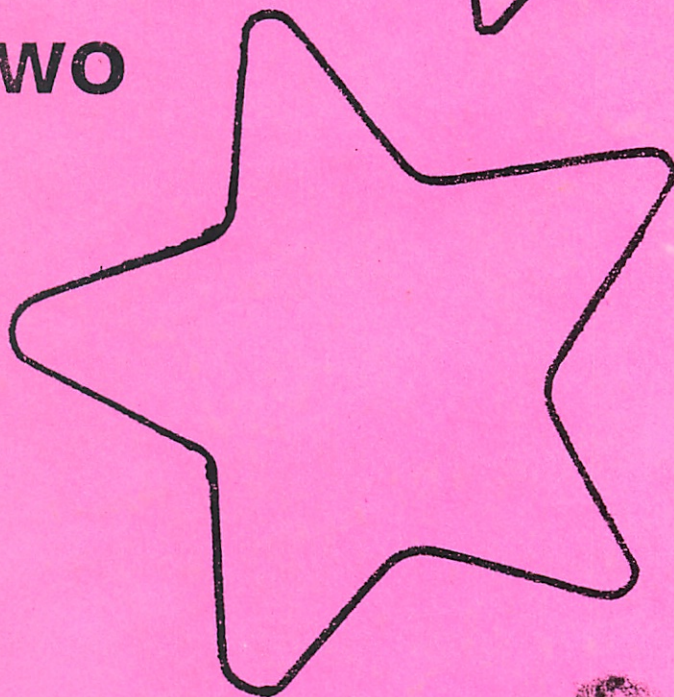


Grammar

Goulash



Book Two



Name: Michael Plasmeier

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Prepositions

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Prepositions

The Match Makers

What do you know about prepositions?

Charlie looked under the chair, over the chair, and around the chair, but he could not find his Cheese Nips.

Preposition Definitions

1. prepositions:

2. prepositional phrases:

Common Prepositions

about	around	between	for	of	through
above	at	beyond	from	off	to
across	before	but (except)	in	on	toward
after	behind	by	inside	out	under
against	below	down	into	outside	until
along	beneath	during	like	over	up
among	beside	except	near	past	with

Prepositions Overview

Name _____

When you use prepositions, you get to be specific!



A preposition tells how a noun or pronoun is related to another word in a sentence.

Prepositions are always in a group of words called a **phrase**. The noun or pronoun at the end of the phrase is the **object** of the preposition.

Examples ➡ over the river through the woods in the forest
at two o'clock inside the cave of the owl

Most prepositions add more specific information to a sentence about **where** or **when**.

Examples ➡ Debbie is singing in the rain. tells *where* she's singing
We're having a party after school. tells *when* the party will be

When prepositional phrases act like **adverbs**, they modify the action of a verb.

Examples ➡ Superman flew over the city. tells *where* he flew

When prepositional phrases act like **adjectives**, they modify a noun or a pronoun.

Examples ➡ The man of my dreams isn't macho. tells *which* man

By the time we finish this unit, you will know:

- what a **preposition** is tells how words are related in a sentence
- what a **prepositional phrase** is a group of words that starts with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun
- how prepositional phrases act like **adverbs** Casey ran down the street.
- how prepositional phrases act like **adjectives** Soon Casey was out of breath.
- how to **link** prepositional phrases together Put it on the shelf in the back of the room.

What Are Prepositions?

A **preposition** is a word that stands before its object and shows the relationship between that object and another word in the sentence.

I strolled *along* the street. (*along* is the preposition; street is its object. *Along* relates *street* to *strolled*.)

A preposition is a word that relates its object to some other word in the sentence.

Here are some words we often use as prepositions:

about	around	between	for	of	through
above	at	beyond	from	off	to
across	before	but (except)	in	on	toward
after	behind	by	inside	out	under
against	below	down	into	outside	until
along	beneath	during	like	over	up
among	beside	except	near	past	with

Remember, a preposition always has an object.

Finding the Prepositions. Underline the preposition in each of the following sentences.

