's a J.P. -
- 3) - would you believe it?
- 4) - believe it or not -
- 5) - a keen golfer too -
- 6) - it must have been for at least twenty minutes -

7) - common courtesy will demand an apology -

8) - he's a busy man -

9) - I know it's hurtful

10) - rather the reverse -

Exercise 84

1) separates phrase in apposition to 'chlorofluorocarbons'.

2) indicate word continues on next line.

3) compound noun.

4) introduces an aside or additional comment.

5) long-term (para 7)

Exercise 85

1) (£ 1 each)

2) (Mrs McFadden)

3) (some 13 000 hours over the eleven years)

4) (he's got a heart of gold)

5) (I mistrust all bridges)

6) (a poignant ceremony)

7) (what a treat for you all!)

8) (the best written)

9) (such an innocent form of the vegetable)

10) (members only)

Exercise 86

(it is an expensive business)

(much damage can be done by the wrong approach)

(particularly postural ones)

(this is more than just being slim!)

(as you would expect)

Exercise 88

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

day/evening

academic/professional

full/part-time

experience/training

hobbies/interests/recreational activities

N/A

=====

Supplement 4:

Spelling – 20 study blocks ▪ Commonly misspelled words

THE CHAOS OF SPELLING

Spelling wasn't always standardized [*most words now have only one spelling*] as it is now. If you had lived 600 years ago, you could have spelled any way you liked. There were no rules. You would have spelled words phonetically [*the way they sounded*], but people living in neighbouring towns often pronounced words quite differently, and as a result they spelled them differently too.

This was very confusing and made it difficult for readers to understand what a writer had to say. For example, our word “guest” can be found spelled many different ways at this early period. It was spelled as *gest*, *geste*, *guests*, *ghest*, or *gheste*; and “where” was spelled as *wher*, *whear*, *wheare*, *were* and *whair*. “In the same piece of writing, you find the the author using *been*, *beene*, *bin* and unable to make up his mind about the suffix “ly”, since he writes *aptly*, *featlye*, and *neatlie* (*Winter*: 249).”

When the printing press was invented about 1477, printers realized that if they wanted to sell lots of books they had to do something about making it easier for people to read and understand, so they started to standardize grammar and spelling.

Soon, the dialect spoken and written in the East Midlands of England became the standard form of written English. Writers who did not use the language established by the printers ran a serious risk of their work not being read or understood. As more and more people learned how to read and write, it became necessary to create dictionaries that recorded the **acceptable** spelling of every word in the English language. As you learned in Module 1, Dictionary Skills, Samuel Johnson's dictionary, published in 1755, helped create the standardize spelling of today.

One unfortunate side effect of standardized spelling is that we now have many silent letters in English. In the 1500s and 1600s, there were no silent letters; all words were pronounced as they were spelled. Since then, many words have changed their pronunciation but the spelling remains as it was four hundred years ago. The silent letters “k”, “g”, and “w” in words like *know*, *knife*, *knight*, *gnome*, *wrong*, *write*, and *wring* used to be pro-

nounced. The “*gh*” sound in words like *night*, *fight*, and *caught* were lost about three hundred years ago, but the spelling hasn’t changed. Some words changed the “*gh*” sound to “*f*” as in *cough*, *laugh*, and *enough* (Winter: 250).

Even today, some confusion remains about the correct spelling of some words. Look at the word pairs below and pick out the correct spelling for each.

1. traveller traveler
2. colour color
3. recognise recognize
4. theatre theater
5. cancellation cancelation
6. paediatrician pediatrician
7. spelt spelled
8. aluminium aluminum
9. hallelujah alleluia
10. learnt learned

Each of the 20 words above is spelled correctly. The words in the left hand column are acceptable British spelling, and the words in the right hand column are acceptable American spellings. Most good dictionaries will present both spellings, but the word printed first is the spelling preferred by the dictionary’s editors. The Oxford Dictionary is a dictionary of British English, and the Webster’s Dictionary is a dictionary of American English. Canadian spelling lies somewhere in the middle.

Before you begin this spelling programme, you should decide whether you favour the American spelling or the British spelling, and then work to standardize your own work. If you think that “colour” is the correct spelling, then you should use *flavour*, *savour*, *labour*, *behaviour*, *etc.* to make your work consistent. If, on the other hand, you like the American spelling of *color*, *flavor*, *etc.*, then you should also stick to the American spelling for words like *theater*, *center*, and *traveler* rather than *theatre*, *centre*, and *traveller*. Whatever your decision, work towards standardizing your own spelling. In general, it really doesn’t make much difference which you choose, so long as you are consistent. You should know, however, that some employers prefer one spelling over another.

=====▼ 20 blocks with rules and practice ▼=====

=====BLOCK 1=====

SPELLING LIST 1

Your instructor will dictate these words to you in one week's time in the form of a spelling test. It is your responsibility to study them effectively.

1	heir	weird	6	foreign	ancient
2	deceive	review	7	veil	fiery
3	either	patient	8	chief	friend
4	priest	receipt	9	efficient	field
5	height	niece	10	convenient	weigh

SPELLING STRATEGY

One of the most common spelling mistakes in English involves getting the vowels “e” and “i” in the right order. Sometimes learning a rule is a good learning strategy.

Learn and understand thoroughly how to apply the spelling rule below.

Always write “i” before “e”, unless it comes after “c”,

Or if it says “ei” as in “neighbour” and “weigh”

“Always write “i” before “e” means that the most common combination of the vowels “i” and “e” in English is “ie”, so if you’re not sure which combination to use, “ie” is a good guess. Look at the following words. They all follow the rule.

belief grief piece brief pier
relieve fierce chief mischief pierce

The little verse above also states that there are two exceptions to the rule. The first exception **“except after “c”** means that the vowel combination switches to “ei” after the letter “c”. Look at the words below. They each use the “ei” combination after the letter “c”.

receive receipt ceiling deceive perceive

The second exception **“when it says “ei” as in neighbour or weigh”** helps you remember that when you hear the long “i” vowel sound (like the “i” sound in “fate”), you should use the “ei” combination. Look at the examples below. What sound do the vowels “ei” make?

neighbour weight freight veil reign eight vein

Lastly, there are a few words that you will need to memorize because they are

exceptions to the exceptions. Memorize the silly sentence below. It contains the most common ones.

Weird seismic events made the leisurely sheik seize either caffeine, codeine, or protein to calm his nerves.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy the Spelling List for Week 1 into your notebook. Be sure to check, at least twice, that you have copied the words correctly.
2. Make a chart in your notebook, and record each of this block's spelling words in the correct column.

"ie"	"ei" after "c"	"ei" = "A"	exceptions "ei"	exceptions "ie"
friend belief	receipt	weigh neigh- bour	weird	ancient

3. To the chart you have just made, add all the sample words from this block as well.
4. Add all the other "ie" and "ei" words you can think of to this chart. Use a dictionary to check the spelling or ask your instructor to help you. There's no point in learning to spell a word incorrectly.
5. Which column is longest? Why? What conclusion can you come to about why this is so?
6. You may want to attach a copy of this chart to your Personal Spelling List so you can enter other words that follow this rule as you find them.

Exercise 2

Write one sentence for each of this block's spelling words. Your instructor will correct your work.

Exercise 3

In your notebook, fill in the blanks in the words below, using the "i" before "e"

"i" before "e"

1. fr__nd
2. p__ce
3. ch__f
4. br__f
5. f__ld
6. pr__st
7. sold__r
8. p__r

except after "c"

9. rec__ve 12. perc__ve
 10. c__ling 13. dec__ve
 11. conc__ted 14. rec__pt

or with the sound "ei"

15. h__r 20. fr__ght
 16. sl__gh 21. __ght
 17. w__gh 22. v__l
 18. n__ghbour 23. v__n
 19. r__gn 24. r__n

exceptions to the exceptions (use "ei")

25. w__rd 30. __ther
 26. s__smic 31. caff__ne
 27. l__sure 32. cod__ne
 28. sh__k 33. prot__n
 29. s__ze 34. n__ther

Exercise 4

Copy this exercise in your notebook. Pronounce the words in Column A. Then write the correct spelling of the word in Column B. Finally, record the sound made by the vowel combination as either long "~" or long "." in Column C. The first one is done for you.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C
1. bel i_e ve	believe	sound of __i:____
2. ch__f	_____	sound of _____
3. v__l	_____	sound of _____
4. sh__ld	_____	sound of _____
5. p__ce	_____	sound of _____
6. n__ghbour	_____	sound of _____
7. v__n	_____	sound of _____
8. fr__ght	_____	sound of _____
9. cash__r	_____	sound of _____
10. th__f	_____	sound of _____
11. r__n	_____	sound of _____
12. w__ghing	_____	sound of _____
13. ach__ve	_____	sound of _____
14. pr__st	_____	sound of _____
15 f__nd	_____	sound of _____

Exercise 5

This exercise reviews the exceptions to the “ie” rule. Study the examples below.

sheik height glacier sufficient either financier
leisure ancient weird deficient neither science
foreign seize caffeine efficient codeine conscience
counterfeit protein fahrenheit receipt heir c onceited

1. Copy these words into your notebook in ***alphabetical order***.
2. Now use the words in your list to complete the phrases below. Copy the completed phrase into your notebook. If possible try to spell the missing word correctly without looking at the list.

1. L eisure time 2. N_____ Tom nor Dick
2. An e_____ system 4. Guilty c_____
5. S_____ funds 6. H_____ of a tree
7. C_____ money 8. Wealthy f_____
9. F_____ country 10. Prehistoric g_____
11. A s_____ class 12. W_____ sounds in the night
13. Dec_____ coffee 14. S_____ of the desert
15. Degrees above f_____ 16. Income tax re_____
17. H___ to the throne 18. A con_____ed person

=====BLOCK 2=====

SPELLING LIST 2

1	embarrass	hemorrhage	9	secretary	restaurant
2	government	environment	10	psychiatrist	psychology
3	carburetor	laboratory	11	opportunity	disastrous
4	aluminium	maintenance	12	desperate	separate
5	oxygen	perseverance	13	genuine	guarantee
6	pneumonia	pronunciation	14	exhilaration	congratulations
7	temperature	Wednesday	15	jewellery	performance
8	February	superintendent			

SPELLING STRATEGY

1. Learning to divide a word into syllables may help you to pronounce the word correctly and, as a result, help you to spell it correctly. A syllable is one or more letters pronounced together (e.g. Ca-na-da, A-mer-i-ca). Usu-

ally each syllable contains one or more vowels. A single consonant is usually pronounced with the vowel that follows it (be-gin). Double consonants usually are divided so that one goes with the preceding vowel and one with the following vowel (let-ter). The rules for division of English words into syllables are complicated, but the dictionary for the correct syllabication.

2. Another way to learn a long or difficult word is to split them into shorter more meaningful sections. Take the word Saskatchewan, for example. Very few people in Canada can spell this word correctly. Break it into smaller parts. Sask - at - chew - an. Or how about New Brunswick's capital city? Fred - eric - ton. Can you see smaller words inside the longer word. Often remembering the smaller word within the larger word will provide the key to remembering the correct spelling.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy this week's words into your notebook.
2. Break each word into syllables or meaningful sections, whichever seems best.
3. Write the syllables or sections beside each list words. (e.g. em...barr...ass)
4. Use this to help you learn this week's words.
5. Then test how well this strategy worked for you by having a classmate or a friend dictate the list to you before the actual test.

Exercise 2

In your notebook, complete the sentences below with the correct spelling. Many of the sentences contain "hints" that may help you. Try to remember the hints.

1. He blushed with emb_____ment. (What do the 2 missing syllables sound like?)
2. His _____ary typed the letter in **secret**.
3. The will be **wed** on W_____esday.
4. That **nun**'s pro_____ciation of Latin is perfect.
5. Take advantage of our **ten** dollar main_____ance check.
6. He labored [*you have to use the American spelling of "labor" to make this clue work*] for years in the _____atory to find a cure.
7. If you score a **par** on this golf course, you are in a sep_____ate category.
8. The **ten dents** in your car occurred in the superin_____ 's garage.

9. Make an appointment with the _____iastrist or the _____ologist.
10. In case of an emergency, _____gen masks will drop in front of you.
11. If you get your feet wet, you may catch _____monia.
12. This belt is made from _____ine snake skin.
13. He received gover_____ent loans for \$110,000.
14. **Are you** leaving in Feb_____ary [*the first two words in this clue can be read as the missing letters “r” and “u”*] ?
15. I am **grateful** for your con_____ulations.

Exercise 3

Break the rest of the words in this week’s lesson in shorter sections or syllables to help you learn them more easily. If possible, make a “clue sentence” to help you remember the harder parts of the word.

carburetor aluminium
 temperature opportunity
 desperate exhilaration
 jewellery hemorrhage
 environment perseverance
 restaurant disastrous
 guarantee performance

=====BLOCK 3=====

SPELLING LIST

1	Panicky*	skiing	6	publicity	through
2	Trafficking*	condemn	7	accommodate	lieutenant
3	Mimicked*	desperate	8	ecstasy	sergeant
4	Colicky*	development	9	Britain	pamphlet
5	Shellacked*	thorough	10	prejudice	mischievous

SPELLING STRATEGY

1. When learning the correct spelling of a word, be sure to identify the part of the word or the letter combination that may confuse you. For example, many people have trouble remembering the vowel combination at the end of the word “Britain”. Is it “ai” or “ia”? Perhaps underlining the troublesome areas may be enough, but some people find that if they practise writing the word using a red (or contrasting coloured pen) to highlight problem

letter combinations, they learn more quickly. Some of the words in this week's lesson are particularly suited to this spelling strategy. Try it.

2. The letter "c" can sound like *k* ("hard" c) or like *s* ("soft" c). The sound of "c" is always hard *k* when it is the last letter in a word. The words in this lesson marked with an asterisk (*) all have root words that end in "hard" c. When a suffix beginning with "e", "i", or "y" is added to a root of words like "panic", a "k" is always added first. This is done to maintain the hard "c" sound found in the root word.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy the words in this week's lesson into your notebook.
2. Beside each word you have written, rewrite it using some visual cue to highlight the problem letter combinations.
2. Write sentences for each spelling word. Try to write the list word from memory.

Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks with the correct spelling of one of this week's list words. Try no to look back at the spelling list unless you have to.

1. Downhill sk_____ is one of the most popular events at the Winter Olympics.
2. Did you know that in Great Brit_____ apologize is spelled with an "s"?
3. The last two letters in conde_____ follow each other in the alphabet..
4. In the military, a l_____ is ranked higher than a s_____.
5. Children learn by mim_____ things they see around them.
6. Don't get pan_____ when you see your Visa bill. They made a mistake.
7. Molly and the maid did a th_____ cleaning th_____out the entire house.
8. The town sent a pam_____ on recycling to every household.
9. The shipwrecked fishermen were des_____ly hungry when rescued.
10. Use the "i" before "e" rule to spell the words _____ and _____ from this week's spelling list.
11. Were they convicted of tra_____ing in narcotics?
12. There are only three "e"s in the word d_____ment.

Exercise 3

Write a story or essay using as at least ten of the words from this lesson. Make it a silly story if you like. Studies have shown that the sillier the story, the more likely you are to remember.

=====BLOCK 4=====

SPELLING LIST

1	equipped	equipment	6	witless	baggage
2	regrettable	dependence	7	preferred	preference
3	excel	excellent	8	compel	compelling
4	previewing	residence	9	occur	writing
5	controlling	kidnapped	10	occurrence	rebellion

SPELLING STRATEGY

1. Learn and understand how to apply another spelling rule.

When adding an suffix beginning with a vowel (such as *-able*, *-ing*, *-ed*, or *-er*), double the final consonant of the root word if....

1. it ends with a single consonant preceded by a single vowel.

2. its last syllable is stressed. (Ask your instructor to demonstrate this concept or check the dictionary.)

A word must have both characteristics for the rule to apply. The rule sounds

complicated but it will be clearer if you take it step by step.

begin + er - ends with a single consonant beginner

- preceded by a single vowel

- stress on last syllable

- **double** the final consonant

control + ed - ends with a single consonant controlled

- preceded by a single vowel

- stress on last syllable

drop + ing - ends with a single consonant dropping

- preceded by a single vowel

- stress on last syllable

- **double** the final consonant

BUT

- appear + ing - ends with a single consonant **appearing**
- **BUT** is preceded by two vowels
- do **not** double the final consonant
turn + ing - ends with two consonants turning
- do **not** double the final consonant
- open + er - ends with single consonant opener
- preceded by a single vowel
- final syllable not stressed
- do **not** double the final consonant

Note: For words like **equip, quit, and quiz**, do not consider the “ui” as a double consonant but rather as a part of the consonant “q”.

SPELLING STRATEGY(continued)

2. Many people make spelling mistakes because they don’t know whether to double a consonant that comes in the middle of a word. Although there are exceptions, here’s a tip to make it easier, especially if you listen to the vowel sound that comes right before the consonant you’re wondering if you should double.

In general, you can decide whether to double a consonant in the middle of a word by listening to the vowel sound that precedes it. If the vowel makes a short sound (as in băt..., bì t..., b0t..., d4t..., bßt...), the consonant that follows is *often* doubled. Check the following words. Pronounce each word, listening for the vowel sound before the double consonant. Do your hear the short vowel sounds before each double consonant?

battle	cattle	latter	rattle
cellar	stellar	better	settle
bitter	written	glimmer	riddle
cotton	gobble	tomorrow	coddle
butter	dullard	gutter	puddle

If the vowel makes a long sound (as in fate, write, broke, cute), the consonant that follows is usually single. Check the following words and listen for the long vowel sound that comes before the single consonant.

cater	later	relation	crater
bite	writer	criteria	Midas
focal	foment	topaz	molar
butane	curate	cucumber	mucus

There are many exceptions to this rule, but it is a good “trick” if you are stuck and can’t make up your mind whether to double the consonant or not.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy this block’s spelling list into your notebook.
2. Think of at least five more words that also double the final consonant before adding an ending. Add them to your list.
3. Write 5 words that have short vowel and a doubled consonant in the middle.
4. Write 5 words that have a long vowel and a single consonant in the middle.
5. Now look at the words in this week’s spelling list carefully. Analyse each word to see whether it follows the rule.

Exercise 2

Write one sentence for each of the words in the spelling list for this lesson. If you are not sure of the meaning, look the word up in the dictionary. Submit your sentences to your instructor for marking.

Exercise 3

1. Pay particular attention to the following words. Pronounce each pair of words in dark type. What do you notice about the pronunciation of each? What do you notice about the spelling of each word when a suffix is added?

root word	suffix	combined	root word	suffix	combined
	+ed	referred	refer	+ence	reference
prefer	+ed	preferred	prefer	+ence	preference
confer	+ed	conferred	confer	+ence	conference
infer	+ed	inferred	infer	+ence	inference
transfer	+ed	transferred	transfer	+ence	transference
defer	+ed	deferred	defer	+ence	deference

2. Use your dictionary to check your pronunciation of each word. In your

notebook, write each pair of words using the phonetic symbols from the dictionary. What do you notice about the placement of the accent mark (ˈ) in each pair.

3. Write a sentence that explains in your own words when to double the final consonant before adding a suffix and when to leave a single consonant before adding a suffix.

Exercise 4

1. *Knowing the difference between the following pairs of words is important. Consider the words **bare** (to uncover or expose) and **bar** (to close or prevent) when a suffix is added:*

Clear cutting of trees **bared** the landscape.