1. Above her head sat the Cheshire cat.
2. The train roared through the tunnel.
3. Everything was fine before the tornado.
4. Sam went to church.
5. The fawn ran among the trees.
6. Several members of the group were late.

Finding Prepositions and Their Objects. In each sentence, underline each preposition. Then circle the object of each preposition.

Example: Put the book on the desk.

1. Carol filled the grill with charcoal.
2. My father's car was parked near the curb.
3. Hundreds of people swarmed into the theater.
4. In the harbor was moored the schooner.
5. Before class, Jan showed the lizard to her teacher.
6. Maury lives down the street from Dan.

Prepositions Phrase


Name _____

A **prepositional phrase** is a group of words that starts with a preposition and ends with a noun or a pronoun. The noun or pronoun at the end of the phrase is the **object** of the preposition.

Examples → after the **game** in a **minute** from a **skeleton**
 beyond **imagination** out of **sight** into a **swamp**

 Underline each prepositional phrase in this story.

The car whisked John and his driver away into the night. He was nervous all the way to the tips of his toes. There was no way out of it now. They pulled in under the canopy. The car came to a stop with a jolt. The door was snapped open. Then John found himself face to face with Mr. Big.

 Write 3 prepositions that could complete each sentence.

1. Lisa's cat is _____ her bed. under over above
2. Trey sat _____ his desk. behind above below
3. This note is _____ you. ↓ ↓ ↓
4. Jake escaped _____ midnight. after before at
5. We have to go _____ the bridge. over under on
6. Ben waited _____ the bus. awhile out on
7. Can you see _____ the window? over under through
8. Walk _____ your dog. over with near
9. Keep this _____ your desk. in out of on top of
10. Run _____ the track. on off under

Using Prepositional Phrases

The group of words that includes a preposition and its object is a **prepositional phrase**. Words that modify the object are also part of the phrase.

Brad found the pencils *in the big oak desk*.

If the preposition has a compound object, both are included in the prepositional phrase.

I sat *beside Gary and his father*. (*beside Gary and his father* is a prepositional phrase with a compound object.)

Finding the Prepositional Phrases. Underline the prepositional phrases in the following sentences.

Example: She gave the book to the science teacher.

1. Across the street waited the taxi.
2. There was a pile of leaves in the driveway.
3. Take this vitamin with a glass of water.
4. I found a letter inside the yellow envelope.
5. The boy came with the old man and his wife.
6. During the holidays, she will stay with us.
7. For whom is the package in the blue paper?
8. Planes flew over the trees and the houses.
9. He trudged toward town.
10. That is a joke between Louis and Gary.
11. We sang by the light of the silvery moon.
12. My friend will be ready in a minute.
13. Rabbits live in burrows and under piles of brush.
14. We looked at the photographs and paintings.
15. On Saturday, Debby stayed around the house.

Beginning Sentences with Prepositional Phrases

For the sake of emphasis, we sometimes begin a sentence with a prepositional phrase. Also, beginning this way will add interest to your writing.

We arrived at the station in the morning.

In the morning, we arrived at the station.

It is not necessarily better to start a sentence with a prepositional phrase. However, a variety of sentence beginnings makes more interesting reading.

Beginning Sentences with Prepositional Phrases. Rewrite the following sentences so that each begins with a prepositional phrase. If the phrase is a long one, place a comma after it.

1. We will get off the train at the next stop.

At the next stop, we will get off the train.

2. Police surrounded the building in a matter of minutes.

Police surrounded the building in a matter of minutes.

3. The air smelled fresh on that wonderful winter morning.

On that wonderful winter morning, the air smelled fresh.

4. The girls bought some popcorn during the intermission.

During the intermission, the girls bought some popcorn.

5. The squirrel peeked out of its hole after the storm.

After the storm, the squirrel peeked out of its hole.

6. The excited crowd roared during the final inning.

During the final inning, the crowd roared.

7. Several people fainted inside the hot, stuffy room.

Inside the hot room, people fainted.

8. We toured Universal Studios on the last day of our vacation.

On the last day of our vacation we toured US H.

9. Linda tripped and fell in the middle of her routine.

Linda tripped.

10. Steve walked home slowly after the exhausting game.

After the game, Steve walked home.

Placement of Prepositional Phrases

Sometimes a prepositional phrase may be moved from one position to another in a sentence without changing the meaning. At other times, however, the position of a prepositional phrase makes a great deal of difference in the meaning of a sentence.

INCORRECT: The band played before the game in the end zone.

CORRECT: The band played in the end zone before the game.

Using Prepositional Phrases Correctly. Rewrite the following sentences by changing the position of one prepositional phrase to make the meaning clearer.

1. With long ears and an orange wig the child laughed at the clown.

The kid laughed at the clown w/ ears and wig.

2. We took photographs of the sea on the pier.

On the pier, we took photos of the sea

3. Sandy told jokes to the class about horses.

Sandy told horse jokes to the class

4. The rancher guided the horse with a firm hand.

w/ a firm hand, the rancher guided the horse

5. Susan mailed the letter to her grandmother in the post office.

In the PO, Susan mailed the letter to her grand ma.

6. Carlos left his books on the bus (in his hurry).

In a hurry

7. Alice told us about the great vacation she had (at lunch).

8. The girl sang her solo for the second time (in the chorus).

9. The ice cream is for dessert (in the freezer).

10. A cat appeared (at our door) with long white fur.

Prepositions Practice

Name _____



Write a preposition in each blank.

1. above
2. below
3. to the right of
4. " " left of
5. in between
6. on top of
7. in
8. at
9. in
10. through



Now write each preposition in the blank with the same number in this story. When you finish, read your story to a partner. Hope you have lots of fun!

I would go (1) above the ends (2) below
the Earth (3) to the right of you! No mountain in the whole world is too high
(3) to the right of me to climb. There is no river in the world that's too wide
(3) to the right of me to cross. Look (4) to the left of my eyes.
Can't you see my undying affection (3) to the right of you? As I sit
(5) in between you, my heart beats ever faster. Whenever I am
(6) on top of you, I can think (2) below nothing
else. Anyone who wanted to harm you would have to go (7) in
my dead body. Even when I am away (8) at you, I can think
(2) below nothing else. Ever since the day that you came
(4) to the left of my life, every moment (2) below my life
has been much (10) through my wildest dreams.

(Boy, do I love my cat or what?)

Conjunctions
Glue, Tape, & Cement

What do you know about
conjunctions?

Charlie had Cheese Nips and
chocolate pudding for dinner.

Conjunction Definitions

1. Conjunctions:
2. Coordinating Conjunctions:

Conjunctions Overview

Name _____

When you use conjunctions, you get to **put it together!**



Conjunctions connect words, groups of words or sentences.

Conjunctions are special parts of speech that connect information to make language more interesting and clear. Compare the following story versions.

The tall, dark stranger walked into the room. Everyone immediately took notice of him. He was graceful. He was also powerful. There was going to be trouble with Jason. Someone had to warn this stranger not to be the center of attention.

As the tall, dark stranger walked into the room, everyone immediately took notice. He was **not only** graceful **but also** powerful. There was going to be trouble with Jason **unless** someone warned the stranger not to be the center of attention.

By the time we finish this unit, you will know:

- what **conjunctions** are words that connect words, groups of words or sentences
We went to the library **and** got our book for the report.
- about **coordinating** conjunctions connect equal sentence parts or sentences
Ginny washed the dishes **and** I dried them.
The frog was small **but** handsome.
- about **correlative** conjunctions connect pairs of equal sentence parts or sentences
Neither rain **nor** snow will postpone our trip.
- about **subordinating** conjunctions connect unequal sentence parts or phrases
As you know, my diary is none of your business.

What Are Conjunctions?

A conjunction is a word that connects words or groups of words.

Coordinating conjunctions join only words or groups of words that are of equal importance. Coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, and *or*. Most words or groups of words joined by coordinating conjunctions are called compound constructions.

Ken *read* and *reviewed* the chapter. (*and* connects *read* and *reviewed*, forming a compound verb.)

Her letter was *short* but *interesting*. (*but* connects *short* and *interesting*, compound predicate adjectives.)