The guard **barred** the door so he couldn't escape.

The dog was **baring** his teeth in anger

After **barring** the door against the intruder, he got his gun.

2. *Copy the sentences below into your notebook, supplying the correct word.*

1. The prisoner's back had been _____ and the cell door _____. (bared, barred)

2. My sister was _____ an antique chair and _____ the fruit. (canning, caning)

3. He _____ at Robin Williams who had _____ in that recent television special. (stared, starred)

4. The thrifty workman _____ paint from the wood the builder had piled to be _____ and sent to the dump. (scraped, scrapped)

5. Martha was _____ because the dog had tracked mud on the floor she had just finished _____. (moping, mopping)

6. The _____ wife checked her husband's speech, carefully _____ each "i" and crossing every "t". (doting, dotting)

8. The United Nations' nurses were _____ from village to village with medications for _____ the country of measles. (riding, ridding)

9. After the vet fixed the rabbit's paw, it _____ better than we _____. (hoped, hopped)

10. First, she _____ the paint from the toy horse; then she _____ the toy to look like a zebra. (stripped, striped)

Exercise 5

Complete each sentence below by choosing the correct word from the box.

bared-barred hoping-hopping pined-pinned rated- ratted planed-planned
 robing-robbing staring-starring waging-wagging fated-fatted mated-
 matted

1. The religious leaders are _____ for the ceremony.
2. The carpenter _____ the long board.
3. We were _____ your plans would change.
4. The dog's _____ tail welcomed us.
5. The gangster said, "You shouldn't have _____ on me, Bugsy."
6. In Biblical times, they killed a _____ calf to celebrate the return of a long lost son.
7. The rabbit was _____ across the lawn.
8. She was _____ at herself in the mirror.
9. He was _____ from the nightclub because of his violent behaviour.
10. The loons _____ for life and produced many broods of chicks.
11. She _____ the pattern to the cloth.
12. She is _____ in a movie about dinosaurs.
13. Police caught them _____ a bank.
14. In her grief, she slowly _____ away.
15. The army is _____ war in the western area.

Exercise 6

Some of the words in this exercise double the consonant before adding the suffix; others don't. In your notebook, write the correct spelling for each new word.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. master + ful _____ | 11. prefer + ence _____ |
| 2. remit + ance _____ | 12. equip + ed _____ |
| 3. cancel + ation _____ | 13. bat + er _____ |
| 4. gas + eous _____ | 14. wit + less _____ |
| 5. occur & ence _____ | 15. admit + ance _____ |
| 6. crochet & ing _____ | 16. rip + ing _____ |
| 7. endanger & ed _____ | 17. ship + ment _____ |
| 8. picket & er _____ | 18. bag + age _____ |
| 9. solicit + ing _____ | 19. control + ing _____ |
| 10. unreach + able _____ | 20. equal + ed _____ |

Note: The American spelling for some words in this lesson does not require the doubling of the final consonant: e.g. traveler, cancelation, equaled, etc.

If you prefer American spelling, check a good dictionary for acceptable spellings. Inform your instructor of your choice.

=====BLOCK 5=====

SPELLING LIST

1	necessary	descendant	6	arctic	gauge
2	occasion	address	7	assassin	rhyme
3	existence	discipline	8	chocolate	rhythm
4	cemetery	exaggerate	9	courteous	soliloquy
5	academic	mathematics	10	dependent	vacuum

SPELLING STRATEGY

Many of the words in this week's list lend themselves to a spelling strategy called **mnemonics**. Mnemonics are little stories or mental pictures you create for yourself and then associate with something you need to remember.

For example, how many "c"s and "s"s does the word "*necessary*" have? Try this mnemonic to help you remember. If "c" = ¢ (as in cents) and "s" = \$ (as in dollars), then in order to live well it is necessary to have more "\$" than "¢"; therefore, there is one "c" and two "s"s in "*necessary*".

Using the word "*occasion*" as another example, imagine that you have been invited to Buckingham Palace to have tea with the queen. On such a grand occasion, you can be sure that the food would be elegant....so you would have only one sardine but at least two cupcakes to eat, so there is one "s" and two "c"s in "*occasion*".

One final example involves the word "*cemetery*". To spell this word correctly, you need to remember that all the vowels are "e"s. Picture yourself in a spooky graveyard at night. Over every tombstones hovers a ghost squealing "eeeeeeeeee". To make this work most effectively, you must take a minute to actually picture yourself in the scene, or else to draw a real picture.

This technique may seem a little frivolous [*not serious*] but, in fact, its success comes from the silliness of the stories. The sillier the story you create, the more likely the mnemonics technique is to work for you. So, go ahead and have a good time with this strategy. (The sentences in Exercise 2 in Week 2, that contain clues, are also a form of mnemonics)

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy this week's words into your notebook carefully.
2. For each of the remaining 17 words, create your own mnemonic. You may also want to create your own mnemonic for the examples given above. Research proves that mnemonics work best when you create your own rather than using someone else's
3. Write a brief explanation or draw a picture beside each list word to explain how each mnemonic you created works.

Exercise 2

Now use the mnemonics you created to fill in the blanks below with the most appropriate word from this lesson. Write your answer in your notebook, and try not to look back at the spelling list as you do this exercise.

1. Our sales clerks must be both pleasant and _____.
2. Completing a correspondence course requires a lot of self-_____.
3. You can tell the difference between a polka and a samba by the _____.
4. Hamlet's _____ begins, "To be or not to be".
5. Many Inuit live in the Canada's far north near the _____ Ocean.
6. On the _____ of their 50th anniversary, they had a big party.
7. Good study habits are _____ for success.
8. The judge sentenced the _____ to life in prison without parole.
9. Sue bought a small _____ to pick up crumbs in the kitchen.
10. The words cat, hat, and mat _____ because each ends with the same sound.
11. Students in _____ Upgrading can register here.
12. She claimed her son as a _____ on her tax return.
13. Check the oil pressure _____ on your car regularly.
14. His family tree listed all her _____.
15. Fishermen tend to _____ the size of the fish they catch.

=====BLOCK 6=====

In this block you will not have a regular list of words. Instead you will complete a number of exercises that will help you investigate the various

ways that English forms the plurals of some words. Many spelling errors occur because writers are uncertain about how to form plurals.

At the end of this lesson, your instructor will give you a spelling test on plurals based on **any** of the words in the first six blocks.

SPELLING STRATEGY

Rule 1:

Most words form their plural by adding “s”.

Rule 2:

Words ending in “s”, “x”, “ch”, “sh” often form their plural by adding “es”.

Compare the plural form of the words below.

1	barn...barns	6	gas...gases
2	crate...crates	7	church...churches
3	horse...horses	8	box...boxes
4	car...cars	9	mattress...mattresses
5	channel...channels	10	dish...dishes

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy this list into your notebook.
2. Find ten more words that form their plural by adding “s” and ten that form their plural by adding “es”. Add them to your list.

Rule 3:

Some words that end in “f” form their plurals by changing the “f” to “v” before the ending. Some have irregular plural forms and should be memorized.

Exercise 2

Use both an Oxford and Webster dictionary to find the correct plural forms of these words. What do you notice? What decision do you have to make? Copy the plural forms into your notebook.

1. calf 6. elf 11. half 16. knife
2. leaf 7. life 12. loaf 17. self
3. shelf 8. thief 13. wife 18. wolf
4. scarf 9. wharf 14. roof 19. hoof
5. chief 10. mischief 15. cuff 20. brief

Rule 4:

Here's another rule that will help you create plurals correctly. When the last two letters of a word are a vowel followed by "y", keep the letter "y" and add the ending.

monkey...monkeys	boy...boys
donkey...donkeys	survey...surveys
play...plays	delay...delays
pay...pays (but, paid)	buy...buys
day...days	guy...guys

Rule 5:

If the last two letters of a word are a consonant followed by "y", the "y" changes to "i" before the suffix is added.

city...cities	study...studies	copy...copies
odddity...odddities	subsidy...subsidies	vanity...vanities

Rule 6:

Nouns ending in "o" **usually** form their plural by adding "s".

studio...studios	zoo...zoos	tattoo...tattoos
ego...egos	hippo...hippos	kangaroo...kangaroos
piano...pianos	silo...silos	

There are some exceptions that you should make a special effort to learn.

echo...echoes	hero...heroes
potato...potatoes	tomato...tomatoes
embargo...embargoes	

Rule 7:

A number of other words ending in "o" may form their plurals by adding either "s" or "es". When in doubt, check a good dictionary to find the acceptable plural form.

banjo	motto	buffalo	cargo
halo	zero	tornado	

Exercise 3

Find two more examples for each of the rules above. Copy the lists in your book.

Rule 8:

Some words form their plurals in an unusual way. Because English contains many words borrowed from other languages, these words often form their plurals the way they did in their language of origin. These irregular plurals must also be learned thoroughly.

Exercise 4

Use your dictionary to determine the correct spelling of the plurals of the following words. Write sentences using each of the plural forms of the words below.

crisis*	deer	father-in-law	handful
foot	louse	formula	oasis
ox	phenomenon*	radius*	memorandum
datum*	sheep	moose	fish
vertebra	passer-by*	parenthesis*	octopus*
criterion*	alumnus*	analysis*	

Exercise 5

Try to write the correct plural form (or forms) of each of these words in your notebook. If you need to, review the rules for forming plurals.

1. birch 11. fax
2. wharf 12. try
3. cargo 13. leech
4. fish 14. criterion
5. reply 15. hoof
6. box 16. radio
7. midwife 17. turkey
8. datum 18. bunny
9. goose 19. mother-in-law
10. crisis 20. Ox

=====BLOCK 7=====

SPELLING LIST

1	fascinate	hypocrisy	6	persuade	picnicking
2	grammar	gynecologist	7	professor	questionnaire

3	harass	incredible	8	roommate	shining
4	interfere	lightning	9	subtle	subtly
5	manoeuvre (maneuver)	mysterious	10	surprise	technique

SPELLING STRATEGY

Experts say that there are three kinds of learners.

Visual learners.....who learn best by seeing,

Auditory learners.....who learn best by hearing,

Kinesthetic learners.....who learn best by doing.

Which kind of learner are you?

Think about how you learn most easily.

Can you learn how to fix something by watching a video (visual), or do you need to get in there and do it yourself by trial and error (kinesthetic)? Could you learn how to multiply fractions if a friend told how you call over the phone (auditory)? Everyone learns using a combination of these techniques but usually one is more effective. A lot of your academic success in any subject depends on how accurately you assess and meet your own personal learning style.

Pay attention to what you do best and how you learned it. Try to remember something you learned easily and then recall how you learned it. If you're not sure about the learning style that suits you best, start paying attention to which kind of learning methods work for you and which ones don't bring very good results. Don't get impatient. It may take you a while to determine how you learn best.

Strategies for Visual Learners

Have you had success in this spelling programme or other courses by just looking at the words or reading them? If so, maybe you are a **visual learner**. A strategy that often works for visual learners is to make **flash cards**. Write each spelling word on a separate card, about the size of a business card, and post them around your home and work area. Then every time you are making supper, you will see the correct spelling of the words

you are learning that week. Another way to use flash cards is to put a picture on the reverse side that will remind you of the spelling word. Then as you walk to school or stand in line at the grocery store, you can review your words by looking at the picture, spelling the new word, and then checking your answer on the front of the card.

Strategies for Kinesthetic Learners

Does writing out problem words help? Perhaps you learn kinesthetically, by doing? Perhaps you can use alphabet blocks or magnetic letters to practice spelling.

Some people report that they learn how to spell certain words by touch. Here's what they do. Some print the word with their finger, tracing each letter on their forearm. Others write the word with their finger on a piece of sandpaper or coarse cloth. Still others use their whole arm to write great big letters in the air. Although these strategies may sound weird, try them if you haven't already found some good ones that suit your learning style.

Strategies for Auditory Learners

If you are an auditory learner, you might find that simply reading the letters in a spelling word aloud will help you remember. Ask a friend to spell the words so you can hear them. Some people report that "singing" the spelling of hard words works for them.

As an auditory learner, you might like to try using a tape recorder. Read each spelling word, followed by its correct spelling (or your biology notes, or your math formulas), onto audio tape. Then play the tape regularly while you wash the dishes or drive to school. Here's a variation: record the spelling lists, leave a blank space on the tape after every word, and then read the spelling aloud. With this approach, you can hear the word, then spell it out loud, and then hear the correct spelling immediately afterwards.. You can play the tape as often as you like.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Record this week's spelling list in your notebook.
2. Look at each word carefully. Which ones follow rules you have already learned? Which ones do you think will give you trouble? Which letter combinations will be hardest for you?

3. Give yourself a pretest before you start to study this lesson to identify the words you will have trouble with.

Exercise 2

1. Think about your learning style. What kind of learner do you think you are?

2. Decide on one or more learning strategies that you think might work for you, and apply it to this week's words.

If they don't work, try others.

=====BLOCK 8=====

SPELLING LIST

1	proceed	process	6	intercede	intercession*
2	secede	procedure	7	succeed	successive
3	supersede	procession	8	accede	ledger
4	recede	recession	9	precede	acknowledge
5	exceed	excessive	10	conscious	conscience

*(*Universities use the term "intersession" spelled with an "s" to designate the semester between the end of April and the end of June. Intercession, spelled with a "c" has a different meaning.)*

SPELLING STRATEGY

1. Some of the words in this week's lesson contain the sound "seed". This sound can be represented by **three** different letter combinations (cede, ceed, or sede). Another area of difficulty relates to the longer version of these words (see right hand column) when the spelling changes with the addition of a suffix. For example, "recede" becomes "recession" when the suffix is added. A good strategy to use when dealing with spelling problems like this is to group words together that have similar letter combinations.

2. A second similar technique is to group new words based on something you already know. Can you spell “science”? If so, you can spell “conscience” and with a small change “conscientious”.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy this week’s spelling list into your notebook.
2. Beneath the spelling list, reproduce this chart and fill in the blanks.

words ending in “cede”	words ending in “ceed”	words ending in “sede”
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	
3.	3.	
4.		
5.		

Exercise 2

1. Arrange the words in the list below in alphabetical order. This will make it easier for you to identify words with similar letter combinations.
2. Then create lists to group words with similar letter combinations. (Some words may appear in more than one list.)

acquaintance – psychology - committee – conscience – physician - ledge
 - physics - acquire – critic – critical – commitment – acquisition -
 conscious – psychiatry – criticism – ledger – knowledge – acquit -
 acquittal – committed – physical – acknowledgement – psychic - criticize
 - science – conscientious - enquire

3. Which words in this week’s list could be grouped together?
4. Review the first seven lessons and find spelling words that could be grouped.

Exercise 3

Fill in the blanks on the next page with an appropriate word from this week’s lesson. Try to complete the exercise without looking at the list of spelling words.

1. The tide will start to _____ at 4:30.
2. Do not _____ 50 kph when driving through Blackville.

3. The letter “w” _____ the letter “x” in the alphabet.
4. After turning right at the lights, _____ north for one mile.
5. If Quebec were to _____ from Canada, all Canadians would suffer.
6. John wanted his teacher to _____ in his dispute with the principal.
7. Prince Charles will _____ his mother as ruler of Great Britain.
8. The boxer was not _____ when the referee stopped the fight.
9. His _____ would not allow him to cheat on the test.
10. Do you know the _____ for enlarging photocopies?

Exercise 4

1. Write a sentence to demonstrate the correct use of each of this week’s spelling words.
2. Without looking at the spelling list, write the five words that end in “cede”, the three that end in “ceed” and the one that ends in “sede”.

=====BLOCK 9=====

SPELLING LIST

1	whether	weather	6	loose	lose
2	whine	wine	7	choose	chose
3	which	witch	8	than (comparison)	then (time)
4	where	wear	9	Gorilla (animal)	guerrilla (terrorist)
5	led	lead	10	past (preposition)	passed (verb)

SPELLING STRATEGY

The words in this week’s lesson are not difficult if you pay attention to their pronunciation.

Notice the first four pairs of words. Hold your open hand in front of your mouth. Read each pair of words aloud. Which words caused more air to flow onto your hand? What conclusion can you come to regarding the “h” that follows the “w” in the first four words of the left hand column?

Look up the word “lead” in a good dictionary and check the pronunciation. The word “**lead**” has two pronunciations, depending on how it is used. If pronounced to rhyme with “bead”, it means to show the way or to guide. If pronounced to rhyme with “dead”, it designates the metal.

The word “**led**”, on the other hand, is used when you mean guiding (or leading) someone or something at some time in the past.

The **lead** ore was taken to the smelter.

This path will **lead** you to safety.

Last year, the Blue Jays **led** the league in home runs.

Examine the following sentences that demonstrate the meanings of the rest of this week’s word pairs.

- He wore **loose** clothing. (“loose” - adjective describing the noun “clothing”)
- Don’t **lose** your concentration when walking on a tight rope. (Verb)
- He **chooses** his friends carefully. (Verb in the *present* tense)
- He **chose** to ignore the rules. (Verb in the *past* tense)
- He is taller **than** his brother. (Comparison: mnemonic...both “than” & “compare” have “a”s)
- Lightning flashed; **then**, the thunder rolled. (Time: both “then” & “time” have the letter “e”)
- We saw the **gorilla** in the zoo. (An animal)
- The **guerrilla** tried to overthrow the government. (A soldier)
- He **passed** his final exam. (Verb: meaning “succeeded”)
- He **passed** the truck on the highway. (Verb: meaning “overtook”)
- He walked **past** the store. (Preposition: meaning “beyond”)

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy the list of spelling words into your notebook.
2. Write a story using as many of the spelling words as you can.

Exercise 2

Test your knowledge of these word pairs. Write the correct sentences in your notebook.

1. I don’t know (weather, whether)_____the(weather, whether)_____ (which, witch) _____is moving in from the New Eng-

land States, will move (passed, past)_____New Brunswick and give us a better spring (than, then) _____ last year.

2. The environmentalists' demand for the removal of (lead, led) _____from gasoline could (lead, led) _____to unemployment in some Canada's (lead, led) _____mines.

3. In the (passed, past)_____, the soliers (choose, chose)_____to ignore the machine gun attacks made by the (gorillas, guerrillas) _____.

4. When winds reach more (than, then) _____ 100 kph, (than, then) _____ it is time to evacuate homes near the ocean.

5. Never wear (loose, lose) _____ clothing when working near farm machinery, or you may (loose, lose) _____ an arm or a leg.

7. (Which, Witch) _____ (wich, witch) _____ won the prize for the best Hallowe'en costume?

=====BLOCK 10=====

SPELLING LIST

1	formerly	formally	6	residents	residence
2	clothes	cloths	7	personal	personnel
3	all ready	already	8	reality	realty
4	ascent	assent	9	basis	bases
5	patients	patience	10	adverse	averse

SPELLING STRATEGY (Part A)

You have probably heard people say, "If you can say it correctly, you can spell it." The words in this lesson sound almost the same but not quite. Practise pronouncing them correctly. Then say the word slowly pronouncing every letter or sound separately. Now simply write the sounds you hear.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy the spelling list into your notebook.
2. Use your dictionary to discover the correct pronunciation and meaning of each pair of words.
3. Create a sentence for each word that clearly demonstrates its meaning. Your instructor will correct your work.