Your books are on the *counter* or the *table*. (*or* connects *counter* and *table*, compound objects of the preposition *on*.)

Using Compound Constructions. Underline the compound construction in each of the following sentences. Circle the conjunction.

Example: Two eager students and their teacher planned the fair.

1. My pen and pencil are missing.
2. The ship pitched and rolled on the stormy sea.
3. The Nuggets or the Bulls will probably win the division title.
4. The typing students hunt and peck for the keys.
5. The fish flipped and flopped in the net.
6. You can choose the black checkers or the red ones.
7. Lewis and Clark explored the West.
8. The doctor quickly but carefully took charge.
9. I never saw Aunt Matilda or Uncle Harold.
10. Joe watched and waited for the bus.
11. I am hungry and thirsty.
12. The reporter listened and nodded.
13. The travelers waited for a plane or a train.
14. The toys on the table and the floor are broken.
15. Proof was needed and found.

Conjunctions Coordinating

Name _____

Coordinating conjunctions connect sentence parts or sentences with **equal roles**. That means they connect nouns with nouns, prepositional phrases with prepositional phrases, sentences with sentences, and so on. The most common coordinating conjunctions are listed below.



- Examples →
- equal nouns* Emily **and** Josh are cousins.
 - equal adverbs* Lava oozed slowly **but** surely from the volcano.
 - equal word groups* Choco-lite is totally fat-free, **yet** incredibly delicious.
 - equal sentences* Winter is over, **but** summer seems far away.

 Circle each coordinating conjunction in this story.

This is the most important game of the season, so I want you all to play your best. We've had some close calls, but we're still undefeated. Whether you start in every game or not, you are important. You have to be totally focused, yet loose. You have to move with skill and grace. I want you to go out and win this game for Main High and the TV endorsements your agent can get you.

 Use each coordinating conjunction to connect equal parts in a sentence.

1. and Jake and Josh are eating
2. but I can quickly but carefully
3. or You can meet Amanda or Olivia
4. yet Soy has no milk, yet taste like milk
5. so Run slowly so you don't knock anyone over
6. nor Don't read nor write
7. for Win this game for we will win the cup

Conjunctions Practice

Name _____



Underline each conjunction in this story.



Years ago, Danny Kaye played the character of Walter Mitty in the movie "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." Walter Mitty became part of the American culture because the character was special to many people. Was Walter Mitty really a great hero or just a legend in his own mind? If Walter had wealth and power, there would be no question. Walter had no wealth, so people wondered whether he lived in the real world. In Walter's mind, he was in Arabia or South Africa. His neighbors, who saw him every day on 4th Street, worried about him. Walter saw himself fighting magnificent duels with pirates, while his neighbors saw him just thrusting at thin air with his umbrella. Walter saw himself bravely driving a stagecoach past desperate outlaws, but his neighbors saw him just bouncing on a park bench.



It would be one thing if Walter just preferred his daydreams, but it would be quite another thing if he didn't know the difference between what was real or a daydream. Since Walter was always kind and gentle to everyone, he was allowed to live his life without anyone trying to make him see that the world was less romantic than his dreams.



Interjections

The Extras

When you use
interjections, you get to
SCREAM!

Interjections are
_____ used to
express _____.

Interjections don't have a...

Examples:

Interjections Overview

Name _____

When you use interjections, you get to **SCREAM!**



Interjections are words used to express emotion.

Interjections don't have any grammatical relationship to sentences. Strong interjections can stand alone, followed by an exclamation point. Milder interjections can be part of a sentence, followed by a comma.

Examples →

Oh, no! My pants ripped again!

Yes, we have our history test tomorrow.

Good grief! Tracy put his pet snake on another diet.



Underline each interjection in this story.

Wow! This is totally awesome!" shouted Bill. He always liked going new places. His dad was even excited. He said, "Far out, I can't believe we're going!" Bill's mom was less enthusiastic. She said sarcastically, "Super! That's just what I need — three weeks of guys exclaiming over cars."

Oh, but Mom, these aren't just cars!" countered Bill.

Yes, dear! Bill is right! This will be fun for you, too!" helped his dad.