Exercise 2

Use your imagination to create an exercise of your own to help someone who is having trouble with these words. Once your work has been corrected, exchange it with a partner.

SPELLING STRATEGY (Part B)

The silent “e” rule combined with the sound of the word may help you with spelling.

1. Short words with long vowel sounds usually end in a silent “e”. (Long vowels make the same sound as their alphabet name.)

rate	cute	made
bite	pride	stride
rope	cube	huge
Pete	dote	tribe

2. Short words with a short vowel sound, do not usually end with a silent “e”.

rat	cut	mad
bit	mat	tub
pet	dot	spit

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 3

Here’s an activity you can use to find out how auditory learning strategies work for you. Read the first word from the following list of words onto a tape recorder, then slowly and silently count ten. Next spell the word slowly out loud.

Continue in the same way with the rest of the words.

Then play the tape back and test your spelling and listening skills by using the blank spaces on the tape to write the word or spell it out loud. Check your spelling carefully.

fate	tub	tube
rat	bite	mat
wade	cub	cube
mate	cloth	ride
fat	wad	abide
bit	hat	spite

cute rate stripe
 rid cut strip
 hate clothe bid

=====BLOCK 11=====

SPELLING LIST

1	berry (fruit)	bury (funeral)	6	root (of a plant)	route (road)
2	bore (drill)	boar (male pig)	7	stake (wooden peg)	steak (cut of meat)
3	born (given birth to)	borne (carried)	8	sew (needle & thread)	sow (to plant seeds)
4	a lot (always two words)	allot (divide)	9	so (conjunction)	vain (proud)
5	seam (in sewing)	seem (appear)	10	vein (blood vessel)	vane (weather vane)

SPELLING STRATEGY

As an adult learner, you are developing independent learning skills. Today's employers are interested in hiring employees who are flexible and can learn new skills easily and quickly. The better able you are to manage your own learning, the more successful you will be in the workplace.

In this block, you may choose any spelling strategy or combination of strategies that works for you.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy this week's spelling words into your notebook.
2. Use each word in a sentence, and submit your work to your instructor for marking.

Exercise 2

Write a composition that uses all the words in this lesson. Let your imagination go and make the story as funny as you like. Underline each spelling word you used. Your instructor will correct your work.

Contractions

A contraction is a form that combines two or more words, leaving out one or more letters. An apostrophe is used to show where the letter(s) were dropped. Contractions are used frequently in speaking and in informal writing (e.g. friendly letters). They are almost never used in formal or academic writing.

Here is a partial list of common contractions: Look for others in your daily work.

cannot.....can't will not.....won't
is not.....isn't I will.....I'll
was not..wasn't were not.....weren't
could not....couldn't I have.....I've
we are....we're you are.....you're
they are...they're who is.....who's

An apostrophe is also used to represent the missing letters in “o’clock” and “Hallowe’en.”

Caution: Two common mistakes happen when writers confuse the contractions “they’re”, “you’re” and “who’s” with the words “their” or “there”, “your”, “whose”. Read the examples below and notice that “they’re”, “you’re”, and “who’s” can always be replaced by their full forms “they are”, “you are”, and “whose”.

>**You’re** (You are) lucky to have a good car.

>**They’re** (They are) are going to Minto next week.

>**Who’s** (Who is) responsible for organizing the New Brunswick Day parade.

>**Your** car runs well.

>**Their** family lives in McAdam.

>**Whose** books are these on the table?

>**They’re** always talking about **their** work when **you’re** trying to finish **your** notes.

There is also confusion between “it’s” and “its”. The contraction “it’s” can always be replaced by its longer form, “it is”.

>**It’s** (It is) funny to watch a cat try to catch **its** tail.

Exercise 3

Choose the correct word from the brackets. Write the completed sentence in your notebook.

1. Mark and John always take (they're, their) dog hunting.
2. Why don't you tell me where (you're, your) going?
3. The answers (they're, their) looking for will be hard to find.
4. (Who's, Whose) going to arrange that meeting?
5. (You're, Your) coat is hanging in the closet.
6. Sue knows (who's, whose) shoes these are.

Exercise 4

Write the correct form of the contraction to replace the underlined words.

1. I have not seen your brother in weeks.
2. Her relatives cannot travel to her wedding in Miramichi.
3. Will you not be glad when summer comes?
4. It is a good to go hiking in the woods.
5. We are never sure how to tie those flies.
6. I have never been so surprised.
7. The students could not find the right location.

Exercise 5

You may choose to write a review test based on any 50 words presented so far.

=====BLOCK 12=====

SPELLING LIST

1	noisy	encouragement	6	manageable*	management
2	apologizing	courageous*	7	outrageous*	motivation
3	annoyance	legislator	8	argument*	changeable*
4	legislative	lovable	9	truly*	ninety

5	residence	sensible	10	ninth*	sincerely
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SPELLING STRATEGY

Here's another spelling rule that may help you avoid some common mistakes.

For words ending in a silent “e”, the “e” is usually dropped before suffixes beginning with a vowel.

Study the following examples until you begin to feel comfortable with the rule.

>improve + ing....improving

(drop the silent “e” because the suffix starts with a vowel)

>improve + ment...improvement

(keep the silent “e” because the suffix starts with a consonant)

>amuse + ed...amused

(drop the “e” because the suffix starts with a vowel)

>amuse + ment....amusement

(keep the silent “e” because the suffix begins with a consonant)

Study these examples closely. Do they follow the rule?

lived **lively**

likable **likeness**

forcible **forceful**

user **useless**

The words marked with an asterisk (*) in this week's spelling lesson do not follow the rule. Find the words “**ninth**”, “**truly**”, and “**argument**” in the spelling list. Each has dropped the silent “e” before adding a suffix that starts with a consonant. *You will need to make a special effort to learn these.*

The spelling of the remaining words marked with asterisks (*) can be explained by looking at their pronunciation. Pronounce each of the words below and listen to the final sound you hear in each word.

courage encourage outrage

change notice service

manage advantage

The letter “c” can sound like a *k* (“hard” *c*) or like *s* (“soft” *c*). The letter “g” can sound like “guh” (“hard” *g*) or like a “j” (“soft” *g*). Which

sounds of “c” and “g” did you hear in each word above? In each case, it was a “soft” sound.

For more information on the hard and soft sounds of “c” and “g” look at this chart.

Vowel	“c” and “g” usually have have <i>hard sounds</i> before these vowels	“c” and “g” usually have <i>soft sounds</i> before these vowels
“A”	“c”andy “g”ate	-----
“E”	-----	“c”entre “g”entle
“I”	-----	“c”inder “g”inger
“O”	“c”otton “g”old	-----
“U”	“c”ute “g”un	-----

The letters “c” and “g” usually have a hard sound when they are followed by “a”, “o”, or “u”; they usually have a soft sound if they are followed by an “e”, an “i”. pr “y”.

The words “manage”, “courage”, “outrage”, “change”, “notice”, “service”, (and others) end in “ce” or “ge” and have the soft sound of “s” or “j”.

If you follow this week’s spelling rule and remove the silent “e” from words like “courage” and “notice”(before adding “ous” or “able”), you would have words in which the “c” or “g” are followed by an “a” or an “o”. The pronunciation of the word would be forced to change. “Notice” + “able” would become “noticable” and rhyme with “cable”; “manage” + “able” would become “managable” and would rhyme “gable” In order to maintain the soft sound in the root word, keep the “e” before adding the suffix that starts with an “a” or an “o”.

Here is the correct spelling of several words that fall into this category:

manageable advantageous
courageous outrageous
changeable noticeable
serviceable traceable

Note: For the words “likable”, “lovable” and “movable”, Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary gives an alternate spelling of “likeable”, “loveable”, and “moveable”.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

Copy spelling words of this Block into your notebook. Pay particular attention to the correct spelling of the words with an asterisk (*).

Exercise 2

Use the rule in this lesson to create the correct spelling for the words on the next page. Check your answers carefully. If you have even one mistake, review the rule and do the exercise again.

1. stale+ness 13. illustrate+ed
2. come+ing 14. genuine+ly
3. approve+al 15. senate+or
4. taste+ed 16. opaque+ness
5. hate+ful 17. complete+ly
6. imagine+ary 18. smoke+less
7. time+ing 19. wait+ed
8. one+ness 20. make+ing
9. legislate+or 21. large+ness
10. obscure+ly 22. purpose+ly
11. tame+ing 23. opportune+ly
12. like+ly 24. white+ness

Exercise 3

Record the correct spelling of each word in your notebook. Ask your instructor to correct your work.

1. desperate+ly 2. rare+ly
3. crackle+ing 4. atone+ment
5. mate+ing 6. apologize+ing
7. encourage+ment 8. change+able
9. desire+able 10. interfere+ence
11. defuse+ible 12. remove+able
13. remove+able 14. notice+able
15. date+able 16. love+able
17. heave+ing 18. continue+ance
19. mange+y 20. noise+y

Exercise 4

Decide whether it is necessary to insert an “e” in the blanks below in order to spell the word correctly. Enter the correct spelling in your notebook, and then have your instructor check your work.

1. apologiz___ing 11. bereav___ment
2. encourag___ment 12. mov___able
3. nois___ 13. officiat___ing
4. issu___able 14. valu---ation
5. fam___ous 15. valu___less
6. courag___ous 16. amus___ment
7. servic___able 17. lik___ness
8. tru___ly 18. sincer___ly
9. fleec___y 19. lov___ly
10. admir___able 20. mov___able

Exercise 5

1. In a full sentence, explain why the word “publicity” does not contain a “k” as do words like “panicky” or “colicky”.
2. In a full sentence, explain why the word “sergeant” needs an “e” after the “g”.
3. Look up the word “sergeant” and “lieutenant” in an American dictionary. What is the etymology of these words? How is “lieutenant” pronounced in the United States?
4. Now look up “lieutenant” in the Oxford dictionary. What did you discover about the pronunciation of the word? Why do you think the difference exists? How should Canadians pronounce the word? How do they pronounce it?

Exercise 6

The following letter contains twenty spelling mistakes. Write the correct spelling for each misspelled word in your notebook.

Fly By Night Home Renovations
1234 Snow Street
Sampletown, NB

February 14, 19__.

Dear Mrs. Smith;

This letter is in acknowledgment of your recent phone call. We sincerely regret that you are not happy with our renovation work. We apologize for any annoyance you may have experienced from the noisy equipment operating outside your residence until midnight on the ninth of January. In addition, we also agree that there was a noticeable odour in your basement after our work was completed.

There can be no argument with your statement, “Your work is awful. I would be happier living in a barn next to a highway.”

We will not even attempt to excuse our faulty workmanship. Instead we would like to meet with you to discuss a manageable solution to this problem. You were indeed both courageous and sensible to have referred your complaints directly to our president. Once we receive your complaint in writing, we will be glad to make the required repairs and ensure that your home is once again liveable and a credit to the neighbourhood.

Yours truly,
Jack Brown

=====BLOCK 13=====

SPELLING LIST

1	tragedy	tremendous	6	valuable	villain
2	trial	trail	7	excitement	pumpkin
3	vial	vale	8	equivalent	language
4	vague	vicious	9	ophthalmologist	relevant
5	unanimous	until	10	religious	cantaloupe

SPELLING STRATEGY

If you know you always have trouble spelling a word (like occurrence), find two or three synonyms (event, happening, incident, affair, situation). Then use them rather than taking a chance on spelling “occurrence” incorrectly in a business letter or on a test.

The Hyphen

The hyphen (-) is really a spelling device. It is often used to join compound words.

Your dictionary will help you if you are not sure whether a word needs a hyphen.

mother-in-law able-bodied X-ray
 good-bye old-fashioned head-to-head

A hyphen is also used to join some descriptive phrases if they come before a noun.

a well-known actor a brown-eyed girl
 a six-year-old child some soft-spoken words
 some out-of-date equipment chocolate-dipped cherries

When the describing words come after the noun, do not use a hyphen.

an actor who is well known a girl with brown eyes
 He is six years old. her words were softly spoken

The computer is out of date. They bought cherries dipped in chocolate
 You should also use hyphens when writing numbers like these.

twenty-one sixty-eight forty-four
 one-third full a two-thirds majority

Watch for hyphenated words as you read. If you are confused, consult a dictionary or style book.

=====BLOCK 14=====

SPELLING LIST

1	absence	amateur	6	characteristic	correspondence
2	adolescent (person)	adolescence (time)	7	cylinder	curiosity
3	bachelor	appropriate	8	doesn't	eligible
4	association	auxiliary	9	emphasis	envelope
5	cafeteria	calendar	10	explanation	forfeit

SPELLING STRATEGY

Here is another spelling rule you may find useful. If the last two letters of a word are a consonant and “y”, the “y” changes to “i” before adding these suffixes. (s, al, ed, er, es, ly, ness, etc.)

deny...denies	rely...relied
reply...replies	cry...cries
deny...denial	lazy...laziness
busy...business	happy...happiness
forty...fortieth	fifty...fifties
costly...costlier	mercy...merciful

If the last two letters of a word are a vowel and “y”, just add the suffix.

monkey...monkeys

turkey...turkeys

toy...toys

fray...frays

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy the spelling words into your notebook.
2. Underline the problem area in each word.
2. Decide on a strategy for mastering each word.
4. Create your own practice exercise.

Exercise 2

Write the correct spelling of each word below.

1. gay + ly. _____
2. pay + ed _____
3. say + ing _____
4. obey + ing _____
5. joy + ful _____
6. say + ed _____
7. try + al _____
8. lonely + ness _____
9. happy + ly _____
10. enemy + es _____
11. busy + ness _____
12. bury + al _____
13. baby + ish _____
14. lay + ing _____
15. ready + ness _____
16. annoy + ance _____
17. copy + ing _____
18. lay + ed _____
19. key + s _____
20. sky + s _____

Exercise 3

Use the information in this week's spelling strategies to add suffixes to the words below.

1. (es) enemy_____
2. (ly) easy_____
3. (ing) study_____
4. (ness) busy_____
5. (er) carry_____
6. (ed) deny_____
7. (al) try_____
8. (es) family_____

Exercise 4

Answer the following questions

1. What is the plural of “emphasis”?
2. What is the difference between “absent” and “absence”?
3. What is the etymology of “amateur”? What does this suggest about its meaning?
4. Create a mnemonic for “cafeteria”
5. What smaller word can you find in “correspondence”?
6. Does “forfeit” follow the “i” before “e” rule?
7. Think of another word that contains the letters “feit”.
8. What is the root word of curiosity? What do you notice?

=====BLOCK 15=====

SPELLING LIST

1	aisle (pas-sageway)	isle (island)	9	cereal (breakfast)	serial (ongoing)
2	altar (place to pray)	alter (change)	10	coarse (thick)	course (route, school subject)
3	capital (chief town, excellent)	capitol (legislative building)	11	colonel (officer)	kernel (grain, corn)
4	cite (read aloud)	sight (view)	12	council (group)	counsel (advise)
5	site (location)	to (preposition)	13	compliment (praise)	complement (complete)
6	two (one)	too (also, very)	14	dyeing (col-)	dying (losing)

	plus one)			ouring)	life)
7	brake (in a car)	break (smash)	15	principal (main, chief)	principle (theory)
8	canvas (cloth)	canvass (solicit)	x	x	x

SPELLING STRATEGY

This block's words (and those for the next couple of blocks) are called homonyms or homophones. They *sound the same* but are *spelled differently*. The trick to learning how to use each one correctly has to do with thinking about the meaning of the word every time you write it.

Each lesson will contain a spelling tip meant to help you find the best way to learn to spell these words correctly. Try each one as it is presented and then decide whether it helps you remember.

Here's the first tip. Ask a friend or classmate to dictate this week's spelling list to you early in the week. Carefully, correct your work and identify the words that you have spelled incorrectly. *Write each problem word out at least 10 times.*

Be sure you spell the word silently every time you write it.

Be sure to think about the meaning of the word as you write it.

Do not let yourself to copy the word you are practising from the word above.

Use different coloured pens each time you write the word

Print some of the words you are practising and write others.

A strategy specially useful to the visual learner is called ***visualization***. It is similar to mnemonics but requires a vivid mental picture. For example, when writing the word "altar", you need to remember to use two "a"s to spell this word. Picture yourself entering a church built like an "A" frame house. Really see the building, right down to the colour of the shingles and the kind of flowers lining the walkway to the front door. In your mind, trace a giant "A" along the roof line. Make sure that you actually "see" the altar and the "A" frame church.

Write each word in this block's lesson. Create your own mental picture of the meaning and then draw it beside the word. Don't worry if you're not an artist.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Carefully copy the words from this block's list (along with their meanings) into your notebook.
2. Create a strong visualization for each word.

Exercise 2

In your notebook, write the correct spelling for the word that best fits in the blanks below. Work from memory where possible.

1. The bride walked down the _____ on the island called the _____ of Wight.
2. Do not _____ your plans for my sake.
3. You will find President Clinton in the _____ Building in Washington, D.C.
4. The _____ of the hurricane damage on TV made me more sympathetic.
5. Ask the judge if you can _____ the law in this case.
6. _____ thousand dollars is _____ much _____ pay.
7. Check the _____ mechanism on the roller coaster so people won't _____ their necks.
8. The crew of the Bluenose III will _____ the city's businesses to raise funds to buy _____ for the new sails.
9. Oats is considered to be a _____ crop.
10. They caught that _____ killer last week who was terrorizing Fredericton.
11. Use _____ sand in that cement mixture for the best results.
12. He plans to take a physics _____ at the university.
13. _____ Saunders was the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken.
14. Plant two _____ of corn in each hill.
15. I'll take your comments as a _____, not an insult.
16. The straw hat _____ her vacation wardrobe.
17. She is "_____" to see your house once you have finished _____ the curtains.
18. His _____ motivation is greed.
19. The class investigated the _____ of electromagnetic forces.
20. Jack Stewart, who is a member of City _____, will _____ you on how to prepare your proposal.

21. Can you name the _____ cities of Canada's ten provinces and three territories?

Exercise 3

Choose the correct spelling to fit in each sentence below. Record your answers by writing the whole sentence in your notebook.

1. The County (Counsel, Council) meets monthly to discuss local issues.
2. What is the (capital, capitol) of New Brunswick?
3. What is your (principle, principal) reason for attending this meeting?
4. You will have to (alter, altar) those pants before you can wear them.
5. Which (coarse, course) of treatment did he follow?
6. He went (to, too) the store (to, too) buy (two, to, too) loaves of bread and a dozen eggs (two, to, too).
7. That book will (complement, compliment) my course on the Canadian novel.
8. Which (cite, site, sight) did they choose for their new home?
9. Maria made a new (altar, alter) cloth for her church.
10. He is (dyeing, dying) to meet you.

=====BLOCK 16=====

SPELLING LIST

1	spaghetti	lasagna*	7	yogurt	mussels
2	broccoli	sandwich	8	zucchini	tomato (es)
3	cheddar	bologna	9	potato (es)	salmon
4	produce (veg- etables)	asparagus	10	lobster	casserole
5	mozzarella	cinnamon	11	* lasagna - the complet- ed casserole	* lasagne - the noodles before they are cooked
6	pasteurized	homogenized	x	x	x

SPELLING STRATEGY

Here you can try another visual learning technique. Cut flash cards measuring approximately 2" by 3" from cardboard or paper. Write each spelling word in large, bold letters on one side of each card. On the opposite side, draw or paste a picture that illustrates each word. Make your pictures as ri-

diculous as you can. You may even been able to include the problem letter combination as part of your picture.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy this week's lesson into your notebook.
2. Make a set of flash cards. You should choose the words that you have had difficulty learning so far in this programme. Include words from this week's lesson or your Personal Spelling List. Be sure that you copy the correct spelling of the words you are trying to learn onto the card.
3. With a friend or by yourself, use the flashcards at least six or seven times a day.

=====

=====BLOCK 17=====

SPELLING LIST

1	stationery (letters)	stationary (not moving)	6	who's (who is)	rein (on a horse)
2	licence (noun)	license (verb)	7	reign (rule)	rain
3	their (possession)	there (location)	8	through (preposition)	threw (past tense of throw)
4	they're (they are)	your (possession)	9	carrots (vegetable)	carats (weight of a diamond)
5	you're (you are)	whose (possession)	10	straight	strait (body of water)

SPELLING STRATEGY

One of the most effective methods for learning new material is to review it regularly, even if the final test is still some time ahead. Give your brain a fair chance to perform well. Studying does not mean cramming a day or two before the test. You may be able to memorize the material and answer the questions on the test, but research shows that material you crammed will be forgotten in a short time.

The purpose of coming back to school is to learn things well enough so that they belong to you, so that you own them and can use them when-

ever you need them, even if it's years after you learned it. The way to make things stick in your head is to review regularly: every day, every week.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

Use some of your time this week to start reviewing all the words you have seen in this programme. Use whatever learning strategies work best for you.

Exercise 2

1. Write a separate sentence for each of the twenty words you are learning in this block. Be sure the sentence you create clearly demonstrates its correct use.
2. Submit your sentences for marking by your instructor or a friend whose English abilities you trust. Then recopy your sentences, leaving a blank space every time you used a spelling word. You and others in your group can use these to study from. **If you make photocopies first, you can do the exercise more than once.**
3. Create a sheet of exercises to go along with this lesson.
4. Once your exercises are 100% correct. Use this sheet to practice your spelling words before the test. You might like to make several photocopies of this so you can do the exercise more than once or exchange them with a friend.

=====BLOCK 18=====

SPELLING LIST

1	personal (relating to self)	personnel (staff)	6	corps (group)	corpse (dead body)
2	advice (noun)	advise (verb)	7	core (centre)	quiet
3	desert (sand)	dessert (sweet)	8	quite	quit
4	accept (receive)	except (excluding)	9	diseased (infected)	deceased (dead)

5	affect (verb)*	effect (noun - result)	10	all together (every one)	altogether (com- pletely)
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SPELLING STRATEGY

In this block you can experiment with a visual learning strategy. You will need a partner to help you. Close your eyes and clear your mind. Have your partner spell the spelling word slowly. Picture each letter on the back of each eye lid as though it were written in bright white (or coloured) light. Concentrate on really seeing the word written in your mind's eye. Then, strange as it may seem, try to read the letters back to your partner in reverse order. Studies have shown that if you can read the letters of the word backward from memory, you really do know how to spell it.

If this doesn't work, try making flashcards, and review the whole set at least six or seven times a day. Make sure that you write each letter in clear, dark letters.

When it is time to write your weekly test, clear your mind and focus on recalling and actually "seeing" a visual picture of the word as it was printed on the back of your eye lid or on the flash card. You may also want to solidify your learning in this lesson by using a mnemonic technique.

SPELLING PRACTICE

Exercise 1

1. Copy the spelling words into your notebook.
2. Be sure to include the meanings for these homonyms.

Exercise 2

1. Write 10 sentences. Each sentence must contain one pair of words from this block's lesson.
2. Your instructor should correct your work.
3. Rewrite your sentences, but replace the word pairs with blanks.
4. Exchange your sentences with a friend.
5. Try to complete as many different "exercise sheets" as possible.

Exercise 3 Review

*Find and correct the **twenty misspelled words** in the following passage.*

On Wednesday, February 19, scientists from all Canada, except Saskatchewan will proceed to a secret site somewhere in the Arctic to discuss the strategies and principles relating to global warming that are affecting the world's deserts. The National Council for Economic Development will present six workshops to complement the speeches on the causes of increasing world temperatures. The chemicals which have been proven to alter the atomic structure of water molecules at upper elevations and destroy the ozone layer will also be discussed.

Participants are expected to read their conference materials before they arrive so that they are familiar with recent research and will understand that the problems are not being exaggerated. During the final session of the conference, a survey will be conducted to decide what course of action is needed and which government agencies should be referred to for the best advice.

=====BLOCK 19=====

SPELLING LIST

Create your own spelling list for this block. Perhaps you have noticed that you always spell a certain word incorrectly. Maybe you need to learn how to spell some words from science class. Have a look at your personal spelling list. You can use this block to clear the words from your personal spelling list, too. You must, however, have a list of twenty words of your own choosing for this block. Your instructor will dictate your personalized spelling test to you and record the mark.

Once your spelling list is complete, use any of the strategies that you have learned during this programme. Challenge yourself to master all the words on your list.

SPELLING STRATEGY

Computer “**spell checkers**” can be useful tools to help you produce a document without spelling mistakes. They are easy to use and reliable. Here's how they work. When you have completed a piece of writing, “pull down” the Tools Menu and choose Spell Check. The computer then compares every word you have written with each word in its dictionary. If it can't find a match for a word, it highlights it and reports that you have a spelling error. A list of similarly spelled words appears on the screen and

you choose the word you intended to spell. The computer then automatically changes the spelling for you. If you have misspelled the word several times, the computer can change all of the errors at once.

Spell checkers are wonderful tools, but they do have disadvantages. First, the spell checker doesn't really know how to spell anything. It is up to the writer to know the right spelling and then choose it. Secondly, the machine only recognizes misspelled words. If you wrote "principle" but you intended to write "principal", the spell checker won't help you because it recognizes that both words are spelled correctly.

Spell checkers can be really useful, however, when you are trying to find a word that you know you have misspelled. In general, if you type in something that is close to the correct spelling, the computer will provide you with a list that includes the correct spelling of the word you want.

=====BLOCK 20=====

The last few pages of this Supplement contain an alphabetized list of some of the most commonly misspelled words in the English language. All the words from the weekly lists are included along with others. Review this list and choose thirty words you would like to learn. Then apply the spelling strategies that work best for you as you prepare for the last weekly test in this program.

The final test for this section of the BAU and IAU Academic Upgrading programme will consist of at least 100 words, chosen at random from anywhere in this Supplement. Your instructor may also choose twenty additional words.

In addition, each student is expected to write an essay of at least 250 words without any spelling mistakes.

Here's the good news.

In 1923 a lexicographer named G. H. McKnight did a comprehensive study of how words are used and found that just forty-three words account for half of all the words in common use, and that just nine account for fully one quarter of all the words in almost any sample of written English. Those nine are: *and, be, have, it, of, the, to, will, and you.*

COMMONLY MISSPELLED WORDS

A

a lot (two words)	advice/advise	appropriate
absence	advisable	approximate
absolutely	aggravate	arctic
abundance	aisle/isle	argument
academic	all togeth-	arithmetic
accept/except	er/altogether	arrangement
accidentally	all ready/already	article
accommodate	almost	ascend
accompanied	altar/alter	ascent
accomplish	although	assassin
accumulate	amateur	assistance
accurate	among available	assistant
accuse	analysis	association
achieve	analyse	athlete
achievement	ancient	attacked
acknowledge	annual	attendance
acquaintance	answer	attendant
acquire	apology	attitude
across	apostrophe	audience
address	apparatus	authorities
adolescence	apparently	autumn
adolescent	applies	auxiliary
advantageous	applying	
adverse/averse	appreciated	

B

bachelor	belief	brilliant
balance	believe	Britain
bargain	benefit	bureau
basically	benefitted	business
beginning	bookkeeper	

C

cafeteria	calendar	candidate
-----------	----------	-----------

capital / capitol
carburetor
careful
category
cemetery
censor /censure
changeable
characteristic
chassis
chief
chocolate
choose/chose
circumstances
cite/site/sight
civilization
effect/affect
clothes/close
coarse/course

column
coming
commercial
commitment
committed
committee
comparative
competitive
comple-
ment/compliment
conceivable
conceive
condemn
conference
conferred
confidential
congratulations
conqueror

con-
science/conscious
conscientious
conscious
consequently
convenience
convenient
correspondence
coun-
cil/counsel/consul
courageous
courteous
critic
criticism
criticize
curiosity
cylinder

D

dealt
deceive
decision
defence/defense
deferred
definite
definitely
definition
dependent
descend
descendant
describe

description
despair
desperate
develop
development
dictionary
dining
disagree
disappear
disappoint
disastrous
discipline

discussed
dissatisfied
distinctly
does
doesn't
don't
dormitory
doughnut
dropped
duplicate

E

earliest
effect/affect

efficient
eighth

eligible
eliminate

elimination
embarrass
eminent
emphasize
employee
enclosure
endeavour
English
enormous
entirely
entrance

envelope
environment
equipment
equipped
equivalent
especially
essential
eventually
exaggerate
examination
excellence

excellent
excitement
executive
exercise
exhibition
exhilaration
existence
experience
explanation
extraordinary
extremely

F

familiar
fascinate
February
financial
flourish

foreign
forfeit
fortunately
forty/fourth
Fredericton

freight
friend
fulfill

G

gauge
generally
genuine
glimpse
government

grammar
grandeur
gratitude
grievous
guarantee

guard
guidance
gynecologist

H

happiness
harass
height
heir

hemorrhage
hindrance
hoping
humour

hydraulic
hypocrisy

I

ignorance
ignorant
illiterate
illustration

imaginary
imagination
immediate
immediately

immense
imply/infer
incidentally
indefinite

independence
indispensable
industrial
inevitable
inquiries

inquiry
installation
intelligence
intelligent
interesting

interfere
irresistible
its/it's

J

jewellery (jewelry)

journal

K

knowledge

L

laboratory
lead/led
ledger
legitimate

library
licence/license
lightning
literature

language
loneliness
lonely
loose/lose

M

magazine
maintenance
manageable
manoeuvre
/maneuver
manufacturer
marriage

mathematics
maybe
memento
merchandise
merely
metaphor
mileage

miniature
mischievous
misspell
mosquito
multiplied
mutual
mysterious

N

naughty
nauseated/nauseous
necessarily

necessary
neighbours
neither

nevertheless
ninety
noticeable

O

obstacle
obvious
occasion
occupied
occur

occurred
occurrence
official
omitted
ophthalmologist

opinion
opportunity
opposition
optimistic
ordinarily

organization
original

outrageous
oxygen

P

paid
pamphlet
parallel
paralyze
parentheses
particularly
passed/past
pastime
peculiar
percent
perceive
perform
performance
personal
personnel
perspiration
persuade

petition
phenomenon
physical
physically
picnicking
planed
planned
playwright
pneumonia
population
positively
possess
practical
precede/proceed
preference
preferred
prejudice

preparation
presence
prevalent
primitive
principal/principle
privilege
probably
professional
professor
prominent
pronounce
pronunciation
protein
psychiatry
psychology
purchase

Q

quality
quantity

questionnaire
quiz

quizzes

R

realtor
recede
receipt
receive
recognize
recommend

reference
referred
regard
relevant
religion
repetition

restaurant
revolution
rhyme
rhythm
ridiculous
roommate

S

sacrifice
salary

Saskatchewan
scarcely

scenic
schedule

scientific
secretary
seize
sensual/sensuous
separate
sergeant
several
severely
shining
siege

similar
simile
sincerely
society
soliloquy
sophomore
specifically
specimen
speech
stationary/stationery

subtle
subtly
succeed
successfully
sufficient
superintendent
supersede
surprise

T

technique
temperature
tendency
than/then
their/they're/there

thorough
through
tragedy
trait
transfer

transferred
tremendous
truly

U

unanimous
unnecessary

until
urgent

use/used
usually

V

vacuum
vague
valuable

variety
vengeance
vicinity

villain
vicious

W

Wednesday
weird
whether/weather

which/witch
whose/who's
writing

written

Y

yield
you/you're

Supplement 5.

CAPITALIZATION - The Complete Guide

from: 'Learn how to capitalize correctly' – www.englishtips.org

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Capital Letters are used to distinguish certain words to make your sentences - and thoughts - clearer to the reader.

The following are the main rules (1-23) to use capital letters

1. the first word in book - The first word in every book, article, blog post, news piece or other writing should begin with a capital letter.

2. The first word of a sentence - The first word of every sentence or its equivalent should begin with a capital letter.

Example: "When did you come?" "It is a pleasant morning."

3. Numbered clauses, etc. - The first word of each series of numbered clauses or phrases should begin with a capital letter.

Example: "He directed his efforts to these points: 1. To showing the necessity for a short route; 2. To showing that the route he advocated was the shortest; 3. To showing that a road could be built most cheaply by his route."

4. The first word of an example - The first word of a clause or a sentence, when used as an example, should begin with a capital letter.

Example: "A sentence should begin with a capital letter; as Procrastination is the thief of time."

5. After an introductory word - The first word after an introductory word or clause should begin with a capital letter.

Example: " Resolved! That the pen is mightier than the sword," " Be it enacted, etc., That a tax of three mills," etc.

6. In an enumeration of particulars - The first word of each new line in an enumeration of particulars, when arranged in lines, should begin with a capital letter.

Example: The expenses of the committee have been as follows:

For Postage: \$14.70
For Advertising: \$375
For Tickets: 44.50

7. Direct questions - The first word of a direct question should begin with a capital letter.

Example: " The question is, When should we raise more money?"

Note: You can also apply this rule to cover an important statement.

Example: "My opinion is this: If we do not succeed now, we never will succeed."

8. Direct quotation - The first word of every direct quotation should begin with a capital letter.

Example: Carlyle says, "I am overworked, underpaid and exhausted. What else do you want from me?"

9. Poetry - The first word of every line of poetry should begin with a capital letter.

Example: "Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow; He who would seek for pearls must dive below."

10. Proper Names. — Every proper name should begin with a capital letter.

Example: John, Mary, Monday, America, New Jersey, Danielle Barton.

Note 1 - This rule applies also to the names of the months and the days of the week, but not to the names of the seasons, as these latter are not regarded as proper nouns.

Note 2 - The word devil when used to designate Satan is written with a capital letter; as, " The Devil and his cohorts."

11. Particular objects or events - Words naming particular objects or events should begin with capital letters.

Example: Hudson's Bay, Gulf of Mexico, the Statue of Liberty, Jersey City, the Metropolitan Hotel, Niagara Falls, the Park, the Revolution, Fourth of July, the Teachers' Association.

Note 1 - In writing the names of places consisting of two words in some cases usage is not uniform. Thus, New-Castle, New Castle and Newcastle are all correct.

When connected with a hyphen or when separated, each part begins with a capital letter; but when the two names constitute one word, only one capital is used.

Note 2 - When a compound name is composed of a proper name and some other word or affix, if the proper name follows the hyphen both parts begin with capitals;

as, Pre-Med; but when the proper name precedes the other, the proper name alone begins with a capital letter; as, Sunday-school.

12. Proper adjectives - Adjectives derived from proper names should begin with capital letters.

Example: Scotch, American, African, Johnsonian.

Remark 1 - When words derived from proper names are used to express a common quality they are no longer written with capitals ; as, godlike, damask, stentorian, etc.

Remark 2 - The names of religious sects, whether derived from proper names or not, should begin with capital letters ; as, Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Lutherans, Presbyterians, etc. The names of political parties also, as Democrats, Republicans, Whigs, Conservatives, etc., should begin with capital letters; also the adjectives derived from these names.

Note - The words North, East, West, South, when they denote sections of country, should begin with capital letters, but when they denote simply direction, they should begin with small letters; as, "The South is rapidly developing her wealth." "Maryland is south of Pennsylvania." "They have had snow in the north."

13. Titles - Titles of honor, office, or respect usually begin with capital letters.

Example: Colonel Johnson, President Cleveland, Queen Victoria, Prof. Smith, Superintendent Edwards, Gen. Grant, Sir Walter Scott, Miss Wells, Mr. Boone, Henry the Eighth.

Remark When a title is used with a proper name for the purpose of explanation, it does not begin with a capital letter ; as, the poet Byron, the apostle John.

14. Names of the Deity. — All appellations of the Deity should begin with capital letters.

Example: God, Almighty, the Divine Architect.

Remark 1 - When any name of the Deity is applied to created beings, no capitals are used ; as, " Lord of lords. King of kings."

Remark 2 - When the word heaven is used to mean the Deity, it should begin with a capital letter ; but when it means the firmament the word should begin with a small letter. When it refers to the abode of the blest, it is written by some writers with a capital and by others without. Usage is not uniform.

Remark 3 - The adjectives universal, eternal, divine, omniscient, etc, when applied to God, need not begin with a capital letter, but usage requires capital letters in the following : Almighty God, Infinite One, First Cause, Supreme Being.

Remark 4 - In the expression "Son of God," as applied to Christ, each noun begins with a capital letter, but in the expression " Son of man" only the word Son begins with a capital letter.

Remark 5 - Usage is by no means uniform in writing the pronouns referring to the Deity, but the best writers of English seem to favor beginning these pronouns with small letters except when equivalent to the name of the Deity, when capitals are admissible; as, "To Him who guards and cares for us," etc.

15. I and O (injection) - The words I and O should always be written as capitals.

16. Book titles - In the titles of books, or the subjects of essays, etc., every noun, adjective, verb, and adverb should begin with a capital letter.

Example: " How to Make Money Writing." "The University of Science."

Note - When in the title of a book or an essay it is desirable to make the pronouns emphatic, they also may begin with capital letters.

17. Common nouns - Common nouns when strongly personified should begin with capital letters.

Example: "Come, gentle Spring ; show your beauty before me." " Sail on, Brother, I will meet you in seven days."

18. The Bible. — When reference is made to the divine origin of the Bible, the name of the book itself or any particular part of the book should begin with a capital letter.

Example: The Holy Bible, the Old Testament, the Acts of the Apostles.

Note 1 - When the Bible is spoken of simply as a book, do capital letter is needed; as, Six bibles were sold this morning.

Note 2 - Capital letters are used also to begin the names of other sacred writings; as, The Koran, the East Zend Avesta, etc.

19. Specific terms - The words state, academy, college, university, park, etc., when used specifically, either as nouns or adjectives, should begin with capital letters, and at other times with small letters.

Example: The State, a state election ; The College, a regular college course; A drive in the Park, the park along the railway.

20. Geographical names - General names, such as county and state, when preceding a specific name, in ordinary writing begin with a small letter: the county of Cumberland, the state of Ohio. In formal writing, both the general name and the specific name begin with capitals. Each name is capitalized also in an appellation bestowed upon a state or city: the Keystone State, the Lone Star State, the Crescent City.

Note 1 - When state means a political community or the powers exercised by government, it begins with a small letter: the states of Europe, the union of church and state.

Note 2 - General names, when not forming part of a proper name, should always begin with a small letter: the law of the state; the exports of this city.

Note 3 - Government is capitalized when it forms part of a proper name: the French Government; but the government of the country.

Note 4 - When forming part of a proper name, mountain, lake, province, and district usually begin with capitals. The Rocky Mountains, the Great

Lakes, the Province of Quebec, District of Columbia. In display matter, both the general and the specific name should be capitalized.