Arghhh! Can't you see all the cars there are to see in Detroit in three days?" asked Mom.

No way! Then we'd miss all of the workshops on compression, timing, power bands, and air flow through engines," chimed in Bill and his Dad.

Good grief," thought Bill's mom. "They are both totally gone and they want to drag me over the edge with them. Engineers! Oh, why did I marry an engineer?" Then she remembered the money, stability and honesty that were also part of her husband and his career. As long as she didn't have to go to Detroit, why not let them go?

Okay, guys, go ahead without me. I'll have much more fun here."

Yes! This is great!" the guys exclaimed. Then they went off to argue about how to increase the power output while staying within the cubic-inch cylinder size requirement for their racing class.

Interjections Practice

Name _____



List your favorite interjections in the blanks below.

1. Yes 3. Good Grief 5. Far Out 7. Augh!
2. No 4. Okay 6. Oh Please 8. Awesome



Now, write each interjection in the blank with the same number in the story below. Enjoy!

"(1) Yes, Batguy! You really have evil Beetle on the run now!" exclaimed Bobbin.

"(2) No, we really put the swat on him. (3) Good Grief, nothing relaxes like

success!" oozed Batguy.

"Not so fast, superheros!" laughed evil Beetle from the nearby darkness.

"(4) Okay! Did you hear that, Batguy?" asked Bobbin.

"(2) No, I did, Bobbin," answered Batguy. "(3) Good Grief, that really makes

me mad! Why do bad guys always get to laugh? We save the world, but we never get to laugh over our triumphs. (3) Good Grief, I really get steamed over that!"

"(5) Far Out, Batguy, what I meant was, didn't that sound like evil Beetle, and shouldn't we try to stop him?" asked Bobbin.

"Stop him from what, laughing? I think the world would be a better place if more people laughed," said Batguy. "Why don't our writers ever let us laugh? We could put the cuffs on the bad guy and then say, '(6) Oh Please, take that, you evil villain! You're toast!'"

"(7) Augh, I can see why you're not a scriptwriter, Batguy!" Bobbin muttered.

"What was that, Bobbin?" scowled Batguy. "I think I need a good laugh. How's this:

'(8) Awsome, you awful felon!' Wouldn't that strike fear into the hearts of all evildoers?"

"(1) Yes, Batguy, that's a great idea!" exclaimed Bobbin. Meanwhile, evil Beetle was still free, ready to strike — and to laugh.

Review Parts of Speech

Name _____

Here's some practice using these parts of speech:

- noun** — the name of a person, place, thing, or idea
- pronoun** — takes the place of a noun
- verb** — tells the action a noun or pronoun does



Underline each noun in this story. Draw a box around each pronoun. Circle each verb.

Chuck could not hide it any longer. He just did not know his multiplication tables. When he could not use a calculator to multiply numbers, he had to count on his fingers. Chuck slid by all the way to high school, but his Algebra teacher figured it out and she was on him like color on a crayon. The funny thing was, once he just concentrated on memorizing the multiplication tables, it was pretty easy. Chuck realized he could have done it much sooner if he had worked just a little harder.



Use these nouns and verbs in complete sentences.

I saw

1. Karen borrow a box

2. Lester and Bill see 2 deer

3. Bozo ^{saw a deer} jump the hurdle

4. Mr. Magoo and Ms. Tweed swim in the ocean

5. perfume smell

Go smell the perfume

Review Parts of Speech

Name _____

Here's some practice using these parts of speech:

adjective — describes a noun or pronoun; tells what kind, which one or how many

adverb — tells how, when, where, or how much; modifies a verb, adjective or adverb



Underline each adjective in this story. Circle each adverb.

Mary could not believe how green everything was after just one gentle rain! The flowers seemed brighter and more colorful. She softly inhaled the sweet aroma. The freshness of the spring air completely filled her mind. Mary was totally transported to the magical Springland Kingdom of her Irish ancestors. She was gone for a lifetime of grace and splendor with the noble lord of that happy place, when her mother called her in for lunch.



Add at least one adjective and at least one adverb as you rewrite each sentence.