21. Names of important historic days, events, or document; of religious sects, political parties, etc. Words denoting historic days or events, important documents, and names of bodies of men, religious sects, and political parties, are capitalized.

Example: The Fourth of July; the Ascension; the Constitution, Magna Charta, the Pandects of Justinian; the Pilgrim Fathers; Jew, Protestant, Presbyterian; Republican, Democrat, Conservative, Liberal, the Right, the Left.

Note - Certain epochs and eras that are not derived from proper names, are written with small letters. The dark age, the middle age; the Augustan age, the Elizabethan age, the Christian era; but the Deluge, the Captivity, the Advent.

a. m. and p. m. are not capitalized in ordinary text matter.

22. Titles of respect, affection, dignity, or office - Titles of respect, honor, or affection, and titles of dignity or office, if applied to a particular person or if used in connection with a proper noun or in formal address, should begin with capitals.

Example: Father Andrew; Uncle William; the Iron Chancellor. The President of the United States; the Queen of Spain; Governor Morton. Her Royal Highness; to His Excellency, the Governor.

Example: When a title used alone is intended as the synonym of a particular person, it is generally capitalized: the President, the Czar, the Sultan, the Pope. When not used as the appellation of a specified person, a title begins with a small letter: he was arrested by a constable.

Example: When such titles as king, president, general manager, etc., are used frequently and are not followed by the name of a person, they are not capitalized.

Example: In a title consisting of separate words used with a name, both words in the title should begin with capitals: Major General Greene; Chief Justice Patterson.

Example: In a compound title only one capital is needed: Vice-president Hobart; Expresident Cleveland. Ex-president used without a proper name,

except at the beginning of a sentence, takes small letters: only one ex-president of the United States is now living.

Example: In salutations of letters, only words referring to the person should be capitalized: Dear Friend, My dear Friend, My darling Child.

Example: Words denoting family relations begin with capitals, when used without a possessive pronoun: "I received a message from Father"; or, "I received a message from my father."

Example: Jr. and sr. need not be capitalized in ordinary text-matter. In display work they require capitals.

23. Names of committees, clubs, associations, and organizations -

Names of committees, clubs, associations, and of organizations, generally, should be capitalized. When the article forms part of an official title or the title of a book, it should begin with a capital, even when it occurs in the middle of a sentence.

When the name of a magazine or newspaper is given in the text, the article takes a small letter.

Example: The Committee of One Hundred, Young Men's Christian Association, The Union League, The Right of Way. The matter was noticed in the Saturday Post.

=====Capitalization – Handout=====

▪Capitalize the first word in every sentence.

EXAMPLE: She said, "It will be hard to go home after this fun vacation."

▪Capitalize the pronoun I.

EXAMPLE: Ira said that I was the best dancer in the show.

▪Capitalize the interjection O.

EXAMPLE: Guide and direct us, O Lord.

▪Capitalize the first word in both the salutation and the closing of a letter.

EXAMPLES: Dear Mr. Novato: Sincerely

▪Capitalize the names of persons and animals.

EXAMPLES: Franklin D. Roosevelt Willem de Kooning

▪Capitalize geographical names

EXAMPLES: the Gulf of Mexico the Southwest Prince William Forest

▪Capitalize the names of planets, stars, constellations, and other heavenly bodies.

EXAMPLES: Neptune Polaris Great Nebula

▪Capitalize the names of teams, organizations, institutions, and government bodies.

EXAMPLES: **K**ansas **C**ity **C**hiefs **F**uture **T**eachers of **A**merica

▪Capitalize the names of historical events and periods, special events, holidays, and other calendar items.

EXAMPLES: the **E**ighties the **C**ivil **W**ar **H**annukah my **B**irthday

▪Capitalize the names of nationalities, races, and peoples

EXAMPLES: **I**ndian **C**hinese **B**edouin

▪Capitalize the names of religions and their followers, holy days and celebrations, sacred writings, and specific deities.

EXAMPLES: **A**llah **H**indus **C**hristmas **K**oran

▪Capitalize the names of buildings and other structures.

EXAMPLES: **C**olleyville **H**eritage **H**igh **S**chool **W**orld **T**rade **C**enter

▪Capitalize the names of monuments, memorials, and awards

EXAMPLES: **L**incoln **M**emorial **N**obel **P**eace **P**rize

▪Capitalize the names of trains, ships, aircraft, and spacecraft

EXAMPLES: **E**nola **G**ay **U.S.S.** **E**nterprise **C**hallenger

Capitalize the names of businesses and the brand names of business products

EXAMPLES: **C**ontinental **A**irlines **M**icrosoft **W**indows

=====

Supplement 6.

●FREQUENTLY CORRECTED ERRORS 1-112

from: <http://mekabay.com>

●10 Functions of the Comma& some questions on its usage

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Punctuation and spelling problems

1 acronyms defined on first use

Define each acronym on first use in an essay even if you have defined it in previous essays. Use the acronym consistently throughout the rest of the paper.

2 acronym plurals do not take an apostrophe

The plural of *ACL* is **ACLs**, not *ACL's*; that of *MMPORPG* is *MMPORPGs*.

3 acronyms to be used later

If you define an acronym on its first use, you should generally *use it consistently* later in the paper or chapter.

4 affect or effect?

In general use, *affect* is only used as a verb, whereas *effect* is commonly used as a noun and only in formal contexts as a verb. What causes confusion is that they have very similar pronunciations and closely related meanings. If one thing affects [acts upon] another, it has an effect on it [causes it to change]. Notice also that you can affect [cause a change in] people as well as things, but you can only effect [bring about] things such as changes: *The election has affected our entire society, for it has effected major changes in the government. The bad weather has a bad effect [not affect] on him.* ■ Microsoft® Encarta® 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

■ There are technical meanings of the word *affect* that make the confusion worse. In psychology, *affect* refers to feelings or emotions. Thus, *The autistic child lacked affect.*

6 altogether vs all together

He was altogether incompetent. [=thoroughly] *She and her friends were all together when the flying saucer landed.* [= together without exception]

7 although or while?

While is best used for duration. In contrast, *although* instantly makes it clear to the reader that you mean to provide a clarification whereas *while* leaves a momentary confusion about your meaning.

8 and creates a compound subject

The moment you link two nouns with *and* you have created a compound plural subject. *Means, motive and opportunity are* [not is] *the basis for prosecution.*

9 apostrophes don't create plurals

Shoe's for sale is wrong. The apostrophe creates a possessive (except for it / its) or a contraction (does, doesn't). In particular, don't use apostrophes to create the plural of an acronym. *ACLs* and *RTFs*, not *ACL's* and *RTF's*. So don't you *dare* write *Apostrophe's don't create plural's!*

10 as and like

As is usually a *conjunction* that introduces a clause:

E.g., *As I was saying, the red car sped through the intersection without stopping.* *Like* is usually a *preposition* that takes an object:

E.g., *The red car sped through the intersection like a cannonball.*

WRONG: *Like I said....*

RIGHT: *As I said....*

11 automatically updated data fields

Don't use automatically updated date fields in essays – you'll have the current date substituted every time you save the file. Such usage is useful when you are trying to show when a file was last saved or edited but not if you are showing, say, a submission date that should be fixed.

12 by having . . . it

Never write —*By having... it*! if you intend —*it*! to refer to the fact indicated in the clause starting with *By having*.

WRONG: *By having a large enough stock of products, it led to high profits.*

In your original sentence, the reader has to try to imagine exactly what you mean by *it* because that pronoun *cannot* point to the entire preceding clause. Using *it* to point mistakenly to the adverbial clause momentarily confuses the reader as (s)he looks for the precise antecedent of that pro-

noun – and cannot find one because *by having* isn't a noun (although *having* is a gerund).

You could write,

Having a large enough stock of products led to high profits or

By having a large enough stock of products, we were able to make high profits or

Having a large enough stock of products allowed us to make a high profits.

13 cannot

The usual way of writing *can not* is *cannot*.

14 capitalization not for emphasis

Stop capitalizing ordinary nouns! Do not use capitalization as a form of emphasis. Capitalize only proper nouns.

WRONG: The need for Information Assurance Certification is growing.

RIGHT: The Global Information Assurance Certification® (GIAC) granted by the Systems Administration and Network Security Institute (SANS) is growing in popularity.

WRONG: The evidence is that Computer Crime will be a major problem in the second decade of the 21st century.

RIGHT: The Computer Crime Task Force in Vermont is already a success.

15 capitalize names of specific organizations

If you are writing about a specific, named organization, you should capitalize its name.

“The full names of institutions and companies and of their departments, and sometimes their short forms, are capitalized. A *the* preceding a name, even when part of the official title, is lowercased in running text. Such generic terms as school and company are usually lowercased when used alone but are sometimes capitalized to avoid ambiguity or for promotional purposes.” [*Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th Edition, p338]

For example, one could write as follows if referring only to Norwich University: *We find that University privacy policies are weak.*

But if one were discussing universities in general, one could write, *We find that university privacy policies are weak.*

More examples:

“A *university* graduate program expects students to apply the highest standards of writing” but

“The *University* graduate program expects students to apply the highest standards of writing.”

In the first sentence, the word *university* is a generic noun; in the second, *University* refers to a specific university (to be understood by the reader) such as Norwich University. Here’s another example:

The President of the University Faculty Council announced a new retirement plan on Tuesday.

A president of a university faculty council is the spokesperson for the faculty.

16 chapter in book

Normally you should be referring to a specific article (and its author and title), not to an entire reference work. You include the overall work by putting *in* and what you have here after the specific info about the chapter. Thus,

Somebody, F. (2016). “Impressive chapter title.” Chapter 345 in Widget, P & R. Wadgett (2016), eds. *Handbook of Widgetry*, 4th edition. New York: Wiley

17 cited or sited or sighted?

The castle is *sited* on the Isle of Wight. The book is *cited* three times in the article. The bird was *sighted* three times on the Isle of Wight. And it’s a Web *site*, not a Web *sight*. [*With thanks to Guy L. Letourneau, PE.*]

18 colon before lists

Don’t put a colon immediately after a verb or a preposition that introduces a list; e.g., “My list of commonly misused words includes: *affect*, *complimentary* and *utilize*.”

That sentence can be written without a colon as “My list of commonly misused words includes *affect*, *complimentary* and *utilize*.”

One can also use *the following* or *as follows*, depending on context, with a colon, as in “My list of commonly misused words includes the following: *affect*, *complimentary* and *utilize*.” [*With thanks to Prof Don Holden*]

19 colon to show explanation

In these examples of one of the suitable uses of the colon, the clause following the colon is an explanation or expansion of the clause preceding the colon.

He was a brilliant manager: his employees wanted to do well because they liked and respected him.

The conflict seemed insoluble: both sides were convinced that their view was the only possible valid perspective.

20 comma needed

The conjunctions *however*, *therefore*, *moreover*, and *nevertheless* are normally followed by a comma.

The opposing team consistently scored goals; however, we tried to defend our goalie.

The opposing team consistently scored goals; nevertheless, we tried to defend our goalie.

BUT CONSIDER THESE EXAMPLES:

The opposing team consistently scored goals however we tried to defend our goalie.

However we tried to defend our goalie, the opposing team consistently scored goals.

In these examples, “however” means “no matter how” and is not preceded by a semicolon or followed by a comma.

AND ANOTHER EXAMPLE:

The opposing team consistently scored goals; we tried to defend our goalie nevertheless.

Notice that the terminal “nevertheless” also has no semicolon or comma when it is used as an afterthought instead of as a critical conjunction.

21 complement / compliment

The two words are close in spelling but their meanings are quite different. A *complement* is something added to perfect a thing and make it complete, whereas a *compliment* is an expression of praise: *A fine wine is the perfect complement to good cooking. The cook received many compliments from the guests that evening.* Both words are also used as verbs, and both have adjectival forms: *complementary* and *complimentary*. *Complimentary* has the special meaning *given free*; and so a *complimentary* copy of a book is

one given without charge, whereas a *complementary* copy is one that completes a set of books. ■ Microsoft® Encarta® 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

22 compound adjectives take hyphens

The 12th Edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* admitted that hyphenating words is complicated: “There are, quite literally, scores if not hundreds of ...rules for the spelling of compound words. Many of them are nearly useless because of the great number of exceptions.” [*Chicago Manual of Style*, 12th Edition, Revised (1969). University of Chicago Press (ISBN 0-226-77008-7). §6.18, p 132.] The authors of the current (15th edition) of the *Chicago Manual* provide an extensive table showing details of various types of hyphenation. [*Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th Edition, CD-ROM for Windows. Version 1.2.2. (2003). §7.90, p 302.]

The specific issue in this case is whether to hyphenate compound modifiers. The fundamental principle is that the hyphen helps to avoid even momentary doubt or confusion about the writer’s precise meaning.

For example, what is meant by *The large grained wood chest weighed a ton*? Does the writer mean that

- (a) The chest was large and it was —grained?||
- (b) The wood had large grain?

Using a hyphen in *The large-grained wood chest* eliminates all hesitation for the reader and immediately points to meaning (b).

So here are a very few key rules about hyphenating (or not) compound adjectives:

If the first word in a compound modifier is an adverb, don’t hyphenate the words. His **weakly uttered** words were nonetheless effective. She found the **poorly concealed** treasure behind the sink.

If the first word in a compound modifier is an adjective, hyphenate the words. His **weak-kneed** reaction was shameful. The **pink-toed** aardvark was astounding.

If the first word is a noun and the second is a present participle (verb form ending in *-ing*) then hyphenate the compound adjective. *The advertising copywriter’s writing was **irritation-producing** twaddle.* (Note the radically different meaning of *irritation producing twaddle*.) *She is building an **awe-inspiring** log cabin. They had an **eye-watering** meal at the Indian restaurant.*

Phrases used as modifiers should be hyphenated: *The **first-in-line** effect... but He was **first in line**. A **once-in-a-lifetime** opportunity. . . but This opportunity comes only **once in a lifetime**.*

Compounds using a number and *-odd* use a hyphen. *There were a **hundred-odd** participants.* Contrast the meaning of *There were a **hundred odd** participants* which means something quite different (indeed, potentially insulting). [By the way, people with a stronger British component in their spoken language than people in the USA or Canada might use *an hundred*.]

Numbers with a unit need a hyphen when used as modifiers. *We were in a **twenty-mile** race. It is a **sixteen-ton** squasher used by Monty Python. That's the **eight-year-old** girl who is first in her math class.*

However, percent does not take a hyphen: *We've seen an **eight percent** decline in rhinoceros dung in the classrooms this year.*

Quasi-, half-, all- and cross- take hyphens in compound adjectives. *That's a **quasi-legal** solution. It's a **half-hearted** approach. He's a high school **all-star** [team member]. Note that compound adjectives with *all-* keep the hyphen even if they follow the noun or are free-standing. She is a **cross-country** skier* (but watch out for words with cross that have been joined together; e.g., *crossword puzzle, crosscut saw*).

23 compose / comprise / consist of / constitute / include

Comprise and consist of are concerned with a whole having a number of parts. **They are used in the active voice**, with the **whole as their subject** and the **parts as their object**: *The house comprises three bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, and a living room. The meal consisted of several small dishes that everybody dipped into and shared.* Use of **comprise** in the sense - to constitute is controversial.

Avoid constructions like this if you wish to steer clear of criticism:

WRONG: The house **is comprised** of three bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, and a living room.

WRONG: Three bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, and a living room **comprise** the house.

If some rather than all the parts are mentioned, **include** may be used instead: *The house includes a kitchen and a living room on the first floor.*

Compose and constitute are concerned with parts making up a whole. **Compose** is normally used in the **passive**, and **constitute** in the **active**: *The*

team is composed of several experts in the field. The following commodities constitute the average household diet. ■ Microsoft® Encarta® 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

24 cross-references

In a published book, sometimes authors make reference to a previous source by either copying the reference outright (thus generating two identical footnotes or endnotes). Sometimes authors will refer to exactly the same point in a reference as in the immediately preceding reference; they use *ibid.* (stands for Latin *ibidem*, “the same”). If they are referring to the same work as in the immediately preceding reference but a different location, they use *op. cit.* (stands for Latin *opus citatum*, “the work cited”). However, I strongly recommend that you *not* use these forms. In an essay or manuscript where you may decide to change the order of materials or to introduce new references, you may find the backward references to be incorrect. Instead, use the **INSERT CROSS-REFERENCE** function of your word processor. In MS-Word, the function shows you a list of types of references (e.g., section headings, footnotes, tables) from which you can select a subset and then point to the specific cross-reference. You can then format the cross-reference to match other references according to your chosen style. All these cross-references will then automatically be adjusted if there are changes in the order or content of your text.

25 dangling participle

After biting me on the ankle, the dog-catcher put Fido in a cage. “Biting” modifies the proximate (nearest) noun suitable as a subject, which in this case is “dog-catcher!” This error is known as a “dangling participle.” Use *After Fido bit me on the ankle, the dog-catcher put him in a cage.*

26 data – singular or plural?

Because the meaning *data* is much like that of the singular noun *information*, and because its Latin *-a* plural announces the word’s plural status less plainly than a final *s* would, *data* is often treated as if it were singular. This use is common, and few now perceive it as wrong, especially given the word’s connotation of a collection or single unit made up of many informational subunits. All the same, in formal English, *Our data have been assembled over a number of years* would be regarded as correct, and commonly used constructions such as *very little data*, *the data shows...*, and *a*

great deal of data would be regarded as incorrect. ▪ Modified from entry in Microsoft® Encarta® 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

[MK adds: I don't fight lost battles, but this one is worth continuing. The distinction between *information* and *data* is that the former implies a mass of knowledge whereas *data* implies a collection of specific, individual facts or observations. Thus *I have information about government corruption* implies non-quantitative knowledge (e.g., a source or indications) whereas *I have data about government corruption* implies specific, quantitative information (e.g., exactly how much money a specific official received in bribes).]

27 due to vs because of

Some people object to the use of the phrase *due to* in sentences like these: *The concert has been canceled due to circumstances beyond our control* and *The flight was delayed due to bad weather*. Their objection is based on the fact that *due* is an adjective and should be used with a noun, as in *The delay was due to bad weather*, where *due* modifies *delay*. You can avoid using *due to* with a verb by replacing it with *owing to* or *because of*: *The concert has been canceled owing to circumstances beyond our control*. *The game was postponed because of bad weather*. ▪ Microsoft® Encarta® 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

28 e.g. or i.e.?

Do not confuse these two abbreviations, which mean different things and have different origins. The abbreviation *e.g.*, meaning “for or as an example,” comes from the Latin expression *exempli gratia* (“for example”). Use it when you want to list a few typical examples of the thing mentioned: *I have the laboratory equipment, e.g., [not i.e.] beakers, thermometers, and test tubes, that we need*. **Do not end a list that starts with e.g. with etc.**

[MK adds: *etc.* stands for *et cetera* and means *and the rest*. Do not spell it *ect* or leave out the period unless the house style consistently eliminates terminal periods in abbreviations.]

The abbreviation *i.e.*, meaning “that is”, that is to say, comes from the Latin expression *id est* (“that is”). Use it when you want to give a more precise description of the thing mentioned: *The hearing, i.e., [not e.g.] the preliminary hearing, is set for noon Friday*.

Two periods punctuate *e.g.* and *i.e.* in U.S. English, whereas they may be unpunctuated in British English [eg, ie,...]. [Follow] these abbreviations with commas. ▪ *Microsoft® Encarta®* 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

[MK adds: If you begin a *clause* with “e.g.” or “i.e.,” use a semicolon before the abbreviation; e.g., this sentence itself illustrates the point in question; i.e., the sentence is self-referential. Avoid starting a sentence with either of these abbreviations.]

29 elisions and interpolations

If you are quoting material and leave out words within a sentence, replace the missing text with a *three-dot ellipsis*. Thus, *If you ... leave out words within a sentence, replace the missing text with a three-dot ellipsis*. If you leave out material that crosses a sentence boundary, you must use a *four-dot ellipsis*. If you insert clarifying text of your own, surround the insertion with square brackets []. These distinctions help the reader evaluate the trustworthiness of your quotation. Thus, *If you leave out material [in a quotation] that crosses a sentence boundary, you must use a four-dot ellipsis....[to] help the reader evaluate the trustworthiness of your quotation*.

30 eminent / immanent / imminent

em•i•nent [émminənt], adjective

1. of high standing: superior in position, fame, or achievement
2. noticeable: easy to see or notice
3. high: in a high or raised position

[15th century. < Latin eminent-, present participle of *eminere* “stand out, project” < *minere* “stand, project”]

* * *

im•ma•nent [ímmanənt], adjective

1. within something: existing within or inherent in something (formal)
2. existing in all parts of universe: describes God as existing in and extending into all parts of the created universe

[Mid-16th century. < late Latin immanent-, present participle of *immanere*, literally “dwell within” < Latin *manere* “remain, dwell”]

* * *

im•ma•nence, noun & im•ma•nent•ly, adverb

Do not confuse the spelling of immanent and imminent (“about to occur”), which sound similar.

* * *

im•mi•nent [imminənt], adjective

about to occur: about to happen, or threatening to happen

[Early 16th century. < Latin imminent-, present participle of imminere “hang over” < minere “to project”]

* * *

im•mi•nence, noun / im•mi•nent•ly, adverb / im•mi•nent•ness, noun ▪

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31 fewer vs less

Right: *We will see **fewer** errors.*

Wrong: *We will see **less** errors.*

Right: *We will see **less** damage.*

Use *fewer* for what you can count; use *less* for what you have to measure.

32 every word, every phrase

Every word, every phrase, every sentence and every paragraph must add operational meaning to your technical writing. If it doesn’t add, benefit, clarify, distinguish, explain, or focus your meaning, leave it out! For example, *At this point in time, using the phrase “at this point in time” makes the author look silly.* What’s the alternative? *At this point in flavor? At this point in color?*

33 frankly, honestly, truthfully

Frankly, honestly, really, sincerely, truthfully – all these expressions raise legitimate doubt about the frankness, honesty, reality, sincerity and truth of everything else in the writing that is not prefaced by these adverbs. Avoid using these words in reference to yourself. They can be used effectively when describing someone else.

WRONG: **Frankly**, I can’t see why you would marry him.

RIGHT: She told him **frankly** that she would never marry him.

See also *in fact* / *to tell the truth*.

34 full justification

Don't use full justification with your word-processing software; it makes it difficult to spot extra spaces in the text and makes a mess when some lines are much shorter than others in your text.

*I convert student text to left-justified as a matter of course when editing or **grading papers because I dislike** seeing gaps in the text resulting from noticeably shorter lines like the one I put in boldface above.*

35 general consensus

Redundant: *consensus* means *general opinion* or *general agreement*. Writing *general consensus* is redundant. This error is similar to *ATM machine* (automatic teller machine machine), *PIN* number (personal identification number number), and *VIN* number (vehicle identification number number).

36 gerundial takes the possessive

In my experience, the following is grammatical rule little known in the USA: *the gerundial always takes the possessive*.

For example, the following sentence is wrong: It having three legs made it very odd indeed.

The subject is the noun version of the verb *to have* (*having*), so it should be possessive (*its*), as follows: *Its having three legs made it very odd indeed*.

A simpler example: My going to the store delayed the whole family by half an hour.

[When I was a graduate student starting my PhD in 1972, my research professor popped out of his office to ask all of us in the lab "Is it "My going to the store" or "Me going to the store?" Without thinking, I said, "The gerundial always takes the possessive" and kept washing glassware. I noticed a sudden silence in the lab: everyone was staring at me in disbelief. I understood then that US schools did not have quite the same educational details as my own experience had led me to accept as normal.]

37 grammar & style checker

Didn't you enable grammar/style checking? On my system, this word is underlined with a green wavy line; floating the cursor over it shows a sug-

gestion for improvement (correct, in this case, although it's not always on the mark). In Word, use **Word Options | Proofing | When correcting spelling and grammar in Word** options to select **Grammar & Style** as well as spelling.

38 **ibid.**

If a second passage from the same source is quoted close to the first and there is no intervening quotation from a different source, “*ibid.*” (set in roman) may be used in the second parenthetical reference (e.g., “*ibid.*, 114”). If a quotation from another source has intervened, a shortened reference may be given (e.g., “Hawking, *Brief History of Time*, 114”). ▪ *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition, §11.74

39 **impact**

Many careful writers strongly dislike the verb *impact* in any figurative sense whatsoever, as in *The revised budget impacts the university unfavorably* and *The revised budget impacts on the athletic program*. Though the verb in senses extending beyond the infliction of physical force is undeniably common in business, legal, journalistic, and political discourse, anyone who hopes to achieve an effect even faintly literary [or scholarly, adds MK] should avoid it in favor of *affect*, *change*. Use of the verb is uncontroversial only in physical senses: *The car impacted the railing*. By the same token, the noun *impact* should not be used as a catchall alternative for words like *effect* or *impression*; rather, it should be used to convey the idea of powerful, dramatic consequence: *The sudden rise in prices had a calamitous impact on many economies*. ▪ Microsoft® Encarta® 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

40 **imply vs infer**

To **imply** something is to *suggest* or *bring to mind* an idea without making it explicit. For example, the question *When did you stop taking bribes?* implies that the person addressed must have been taking bribes. In contrast, to **infer** something is to deduce it or to reason towards a conclusion. *I inferred that he had been taking bribes from observing him to accept many money-filled, unmarked envelopes from building contractors without recording these sums in his taxable income*. Unfortunately, a recent dictionary accepts the use of *infer* as equivalent to *imply* – an unnecessary and re-

grettable loss of precision in our language. [With thanks to Prof John MacMichael for noting this distinction in grading one of his MSIA students' essays.]

41 in fact / to tell the truth

Putting *In fact* or *to tell the truth* in front of an opinion doesn't magically convert opinion into fact. And in cases where the statement *is* factual, the phrase—in fact!—casts doubt on the veracity of everything that is not preceded by those words. DON'T USE IT.

42 indefinite antecedents

Avoid indefinite antecedents for pronominal adjectives *this* and *that*. Provide a specific object so that the reader does not have to guess to know exactly to what you are referring. Thus WRONG: *The countries went to war in 1914. This led to serious death tolls across Europe in the next four years.* RIGHT: *The countries went to war in 1914. This **conflict** led to serious death tolls across Europe in the next four years.*

43 indicative and subjunctive moods

Compare the meanings of these sentences:

RIGHT: It is also important that the staff *understands* the technical field in which they work.

RIGHT BUT DIFFERENT: It is also important that the staff *understand* the technical field in which they work.

Sentence (1) illustrates the normal *indicative* mood of the verb *to understand*. The sentence means that *the fact that the staff already understands the field* is viewed as important.

Sentence (2) illustrates the *subjunctive* mood of *to understand*. The sentence means that the staff *ought* to understand the field.

[Subtle but useful.]

44 intensifiers weaken your text

Don't use intensifiers such as *highly*, *extremely* and *very* in your professional writing. Such adjectives and adverbs *weaken* your text instead of strengthening it. They give the impression that you have to defend your position because the reader won't agree with your appraisal. Compare *This*

attack was effective and destructive with *This attack was very effective and extremely destructive*. See also *mealy-mouthed adverbs*

45 Internet and Web vs internet and web

An *internet* is a collection of networks that are linked together; the *Internet* is the global TCP/IP-based internet that people often call *the Net* or *the Net*. A *web* is made by spiders; the *Web* refers to the World Wide Web, a system based on HTTP for linking Web pages written in HTML.

46 ... is because.... / ... is when....

The informal usage illustrated in *A breach of authenticity is when someone generates false descriptions or false attributions of data* should not appear in formal writing. Nothing “is when.” Perhaps it *occurs when* or perhaps it *is defined as having* but it isn’t *is when!* Similarly contempt pours upon the head of the unfortunate user of *...is because....* as in *The loss of credibility is because the usage sounds illiterate*. That sentence correctly be written as *The loss of credibility occurs because the usage sounds illiterate* or *The loss of credibility is due to the usage’s sounding illiterate*.

47 italicize foreign words

For example, “The French mechanic referred to the clutch as the *embrayage*.” However, commonly-used Latin expressions such as *ad hoc*, *ex post facto*, *ibid.*, *op.cit*, *loc. cit.*, *e.g.*, *i.e.*, and *viz.* are not typically italicized.

48 its and it’s

Alas for anyone learning English as a foreign language, the possessive of *it* is *its*, not *it’s*. *It’s* is the contraction of *it is*. Get over, ah, it.

49 literally is not an intensifier

Don’t use *literally* as if it a generic intensifier. Think about the following ridiculous sentence:

WRONG: *He was literally falling apart in shock when he saw the number of errors in his draft essay.*

No, he wasn’t. He was upset but he did not in fact fall into pieces.

RIGHT: *He was literally cut in two when he fell into the sawmill.*

50 loath, loth, or loathe?

Do not confuse the spelling of *loath* (or its variant *loth*) and *loathe*.

Loath (or loth) is an adjective meaning “unwilling or reluctant” and is usually followed by to, as in *I was loath [or loth] to admit it*.

It is also occasionally encountered in the fixed phrase *nothing loath* (or *nothing loth*).

Loathe is a verb meaning “dislike intensely”: *I loathe this kind of music*.

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51 long quotations

If you have a long quotation, you may indent it; you do not have to use quotation marks for such indented material – particularly useful if there are double-quotation marks (“”) in the block. Those would otherwise have to be converted to single quotation marks (‘ ’) in the quotation itself.

52 majority as a singular or plural?

When you use majority to refer to a group of people or things as a unit or whole, use a singular verb: *A majority of the Senate intends to vote “Nay.”*

When you use majority to refer to people within a group, use a plural verb: *The majority of our students live on campus, with a minority living in the surrounding neighborhoods.*

In the second sentence, each student is under consideration; hence, the plural verb.

Ensure that any pronouns referring to majority are in the same number denoted by majority. Thus, it is incorrect to say *A majority of the Senate has cast their votes*. Say instead *A majority of the Senate has cast its vote*, or, if you are speaking of the senators as individuals, say *A majority of the senators have cast their votes*. ▪ Microsoft® Encarta® 2008. © 1993-2007 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

53 manual linefeeds

Never use manual linefeeds (ENTER) to start a new page; use a hard page break (CTL-ENTER) so that you don’t find your text slipping up the previous page or starting in the middle of a page when you reformat your text. In addition, use the **paragraph format** functions to separate paragraphs from

each other automatically rather than constantly remembering to press ENTER twice. ▪See also *page breaks*.

54 many & often

Dangerous word. Now you have to prove that the frequency qualifies as "often" by defining the term and providing objective evidence that your generalization is correct. I recommend that you avoid "many" and "often" unless you are prepared to find the evidence and refer to it. ▪See also *mealy-mouthed adverbs* below.

55 mealy-mouthed adverbs

Often, quite, rather, somewhat, usually, very – these adverbs weaken your writing. Think hard before using any of them: are they necessary? Are they helpful? *Usually* you will *tend* to find that they are *rather* useless and *somewhat* pointless as well as *very often* being *quite* irritating! ▪See also *intensifiers*.

56 metric prefixes

Metric units (nanometer, kilogram) are not capitalized. Thus *The enormous housecat weighed 10 kilograms*.

n = nano = 10^{-9}

μ = micro = 10^{-6}

m = milli = 10^{-3}

K = kilo = 10^3

M = mega = 10^6

G = giga = 10^9

T = tera = 10^{12}

P = peta = 10^{15}

E = exa = 10^{18}

There is a difference in application of these prefixes when used for measuring amounts of storage in bytes or bits. Uppercase "B" as in KB, MB etc. signifies bytes (characters); lowercase "b" indicates bits instead of bytes (8 bits per byte). The uppercase symbol corresponds roughly to the official metric prefixes – KB, MB, GB, TB, PB – but is modified to correspond to powers of 2. The full names of the units are not capitalized. Thus We have three terabytes of storage for System 1; System 2 has 12 TB. The units are as follows:

KB = kilobyte = 2×10 bytes = 1024 bytes
MB = megabyte = 2×20 bytes = 1,048,576 bytes
GB = gigabyte = 2×30 bytes = 1.073×10^9 bytes
TB = terabyte = 2×40 bytes = 1.099×10^{12} bytes
PB = petabyte = 2×50 bytes = 1.125×10^{15} bytes
EB = exabyte = 2×60 bytes = 1.152×10^{18} bytes

57 most anyone

Most anyone is a colloquialism inappropriate for formal writing. Use *Almost anyone* or *Almost everyone* depending on your specific meaning.

58 none is or none are?

This correction is very much a matter of taste. Technically, *none* (a contraction of *not one*) is singular. *I checked all the bottles: none is empty.*

However, many good writers now use the word in the plural: *I checked all the bottles; none are empty.*

At this point in the evolution of our language, it's a matter of personal preference which one you use; just keep your usage internally consistent within your document.

59 number of the verb must accord with number of the subject

You have incorrectly made the number of the verb accord with the proximate noun (the nearest to the verb) instead of with the actual subject of the verb. This common error often occurs with compound subjects (e.g.,

WRONG: The color and shape of the object is important instead of

RIGHT: The color and shape of the object are important).

A frequent source of confusion is a singular **subject** that is modified with a **plural in a prepositional phrase**; e.g.,

WRONG: The **cause** of the numerous errors **were** traced to poor training which should use *was* because the subject of the verb is *cause* and not *errors*. The proximate (near) noun *errors* tricks the writer into making the verb accord with that word instead of with the subject.

RIGHT: The cause of the numerous errors **was** traced to poor training.

Another issue is illustrated in this sequence:

WRONG: The **attacker** can do [such and such]. Furthermore, **they** can do [whatever].

If *they* refers to *attacker* then either (a) make it *attackers* or (b) use *the attacker* again or (c) use *he*. Some authors alternate the use of *he* and *she* throughout the text for variety and to avoid gender bias. You can also use the clumsy *he or she* (but not *he/she*).

60 number: singular or plural?

Number is a collective noun that can take a singular or plural verb depending on how you use it. If you put the definite article *the* in front of *number*, you are stipulating one particular number, even if *of* and a series of things comes next. Therefore, you must use a singular verb with *number* preceded by *the*: *The number of lab coats available is limited.* On the other hand, if you put the indefinite article *a* before *number*, you must use a plural verb: *A number of lab coats are available.* ▪ Microsoft® Encarta® 2007. © 1993-2006 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

61 numbers

Spell out numbers from one to ten and use numerals for 11 and up.

62 got ... off of

Not *I got the quotation off of a Website*; it must be written (and said) as *I got the quotation from a Website*. Better would be *I retrieved the quotation from a Website*.

63 oftentimes vs often times

Don't use *oftentimes* at all. And *often times* is pointless verbiage: what else could you be referring to? Often flavors? Often equations? Just write *often*.

64 only modifies the proximate verb

WRONG: I only *need* one tomato.

RIGHT: I need only *one* tomato.

RIGHT: I only *threw* one tomato, but Bob smashed his with a sledgehammer.

Note that in the last example, a poor writer (or someone speaking colloquially) might believe that "I only threw one" and "I threw only one" mean the same – but they don't, as you can see from the second part of that example.

65 orphans

The last line of a paragraph may appear all by itself at the top of a page. That line is known by editors and typesetters as an *orphan*. In Word, you can prevent orphans automatically by highlighting text (usually all of your text) and using the **Paragraph | Line and Page Breaks** settings: check **Widow/Orphan control**.

66 out there

Students often include the useless phrase —out there|| in their writing; e.g.,
- There are many options *out there* for students.|| STOP THAT.

67 page breaks

Sometimes you need to force an entire block of text to stay together on one page. If all of that block doesn't fit at the bottom of the current page, it should move to the next page. Instead of using a manual page break (in Word, CTL-ENTER) in the middle of your text, you can highlight the section of text in one paragraph that has to stay together and, in Word, use the **Paragraph | Line and Page Breaks** function to check **Keep lines together**. If you have headings or multiple paragraphs in the block, also check **Keep with next**. You can also force page breaks before certain types of headings automatically by checking **Page break before**. ▪ See also *manual linefeeds* and *page formatting*.

68 page formatting

Never use manual page formatting; always allow or force your word processor to create page breaks, page headers, and page footers. Manual formatting (e.g., writing out a page footer at the bottom of each page) immediately becomes incorrect if anyone changes the page margins, the typeface, point sizes, or leading (inter-line and inter-character spacing) of your text. Such manual formatting then becomes stranded in odd places in the resulting text. In particular, avoid forcing a manual page break in the middle of your text; insertions, deletions and other changes can push the page break into a place where it causes an unexpected new page. ▪ See also *manual linefeeds* and *page breaks*.

69 paragraph break

What's a good place for a paragraph break? When you change the focus of your writing to a significantly new topic, break your paragraph to help the reader implicitly grasp the change.

70 paragraph spacing

I remove all double-carriage-returns and switched students' formatting to 6 pt before and 6 pt after every paragraph. Automatic formatting options allow you to skip having to insert an extra space after each paragraph and therefore helps you maintain a consistent style throughout your document.

71 parallel construction

Think about the meaning of components that follow conjunctions such as *and* or *or*. The normal pattern is that these conjunctions apply to the proximate (nearest preceding) verb. For example, the sentence, *Medical information can be hacked by civilians using computers to obtain patient records or change different medications* results in momentary confusion as the reader tries to parse —...to obtain records or change.... by interpreting *change* as a noun in parallelism with *records*. To ensure seamless communication, write, —...to obtain patient records or **to** change....” Another example of a non-parallel construction is *Medical information can be hacked by civilians or professionals can access the data directly*. In this case, the first impression is that medical information can be hacked by civilians or by professionals – not the intended meaning. The sentence could be correctly written as *Medical information can be hacked by civilians; professionals can access the data directly*.

Lack of parallel construction often shows up in lists; for example,

The key factors in preventing data leakage are as follows:

Encrypt all sensitive data

Assigning access privileges with care

....

The list should use the same verb form in all entries; thus either *encrypt* and *assign* or *encrypting* and *assigning* or *encryption of* and *assignment of*. Similar parallelism should apply to lists that include *they* in some items but *he* or *she* or *one* in others.

72 plethora

pleth·o·ra [pléthərə] noun

1. large or excessive amount or number: a very large amount of something or number of things, especially an excessive amount (formal)

a plethora of new scholarly articles on the subject

2. excess of blood: an excess of blood in a part of the body, especially in the facial veins, causing a ruddy complexion

[Mid-16th century. Via late Latin < Greek plēthorē < plēthein "be full"]

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Therefore, do not write “a plethora of” when you mean “lots of.” A plethora refers to BAD STUFF, not just lots of stuff.