1. Ride your bicycle down the street.

Ride your bike quickly down the small street

2. When you meet Aunt Matilda, talk to her.

fast old
3. Walk past the cemetery.

really
4. If you can't run with the dogs, stay on the wooden porch.

suddenly small
5. When the teacher took out the paper, the class knew a quiz was coming.

even bad
6. Don't look for trouble because it might find you!

Review Parts of Speech

Name _____

Here's some practice using these parts of speech:

preposition — tells how a noun or pronoun is related to another word in a sentence

conjunction — connects words, groups of words or sentences

interjection — expresses emotion



Underline each prepositional phrase. Circle each conjunction. Add your favorite interjections in the blanks. Be creative!

Oh God! Dad always bragged that he was the best parking place finder in the world. He would never just go to a parking garage and pay to park the car. No. That was too easy. Really, anyone could do that! He had to drive around and around looking, cursing and ultimately finding a parking place, sometimes miles from where we wanted to be.

Now, I didn't want to be late for my martial arts class at the studio. I was giving the demonstration of takedowns and I wanted to have a little time to warm up before class. I closed my eyes, crossed my fingers and wished that Dad would either find a spot quickly or give up and go into a parking garage. That's when I saw it—the perfect parking place. "Look! There's a parking place right there in front of the studio!" I screamed.

"There's no need to worry or scream," said Dad calmly as he pulled into the space. "After all, I am absolutely the best parking place finder in the world." It's hard to admit, but Dad might just be right about that!

The Comma

**A short pause,
like waiting for the traffic
light to change,
and looking at the person
next to you
until the green comes on
and you move along
and he turns into a stranger
once again,
the same as you.**

Eve Merriam

Comma Rules and Examples

1. Commas in a Series:

Example:

2. Nonessential Information:

Example:

3. Introductory Words and Phrases:

Example:

4. Interjections:

Example:

5. Prepositional Phrases:

Examples

6. Adverb Clauses:

Example:

7. Appositives:

Example:

8. Direct Address:

Example:

9. Parenthetical Comments:

Example:

10. Tag Questions:

Example:

11. Contrasting Elements

Example:

12. Dates:

Example:

13. Addresses:

Example:

14. Letter Openings & Closings:

Examples:

15. Titles:

Example:

16. Compound Sentences:

Example:

17. To Prevent Misreading:

Example

18. Run-on Sentences:

Examples:

Quiz

Add commas wherever they are needed in these sentences.

1. On January 15, 1963, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his most famous speech.
2. Dr. King led a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in 1965.
3. My oldest sister Gloria, is more interested in historic events than I am.
4. Yesterday I told her, "Everyone will laugh at you if you wear that dumb skirt."
5. She always says she doesn't care what people think, but I don't believe her.
6. Well if that's what she wants to wear, let her go ahead.
7. If Gloria had any sense, though, she would follow my advice.
8. Gloria who is fifteen, thinks she knows everything in the world.
9. Gloria may be older than I, but she has more to learn about things.
10. I know for example, much more about shopping, using makeup, baking and boys.
11. All Gloria ever thinks about is history, political events, and dirty oily engines.
12. Uncle Jake, from Las Vegas, Nevada, taught Gloria all about car engines.
13. He collects, cars, old motorcycles, farm tractors and racing cars.
14. Instead of collecting old junk, I wish Uncle Jake collected cool comics.
15. "Georgie, I hope you've finished your homework," Mom said.
16. I told her, I'd get back to it right away, but it won't be easy.
17. How does my mom, the daydream detector, know when I'm daydreaming?

Commas

In a Series

A series in a sentence is a list of items. Use commas to keep each item in a series separate.

list style

→ Jay's allergies
milk
oranges
strawberries
nuts

sentence style

Jay is allergic to milk, oranges, strawberries, and nuts.

Don't put a comma before the first item in a series or after the last item.

incorrect Marta brought, yogurt, raisins, coconut, and cranberries, for a treat.

correct Marta brought yogurt, raisins, coconut, and cranberries for a treat.



Add commas where they belong in these sentences.