RIGHT: My students display a plethora of grammatical and stylistic errors due to the stupid natural-language training that contaminated the teaching of English from the 1970s onward.

WRONG: My students display a plethora of talents for original thinking.

73 premier / premiere

Premier (adjective) is *the best or most important* or (noun) *a prime minister*; **premiere** (noun) is *a first public performance* and, unfortunately, also an adjective meaning – wait for it – *the best or most important*.

Thus: The Premier of Saskatchewan, along with three other provincial premiers, attended the premiere of Swan Lake on Tuesday, starring the premiere ballerina of the Saskatchewan Provincial Ballet corps – a premier example of near-homophonic word usage.

74 punctuation marks inside quotation

Punctuation marks go inside quotations in US usage but outside in UK usage. Thus

WRONG: —He went inside the house.

RIGHT: —He went inside the house.

You can set your preference for the spell checker to catch and correct these errors in Word using the sequence Office Button | Word Options | Proofing | Writing Style – Settings | Require – Punctuation required with quotes – inside.

75 purposely or purposefully?

These two adverbs are sometimes confused. Although both imply that somebody has a specific purpose in mind, they are used in different contexts and are not interchangeable.

Purposely means “deliberately or with an express purpose in mind”: *I purposely left the door unlocked.*

Purposefully means “in a determined way” or “with a definite goal”: *She strode purposefully across the yard.* ■ Microsoft® Encarta® 2008. © 1993-2007 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

76 quotation marks are not for emphasis

Don’t use quotation marks as a form of emphasis – they’re for quoted materials. I don’t see how *this* text is a quotation. I just wrote, “I don’t see how *this* text is a quotation.” You *can* use italics if there is some reason to emphasize a *specific* word or phrase; e.g., when introducing a technical term. BTW, my favorite example of this kind of error is from a highway restaurant whose sign read *Good “Food”*. Another one of this type was “*Good*” *Food*.

77 quotation marks are not for slang

Do not put colloquial expressions or slang in quotation marks in a misguided attempt to distance yourself from using such language.

WRONG: He is a real “jerk.”

RIGHT: He is a real jerk.

“RIGHT” here assumes that using the word “jerk” is OK in a specific context. But make up your mind: if it’s OK to use the expression, don’t put quotation marks around it. If it’s not OK, don’t use the word at all.

78 quotations: standards

You may NOT alter the text of a quotation without using the scholarly standards for indicating such changes:

You must use [] for inserted or changed words.

You must use ellipses (...) for piece missing from middle of a sentence and for missing piece spanning more than one sentence).

You must put [sic] (which means *thus* in Latin) following a misspelling in the original quotation.

79 reading aloud

I urge you to read your text aloud as one of your editing stages. You can catch many errors that slip by simple scanning. Exaggerate the effects of punctuation so that you can spot errors more easily.

80 real

“Real” is a tricky word because it is, ironically, highly subjective. Sometimes you can be more specific; e.g., you can use “effective,” “operational,” “efficient,” “documented,” “formal,” or “official” to show what you mean. Another problem is called *redefinition* in logic. For example, someone may write “There are no real doctors in New York City” – only to admit that to be a real doctor by their definition, someone must be able to cure all known diseases by the laying on of hands. That error is known as *begging the question by high redefinition*. Similarly, claiming that there are a million doctors in New York City may reveal that the speaker defines a doctor as anyone who can administer a pill. That error is *begging the question by low redefinition*. But anyway, avoid “real.” Really!

[For an example of a challengeable use of *real*, see the next entries in this document!]

81 real figure and table numbers

Use real (word-processor-defined) figure and table numbers, not manual numbers. If you change the order of your figures or tables, your manual numbers may have to be repaired one by one, whereas word-process labels readjust themselves automatically.

82 real footnotes or endnotes, not manually-entered superscripts or brackets

If you don’t use automatically-numbered notes, adding one in the middle will force you to renumber all the references following – by hand! Using automated endnotes creates an automatic list at the end of the document so you don’t have to do it by hand. You can also get a complete list of footnotes by converting them to endnotes, copying that list, then reversing the conversion. Paste your copy into the document as text only to get your workable, editable list. If you have Word 2007, enter your references into the *Manage Sources* tool under *References*, which allows you to create footnotes or endnotes and also to create a bibliography automatically in

various standard formats. And use INSERT CROSS-INDEX if you have to refer to the same source, not a new footnote with *ibid* or *op. cit.*

83 real headings

Use your word-processor's headings feature to create headings, not manually-formatted headings. The automatic heading style can be modified to suit your preferences – and all the headings of that level can then instantly change to meet your requirements (saves a lot of time and avoids inconsistencies of formatting). In Word, real headings also let you create a table of contents instantly (in a variety of styles) as well as showing up in the document map, a nifty feature that sits to the left of your screen and lets you not only see the structure of your work but also click on any heading to move to it.

84 references

Here are some notes on how to provide detailed information about every document you reference.

Word 2007 offers an excellent bibliographic function in the Citations & Bibliography section of the toolbar. Use Manage Sources to create your list of sources. You can then format your references according to a ten different styles including APA, Chicago, and MLA.

One popular method is to use a footnote for the first occurrence of the reference. The note includes author (date) Title (*italicized* for a book, “enquoted” for a chapter or an article) and page. E.g., Whosit (2003). “Whosit mean?” p. 34.

You can use endnotes of the same style if you like instead of footnotes.

If you have a quotation or a pointer to the same place in the same article you have just cited in the previous reference, you can avoid another footnote by making it clear in the text that you are using the same reference; e.g., “Whosit (2003) continues with. . . .” If necessary, insert a cross-reference.

A riskier alternative is to use a note with “*Ibid.*” which stands for “*Ibidem*” or “in the same place.” However, if you change your text to introduce a different reference, the “*Ibid.*” will be wrong. Use cross-references (*insert cross-reference*) using your word processing capabilities instead of *Ibid.*

If the immediately following reference is to the same work but to a different place, you can note “*Op. cit.* p. 433” – (“*Opus citatum*,” – the work cit-

ed). Again, you run the risk of making this reference wrong if you insert another reference in between the first and second reference to the work in question. I do **not** recommend this method – use cross-references.

All of these methods require a *Bibliography* or *List of Works Cited* (or *Referenced*) at the end of the paper. Typically, you will alphabetize by author and by date within author if necessary. Use lowercase letters for multiple works in a year: thus Whatsit (2007a)... Whatsit (2007b)... Whosit (1997)...

85 repeated errors

When you find yourself making repeated typing errors, use the FIND/REPLACE function to locate all the bad spellings at once, even if they are not recognized by the spell-checker, and change them one by one using the confirmation dialog. Don't change them all automatically – you might discover a place where the different spelling happens to be correct. The other tool you can use when you *know* that you consistently misspell a word is to add it to the automatic correction list of your word processor. In Word, that feature is known as the *AutoCorrect* function.

86 restrictive and non-restrictive clauses

A restrictive clause (a clause that defines which type of object it is modifying) does not take commas; a non-restrictive clause (a clause that adds supplementary information) does take commas.

Consider the meaning of *The dog which was brown bit me*. The **restrictive** clause (*which was brown* written without commas) cannot be removed without altering the meaning – specifically, that of all the possible dogs the writer could be pointing to, it was specifically the brown one which bit the writer. There is presumably only one brown dog in the group of potential biters.

In contrast, *The dog, which was brown, bit me* uses a **non-restrictive** clause (note the commas) and simply adds information that could be removed without losing the main meaning of the sentence. In other words, the main point of the sentence is that the dog bit the writer. Other dogs, may also have bitten the writer and the fact that this particular dog was brown is incidental to the purpose of the sentence. It is even possible that there were several brown dogs that might have bitten the writer.

87 run-on sentence

“A semicolon is used to mark a more important break in sentence flow than that marked by a comma. Use a semicolon between the two parts of a compound sentence (two independent clauses) when they are not connected by a conjunction: The controversial portrait was removed from the entrance hall; in its place was hung a realistic landscape.”

¶5.61 (p. 5.64) from *A Manual of Style*, Twelfth Edition, Revised (1969). University of Chicago Press (ISBN 0-226-77009-7). Later editions easily available, including the 15th on CD-ROM.

Additional comments from MK: Don’t use a comma to join independent sentences. For example, you would not write, “This is a run-on sentence, don’t use a comma to join independent sentences.” You can separate independent clauses by a period, a semicolon or a colon. You can also use conjunctions such as *and*, *or*, *but*, *however*, *nevertheless* to link independent clauses. Note that *however* and *nevertheless* normally take a semicolon or a period; e.g., “I went to the store; however, I forgot my wallet. Nevertheless, the clerk gave me the food on account.”

88 sentence fragment

Every sentence must have at least a subject and a verb. For example the second “sentence” in this pair is a fragment:

WRONG: This habit would have cost him \$1,470 per account he owned. A substantial fee simply to play a computer game.

The error could be corrected by using a subject and a noun:

RIGHT: This habit would have cost him \$1,470 per account he owned. That **level** of expense **is** a substantial fee simply to play a computer game.

Another solution would be to combine the two components using a dash, as in the following:

RIGHT: This habit would have cost him \$1,470 per account he owned—a substantial fee simply to play a computer game.

89 short, simple words vs long, fancy words

I always wince when I see *utilize*. What’s wrong with *use*? It’s shorter and it means the same!

Aim for simple, clear language. Many editors criticize other fancy words such as *assist* instead of *help*, *effectuate* instead of *make*, *efficacious* instead of *effective* and *objective* instead of *goal*.

Long words used only for effect don't impress anyone except pompous fools. I remember an incident in 1976 when an attractive young woman on a project changed one of the sentences in my *curriculum vitae* from "He **helped** his colleagues with statistical analysis" to "He **assisted** his colleagues with statistical analysis." I asked her why she was changing the word and she answered, "It sounds better." I retorted, "No it doesn't: *help* is shorter and it means the same thing." She sneered, "So what?" I answered, "AHA! I have been fighting people like you all my life and now I have finally met the enemy!" I didn't ask for a date (and presumably wouldn't have gotten one).

90 sign in vs sign-in

Verb: sign in (*He will sign in this evening.*)

Noun: sign-in (*His sign-in was at 19:30.*)

Adjective: sign-in (*The sign-in log is on the desk.*)

91 single line breaks for paragraphs

Many beginners use double line breaks to separate paragraphs. Unless there is specific reason for so doing (e.g., preparing text for HTML formatting), you can simplify your task by setting the style to put extra space at the top and bottom of every paragraph (usually 6pt above and below) and then using only one line break for each paragraph. That process avoids the occasional glitch where one forgets to hit ENTER twice; it's a simpler approach to paragraph formatting that has become popular with writers and standard in many publishing houses. You can also define whether to indent the first line of your paragraph automatically or not instead of hitting the TAB key every time (and occasionally forgetting to do so).

92 so-called "cliché"

If you are going to use a cliché, use it without embarrassment or don't use it at all. Don't use quotation marks around it and don't use *so-called* unless you mean precisely that: that some people refer to the object of your phrase in a particular way.

WRONG: He seemed "mad as a hatter."

RIGHT BUT UNIMAGINATIVE AND BORING: He seemed mad as a hatter.

WRONG: That solution was his so-called "ace in the hole."

RIGHT BUT etc.: That solution was his ace in the hole.

Be wary of combining clichés: you can cause much unwanted amusement by mixing metaphors; e.g., “We ran it up the flagpole and it sprouted wings, so we kicked it around some more and then plunged in with both feet.”

93 state (verb) & conjunctions

When the verb *to state* means the equivalent of to say (e.g., to articulate, to announce, to explain), it is properly followed by a conjunction such as *that* or *why*.

WRONG: He stated the heater had turned off at 19:00.

RIGHT: He stated that the heater had turned off at 19:00.

RIGHT: He stated why the heater had turned off at 19:00: the boiler exploded.

However, if *state* is followed by an *object* of the verb, there is no conjunction:

RIGHT: He stated the rules clearly.

[The conjunction *that* avoids a momentary ambiguity in the reader’s mind about whether the noun following *state* is an object or the subject of a verb to follow.]

94 substantive assertions

Provide references to scholarly or professional publications that supply evidence to support your statement of fact (a *substantive assertion*). For example, “Most people do such-and-such.” Claiming that “most” people do so is a substantive assertion – the claim that more than 50% of all the people in the population in question do such-and-such. It is a *statement of fact* and must be justified by reference to research.

95 subjunctive vs conditional

The conditional *would* implies that you are focusing on a contingency:

RIGHT: “I *would* go if I had a ride.”

Had in this sentence is subjunctive – it refers to something that is not true (or not true yet).

The subjunctive *were* implies a hypothetical:

RIGHT: “If I *were* to go, I am sure I would have a good time.”

Would in this sentence is still conditional.

A typical error is to write

WRONG: “If I *would have* gone...” which should be

RIGHT: “Had I gone” or

RIGHT: “If I had gone....”

In general, one must not write “If... would...” in a single clause.

96 such as vs like

Don’t use like to introduce a list of specific examples. Thus Respected members of society **like** doctors, priests and teachers.... should be rewritten as Respected members of society **such as** doctors, priests and teachers.... The word like in this context implies similarity; it can also be momentarily misinterpreted as a verb.

97 symbol or numeral does not start a sentence

Don’t start a sentence with a symbol (e.g., §, °, %), a numeral (½, 2, 3rd) or a year (2003); spell out the word instead. The *Chicago Manual of Style* suggests that if the result seems clumsy, you can use a different construction for your sentence to avoid the problem. Thus *Two thousand seven was a bad year for penguins* could be rewritten as *The year 2007 was bad for penguins*.

98 table of contents

To generate a complete ToC, use “real” headings for all of your headings. Once you have headings at level 1 (and any other levels you wish) you can use the Insert Table of Contents function to create a formatted, automatically-updatable ToC. In Word, to delete a single line within the ToC, place your cursor at the end of the line, use BACKSPACE to highlight only that line, and press DELETE. You can right-click anywhere in the ToC to update page numbers or recreate the entire table.

99 their / there / they’re

I’m sure it’s enough to list these homophones for you to get the point.

100 topical headings

Break your text up by inserting descriptive headings. You may use one or more levels of heading. Be sure to use the Styles feature of your word processor so that you can identify and reformat all level x headings in a single

operation. Don't manually format each instance of a heading – you risk forgetting some and ending up with inconsistent formatting. In addition, repeated manual formatting is a waste of your time.

101 transitive verbs require conjunction for a dependent clause.

A transitive verb (e.g., *ensure*) takes an object; the noun that follows it is usually assumed to be the object. Thus

RIGHT: The lock ensures security of the jewels.

RIGHT: The doctor ensures the health of the patient.

However, if one writes a *dependent clause* following a transitive verb, one normally has to start with a conjunction such as *that*.

These measures demonstrate that all information is safe.

The doctor ascertained why his patients were successfully avoiding fried foods: his prescription made them throw up when they ate fatty materials.

The conjunction (e.g., *that*, *why*) ensures that the reader doesn't get confused for a moment about the object of the transitive verb preceding it.

102 try and...

Do not write *try and* do something: *try* must be followed by an infinitive starting with *to* unless you are referring to judicial processes.

WRONG: I will try *and* avoid clumsy phrases.

RIGHT: I will try *to* avoid clumsy phrases.

But note:

RIGHT: The prosecutor will try to convict the defendant of the felony.

RIGHT: The prosecutor tried and convicted the defendant of a felony.

103 underlining

Underlining is an archaic holdover from the days, decades ago now, when typewriters could not print italics. Underlining was a signal to typesetters that the underlined words were to be set in italic. Today, we just put them in *italic* ourselves. Another reason to avoid underlining for emphasis is that hyperlinks are conventionally shown as underlined, causing potential confusion to the reader who tries to click anything underlined in the hope of getting additional information.

104 useless introductory padding

Don't start your paragraphs with useless introductions such as "First and foremost" or "What is...?" or "There are many important aspects of this subject" or "You may wonder why...." Just get to the point directly.

105 useless words

Of course, naturally, obviously – these words are often thrown in at the start of a sentence without concern for their precise meaning in that particular sentence? Ask yourself how the proposed sentence would lose meaning by leaving out these trash words? Compare:

WRONG: Obviously, the problem requires additional thought.

RIGHT: The problem requires additional thought.

WRONG: Of course, I dislike C++.

RIGHT: I dislike C++

WRONG: Naturally, I chose tensor calculus as my next course.

RIGHT: I chose tensor calculus as my next course.

But note that these adverbial expressions or words may be perfectly legitimate in a description of a person or of a situation:

RIGHT: He spoke naturally and fluently about his experiences during the war.

RIGHT: The inclusion of preparations for handicapped access were a matter of course by that time.

RIGHT: She was obviously embarrassed by her husband's drunken behavior.

106 violating word-count limits

Be careful about word counts. The limits on [MSIA] weekly essays are 900 to 1100 (not counting cover page, standard introduction about yourself (if any), table of contents, footnotes or endnotes, and bibliography) and I penalize undercounts and overcounts. You have <xxxx> words starting here and ending just before the Bibliography.

So don't do this again. Not one word below 900; not one word above 1100. [Yeah, yeah yeah – I know – "rigid and dogmatic obsessive compulsive nerd imposing his neurosis on everyone else" – but following details of instructions – such as those from a CEO - can make a tremendous difference in how your professionalism is rated. Think of it as an exercise or a game.]

107 who versus that

Use the pronoun *who*, not *that*, when referring to people.

WRONG: I preferred to see the doctor **that** cured my father.

RIGHT: I preferred to see the doctor **who** cured my father.

RIGHT: It was the doctor's help **that** cured by father.

108 whoever vs whomever

Use *whomever* when the word follows or is the object of a preposition; e.g.,

RIGHT: You can give it to *whomever* you want.

WRONG: You can give it to *whoever* you want.

That example could be rewritten "...to *whomever* you want to give it."

Whomever is the object of the implied preposition *to*.

RIGHT: You can give it to *whoever* arrives first.

WRONG: You can give it to *whomever* arrives first.

In this case, "whoever arrives first" is the object of *to* and "whoever" is the subject of the verb "arrives."

Note: "whoever" is in the *nominative* case; "whomever" is in the *objective* case.

109 whom vs who

When you need to use *who* as the **object** of a verb, use *whom*, which is the *objective case* for *who*.

Thus

RIGHT: *Who* gave you the ball?

and

RIGHT: To *whom* did you give the ball? But

WRONG: Who was it for? [→ Whom was it for?]

The distinction is particularly important when you start the sentence with *Who* or *Whom* (as may occur if you finish a question with a preposition – some older editors still frown on that practice), as in *Whom did you give the ball to?* The objective case of the pronoun avoids any ambiguity, even for a moment, about whether the pronoun is the subject of the verb that follows it (*Who did...*).

Be careful about the pronoun *whomever*, though.

WRONG: Give the ball to **whomever** asks for it.

RIGHT: Give the ball to **whoever** asks for it.

The entire clause (*whoever asks for it*), not the pronoun alone, is the object of the preposition *to*. *Whoever* is the subject of the verb and therefore in the *nominative* case.

110 widow

The first line of a paragraph may appear all by itself at the bottom of a page. That line is known by editors and typesetters as a *widow*. In Word, you can prevent widows automatically by highlighting text (usually all of your text) and using the **Paragraph | Line and Page Breaks** settings: check **Widow/Orphan control**.

111 Wikipedia

I support the sponsors of Wikipedia (Wikimedia) every year with a donation. However we should not use *Wikipedia* as a *primary* reference. You can use it as a source for further research, but it is not trustworthy as a primary source because the content is unstable. You might point readers to an article that has been vandalized by nine-year-olds or by political propagandists such as the people who tried to change the entry on Paul Revere to make it seem as if Sarah Palin's description (of how he rode around warning the British that the Americans were coming) were correct. See the following article:

Farkas, M. (2006). "Wikipedia: What is it Good For?"

MSIA Director's Corner archives <

http://grad.norwich.edu/msia/directorscorner/02_20_06/index.html >

112 would be happy to

Don't write "*I would be happy to respond to your question*" and then proceed to respond to the question. You're responding, so there's no conditionality. Just write "*I am happy to respond to your question.*" On the other hand, an extortionist might write, "*I would be happy to return your disk drive if you send me \$100,000 in unmarked \$100 bills.*" Or someone might justifiably write, "*I would be happy to return your disk drive if I had not accidentally immersed it in dishwater and then tried to dry it in our convection oven at 400F.*"

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10 Functions of the Comma

& some questions on its usage

by Mark Nichol

A comma is a versatile punctuation mark, serving ten basic functions. Here's an enumeration, with examples.

1. Separate the elements in a series: “Groucho, Harpo, and Chico developed the philosophy called Marxism.”

Many periodicals and websites, and most colloquially written books, omit the serial, or final, comma, but it is all but mandatory in formal writing and is recommended in all usage. As language maven Bryan Garner observes, “Omitting the serial comma may cause ambiguities, whereas including it never will.”

2. Separate coordinated independent clauses: “I like the Marx Brothers, but she thinks they’re too silly.” (An independent clause is one that can stand on its own as a sentence but is linked with another by a conjunction and/or a punctuation mark.)

Exceptions include sentences with closely linked clauses (“Go to the window and see who’s there”) and those with a compound predicate (“The Marx Brothers are known for their puns and their sight gags”).

3. Separate an introductory word (“Naturally, I agree with you”), phrase (“Last summer, I went on a long vacation”), or subordinate clause (“If you’re too busy now, wait until later”) from the remainder of the sentence.

4. Separate an optional parenthetical element from the remainder of the sentence. “We have, in a manner of speaking, won despite our loss.” (The phrase “in a manner of speaking” could also be set off by em dashes or parentheses, depending on whether the writer wishes to emphasize the interruption of the statement “We have won despite our loss” or wants to diminish it as an aside.)

5. Separate coordinate adjectives from each other: “I could really use a tall, cool drink right now.” (Do not separate noncoordinate adjectives with a comma; this post explains the difference between these two types of adjectives.)

6. Separate an attribution from a direct quotation: “She said, ‘Neither choice is very appealing’”; “‘That’s not my problem,’ he replied.” (A colon may precede a formal pronouncement or an attribution that forms a complete thought, as in, “He had this to say: ‘Her point is irrelevant.’” Omit punctuation when the attribution is implied, as in “Your response ‘Her point is irrelevant’ is evasive.”)
7. Separate a participial phrase or one lacking a verb from the remainder of the sentence: “Having said that, I still have my doubts”; “The deed done, we retreated to our hideout.”
8. Separate a salutation from a letter (“Dear friends,”) or a complimentary close from a signature in a letter (“Sincerely,”). A colon should be used in place of a comma in a formal salutation.
9. Separate elements when setting off a term for a larger geopolitical entity from that for a smaller one located within it (“Santa Barbara, California, is located on the coast”) and for elements of street addresses (“1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC”) (and dates (“January 1, 2013”).
10. Separate groups of three digits in numbers: (Let me tell you how to make your first 100,000,000 dollars.” (Because large numbers are difficult to scan, it’s usually better to use one of the following forms: “100 million dollars,” “one hundred million dollars.”)

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More Answers to Questions About Commas

by Mark Nichol

Here are a few questions I have received recently about insertion or omission of commas.

1. *When there are two introductory clauses, as in “In fact, to that end, let’s work hard as a team,” I’m wondering whether a comma should follow “to that end” or whether including another comma so close to the one following “In fact” looks cluttered.*

I would retain the second comma, because I would retain it if “In fact” were omitted, and I prefer to be consistent. The choice is a matter of preference between open (less) and close (more) punctuation, and I believe that

close punctuation is more conducive to clarity and smooth reading. (However, you might also consider whether “in fact” is, in fact, necessary. It is superfluous as I just used it, and although I don’t know the context of the preceding sentence(s) in the source material, it’s likely extraneous in the statement you provided, too.)

2. I’m never sure when to use a comma before because and when not to. I’ve read various explanations but am still confused. Would it be accurate as a rule of thumb to omit a comma when the word only can be inserted in front of because without changing the meaning? In your example, the change would read, “The convention will be delayed until Tuesday [only] because of the threat of Tropical Storm Isaac now bearing down on Florida.” If the sentence is still true with only inserted, then omit a comma before because—does this work as a rule of thumb?

In a sentence constructed like the example above, when the verb phrase (“will be delayed”) is not negated, a comma is omitted regardless of the presence or absence of only.

It is required, however, in “The convention will not begin on Monday, because of the threat of Tropical Storm Isaac” (which is better organized as follows: “Because of the threat of Tropical Storm Isaac, the convention will not begin on Monday”). The absence of a comma in “The convention will not begin on Monday because of the threat of Tropical Storm Isaac” invites the reader to ask, “Why, then, will it begin on Monday?” This question, obviously, does not reflect the meaning intended.

Another Daily Writing Tips reader provided this citation from The American Heritage Guide to Contemporary Usage and Style: “When because follows a negated verb phrase, it must be preceded by a comma when the because clause explains why the event did [or will] not take place.”

3. I’ve generally been using a comma before then in a sentence, but I find places it doesn’t sound like it’s needed. When I did a search online, I found that people have different opinions. Does it really matter? Can it be done either way for style, or does there always have to be a comma before it?

In an “if . . . then” statement, a comma preceding then is necessary: “If I agree, then she’ll be happy.” If the comma is deleted, then might seem, at least initially, to refer to time (equivalent to “If I agree at that time, rather

than at another time, she'll be happy"), so, for clarity, insert the comma. Note, however, that an "if . . . then" statement doesn't necessarily require then. The second sentence in this paragraph has that structure but lacks then (except referring to the word as a word, which doesn't count).

The sample sentence could be written, "If I agree, she'll be happy." Here, too, omitting the comma would create ambiguity: Someone reading, "If I agree she'll be happy" might begin to assume that the writer is concurring that the other person will be happy at some other time, and that the sentence is merely an introductory phrase, only to find that no additional wording (for example, "she'll appreciate that I share her opinion") follows.

In a sentence such as "I had a cup of coffee, then set to work," the comma is also required. However, if a conjunction precedes then ("I had a cup of coffee and then set to work"), the comma is omitted because it is redundant to the conjunction. When then is employed as an emphatic filler ("What, then, is the point?"), though, the comma is of course necessary as the second in a pair of punctuation marks that bracket the parenthetical word.

Writing that deviates from these rules may still be understandable — though perhaps after possible initial confusion — but it's colloquial and doesn't reflect well on careful writers.

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5 Cases of Excessive Commas

by Mark Nichol

The rules about commas can seem so complicated — and contradictory — that writers can (almost) be forgiven for tossing in an extra one or two. Here are several examples of overly generous deployment of commas.

1. "If a killer asteroid was, indeed, incoming, a spacecraft could, in theory, be launched to nudge the asteroid out of Earth's way, changing its speed and the point of intersection."

This thirty-word sentence is littered with six commas — one for every five words — five of them appearing before the halfway point. By simply bending the rule about bracketing interjections with commas — a rule that advocates of open punctuation flout routinely anyway — the number is reduced by two, rendering the sentence more free flowing: "If a killer aster-

oid was indeed incoming, a spacecraft could, in theory, be launched to nudge the asteroid out of Earth's way, changing its speed and the point of intersection."

One more comma can be eliminated by relocating the parenthetical phrase "in theory" to an earlier position in the sentence, so that the comma after incoming does double duty: "If a killer asteroid was indeed incoming, in theory, a spacecraft could be launched to nudge the asteroid out of Earth's way, changing its speed and the point of intersection."

2. "The metaphor, 'The world is a machine,' began to replace the metaphor, 'The world is a living organism.'"

In this sentence, the comma preceding each instance of metaphor implies that that metaphor is the only one — not just in the sentence, but anywhere. (But two metaphors are expressed here, and innumerable others exist.) Metaphor, appearing in apposition to the two brief quotations, should not be set off from them: "The metaphor 'The world is a machine' began to replace the metaphor 'The world is a living organism.'"

3. "The event is part of a catchy, public health message about the importance of emergency preparedness."

Catchy and "public health" are not coordinate adjectives. The point is not that the message is catchy and public health; it's that the public health message is catchy. Therefore, no comma is necessary: "The event is part of a catchy public health message about the importance of emergency preparedness."

If, by contrast, the sentence read, for example, "The event is part of a catchy, quirky message about the importance of emergency preparedness," note that because catchy and quirky are parallel — they are coordinate adjectives — a comma should separate them.

4. "The report was completed in December, 2012."

A comma is necessary between a month and a year only if a date is specified ("The report was completed on December 1, 2012"): "The report was completed in December 2012." (The same rule applies when the name of a season appears in place of the name of a month: "The report was completed in fall 2012.")

5. “Jones traveled by boxcar from California to New York with fellow fledgling artist, John Smith, sketching the American landscape along the way.”

Commas are necessary with this type of apposition only if the epithet is preceded by an article (“Jones traveled by boxcar from California to New York with a fellow fledgling artist, John Smith, sketching the American landscape along the way”): “Jones traveled by boxcar from California to New York with fellow fledgling artist John Smith sketching the American landscape along the way.” Unfortunately, this type of error has gone viral — its ubiquity is mistaken for propriety — and is seemingly ineradicable.

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Supplement 7.

English Usage: 130 common mistakes

after M. Swan: Practical English Usage. 3d ed.

Oxford: OUP, 2009. PP. 27-29

-----Four Levels-----

● **35 basic mistakes to avoid.** Check in the sections to see why they're wrong (the last column here and in the book by M. Swan mentioned above)

	Don't say/write	Say/write	Section in Swan's book ▼
1	Look - it rains.	Look - it's raining.	461-464
2	It's often raining here.	It often rains here.	461-464
3	When I was 20 I was smoking.	When I was 20 I smoked.	422
4	I have seen Louis yesterday.	I saw Louis yesterday.	456
5	We're living here since April.	We've been living here since April.	460
6	I'll phone you when I will arrive.	I'll phone you when I arrive.	212
7	I'm not believing him.	I don't believe him.	471
8	I am born in Chicago.	I was born in Chicago.	108
9	My sister has 15 years.	My sister is 15 (years old).	32
10	I have cold in this house.	I am cold in this house.	92
11	I can to swim.	I can swim.	121
12	I must see the dentist yesterday.	I had to see the dentist yesterday.	358
13	I want go home.	I want to go home.	613
14	I came here for study English.	I came here to study English.	289

15	I drove there without to stop.	I drove here without stopping.	298
16	Where I can buy stamps?	Where can I buy stamps?	480
17	Is ready my new office?	Is my new office ready?	480
18	I'm no asleep.	I'm not asleep.	382
19	She looked, but she didn't see nothing.	...she didn't see anything./ ... she saw nothing.	370
20	Where is station?	Where is the station?	62
21	My sister is photographer.	My sister is a photographer.	62
22	You speak a very good English.	You speak very good English.	149
23	The life is difficult.	Life is difficult.	68
24	I haven't got some free time today.	I haven't got any free time today.	547
25	Everybody were late.	Everybody was late.	548
26	It is more cold today.	It is colder today.	137
27	It's too much hot in this house.	It's too hot in this house.	595
28	The man which lives here is from Greece.	The man who lives here is from Greece.	494
29	The people in this town is very friendly.	The people in this town are very friendly.	524
30	She never listens me.	She never listens to me.	449
31	We went at the seaside on Sunday.	We went to the seaside on Sunday.	80
32	I like very much skiing.	I very much like skiing./I like skiing very much.	611
33	This soup isn't enough hot.	This soup isn't hot enough.	187
34	I gave to her my address.	I gave her my address.	610
35	I have done a mistake.	I have made a mistake.	160

●**35 mistakes that *intermediate* students often make.** Check in the sections to see why they're wrong (the last column here and in the book by M. Swan mentioned above)

	Don't say/write	Say/write	Section in Swan's book ▼
1	I promise I pay you tomorrow.	I promise I'll pay you tomorrow	217
2	This is the first time I'm here.	... the first time I've been here.	591
3	I've been here since three days.	... for three days.	208
4	If I'll have time, I'll go home.	If I have time, ...	257
5	If I knew the price, I will tell you.	... I would tell you.	258
6	He said me that he was Chinese.	He told me that he was Chinese.	504
7	She told me she has a headache.	She told me she had a headache.	275
8	There's the man that I work for him.	There's the man that I work for.	494
9	I've told you all what I know.	... all (that) I know.	494
10	Although it was late, but she went out.	Although it was late, she went out.	511
11	You have better to see the doctor.	You had better see the doctor.	230
12	I use to play tennis at weekends.	I play tennis at weekends.	604
13	It can rain this evening.	It may/might/could rain...	345
14	My parents wanted that I study.	My parents wanted me to study.	283
15	I must stop to smoke.	...stop smoking.	299
16	I look forward to see you.	I look forward to seeing you.	298
17	I'm boring in the lessons.	I'm bored in the lessons.	409
18	He has much money.	He has a lot of / plenty of money.	357
19	Most of people agree with me.	Most people...	356

20	I look at me in the mirror.	I look at myself in the mirror.	493
21	We waited during six hours.	... for six hours.	167
22	I like eating chocolate milk.	... milk chocolate.	385
23	Come here and look at that paper.	Come here and look at this paper.	589
24	We go there every Saturdays.	... every Saturday.	193
25	Which is the biggest city of the world?	... the biggest city in the world?	139
26	I'm thinking to change my job.	I am thinking of changing my job.	588
27	Can you give me an information?	... some information?	148
28	He's married with a doctor.	He's married to a doctor.	449
29	Can you mend this until Tuesday?	... by Tuesday?	602
30	There's a hotel in front of our house.	... opposite our house.	402
31	I like warm countries, as Spain.	... warm countries, like Spain.	326
32	Please explain me what you want.	... explain to me...	198
33	When you come home, take your bike.	...bring your bike.	112
34	My brother has got a new work.	... a new job.	148
35	He's Dutch, or better Belgian.	He's Dutch, or rather Belgian.	157

●*Even advanced students make mistakes. Here are 35. Check in the sections to see why they're wrong (the last column here and in the book by M. Swan mentioned above*

	Don't say/write	Say/write	Section in Swan's book ▼
1	I'll ask you in case I need help.	I'll ask you if I need help.	271
2	I object to tell them my age.	I object to telling them my age.	287
3	I like the 60s music.	I like 60s musics./the music of the 60s.	69
4	ten thousand, a hundred and six	ten thousand, one hundred...	389
5	"Who's that? ~ "He's John."	... "It's John."	428
6	I don't like to be shouted.	I don't like to be shouted at.	416
7	It's ages since she's arrived.	It's ages since she arrived.	522
8	The police is looking for him.	The police are looking...	524
9	Prices are surely rising fast.	Prices are certainly rising fast.	573
10	I have big respect for her ideas.	... great respect...	106
11	I don't like nowadays fashions.	... today's/modern fashions.	388
12	She passed her exam, what suprised everybody.	... which suprised everybody.	494
13	I've good knowledge of German.	... a good knowledge of German.	149
14	Finally! Where have you been?	At last! ...	204
15	I'll be home since 3 o'clock.	... from 3 o'clock.	308
16	We waited one and a half hour.	... one and a half hours.	231
17	It's time they go home.	It's time they went home.	306
18	I'll see you a few days later.	... in a few days.	315

19	All along the centuries, there have been wars.	All through the centuries...	45
20	I want a completely other colour.	... a completely different colour.	54
21	Let's go and have coffee to Marcel's.	... at Marcel's.	80
22	That's mine - I saw it at first!	... I saw it first!	84
23	Switzerland is among Germany, France, Austria and Italy.	... between Germany, France, Austria and Italy.	105
24	According to me, it's a bad film.	In my opinion / I think...	8
25	It was a too good party to miss.	... too good a party...	14
26	Whole Paris was celebrating	The whole of Paris...	40
27	I nearly wish I'd stayed at home.	I almost wish...	43
28	One speaks Italian in my town.	We/They speak...	396
29	The girl wants an own room.	... her own room.	405
30	Couldn't you help me, please?	Could you...? / You couldn't ..., could you?	368
31	I'll try to know when it starts.	I'll try to find out when it starts.	313
32	I love this so beautiful country.	... this country - it's so beautiful.	538
33	It's getting winter.	It's getting to be winter.	223
34	Our flat is decorated this week.	... is being decorated...	412
35	The Mont Blanc is 4808m high.	Mont Blanc is...	70

● *Even very advanced students make mistakes –nobody's perfect. Here are 25. Check in the sections to see why they're wrong (the last column here and in the book by M. Swan mentioned above*

	Don't say/write	Say/write	Section in Swan's book ▼
1	No doubt the world is getting warmer.	There is no doubt that the world is getting warmer.	377
2	I can't think of anybody whom to invite.	I can't think of anybody to invite.	498
3	My father, whom we hope will be out of hospital soon.	My father, who we hope...	498
4	Would you follow me wherever I would go?	... wherever I went?	580
5	We all have to live in the society.	... in society.	68
6	The number of the unemployed is going up.	The number of unemployed...	70
7	She was showing tiredness signs.	... signs of tiredness.	382
8	She works the hardest when she's working for her family.	She works hardest...	141
9	I'm thankful for your help.	I'm grateful...	582
10	We talked about if it was ready.	... about whether it was ready.	453
11	What live in those little holes?	What lives...	532
12	Some people are interested, but the majority doesn't care.	... the majority don't care.	526
13	It mustn't be the postman at the door. It's only 7 o'clock.	It can't be the postman...	359
14	A third of the students is from abroad.	... are from abroad.	389

15	Except Angie, everybody was there.	Except for Angie,..	194
16	I wish you felt/would feel better tomorrow.	I hope you feel...	630
17	The train may be late, as it happended yesterday.	... as happened yesterday.	581
18	When I wrote my letters, I did some gardening.	When I had written...	424
19	When I had opened the door, the children ran in.	When I opened...	424
20	Stefan can never return back to his country.	... return to his country./... go back to his country.	87
21	Will you go and see me when I'm in hospital?	... come and see me...	134
22	May you go camping this summer?	Do you think you'll go...	339
23	My cousin works for the NATO.	... for NATO.	2
24	My wife will be angry unless I'm home by 7.00.	... if I'm not home...	601
25	We were poured water on.	We had water poured on us./ Water was poured on us.	416

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- Daily Writing Tips ► info@dailywritingtips.com
- Spelling: **www.askoxford.com** has much information on the everyday use of language, with a ‘better writing’ section that includes tips on common errors and guidance on related matters such as spelling and plain English. There is also a facility for putting questions by email to the Oxford Word and Language Service (Owls).
- <http://mekabay.com>
- http://grad.norwich.edu/msia/directorscorner/02_20_06/index.html
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