1. You can choose red, blue, green, or yellow M&M's®.
2. Call it candy, chocolate, treats, or dessert, I like them all.
3. I'll eat pies, cakes, cookies, and brownies.
4. *Large, fat, husky* and *ample* are words others use to describe me.
5. I prefer to think, act, and consider myself *impressive*.
6. I eat, snack, devour, and inhale, therefore I am.
7. They want me on the wrestling, football, and tugging teams.
8. If it isn't eating, sleeping, resting, or snacking, I'm not interested.
9. Coaches would just want me to jog, exercise, work, and practice.
10. As someone famous said, "Give me cupcakes, brownies, and doughnuts, or give me death."

Commas

In a Series

An item in a series can be more than one word. Use commas only between whole items in a series.

→ *incorrect* Zeke ate tossed, salad, French, fries, baked, beans, and celery, sticks.

correct Zeke ate tossed salad, French fries, baked beans, and celery sticks.



Add commas where they belong.

1. All right, I don't like wilted salad, gooey okra, stale corn bread, or grits for lunch.
2. I'd rather have crisp salad, raw carrots, fresh corn bread, and juicy watermelon.
3. If I can evaluate a lunch menu, figure out what's wrong and propose a better menu, why not do it?
4. Too many people, hold back, say nothing, and let problems grow larger.
5. If a menu includes poor choices, unhealthy foods, or stale choices, let's just say it.
6. If no one wants leftover mystery meat, raw meat, or smelly cheese, let's just say it.
7. I value simple honesty, directness, and absolute truth.
8. Yet I also know I should be open-minded, kind to others, and tolerant of others' preferences.
9. My brother says I am overly critical of others, too judgmental, and quick to find fault with just about anything.
10. He says I should spend more time praising others, being grateful for what I have, and looking for the good in everything.
11. I guess being positive about the cafeteria food, complimenting the dietician, and finding at least one thing to like on each menu would be a place to start.

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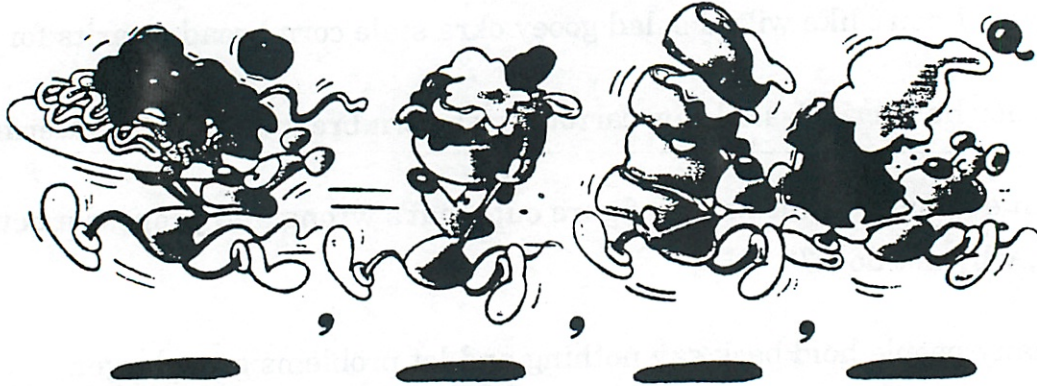
Commas


In a Series

Words that are usually pairs of things that go together are considered one item in a series. Use commas to set off each pair of words that go together.

↳ *incorrect* Lunch today is spaghetti, with meatballs, tossed salad, garlic bread, with cheese, and brownies, with frozen yogurt for dessert.

correct Lunch today is spaghetti with meatballs, tossed salad, garlic bread with cheese, and brownies with frozen yogurt for dessert.



 Add commas where they belong.

1. In tonight's game, you'll see the agony and ecstasy, the effort, the success, and the drama of human competition.
2. For brunch, we serve rolls, tea, bagels and cream cheese, doughnuts and coffee.
3. The music selections are country, rock and roll, blues or jazz.
4. You should pack your underwear, shoes and socks, shirts, pants, and a hat.
5. While returning from Cleveland, we encountered rain, wind, thunder and lightning, hail and snow.
6. This is a land of milk and honey, opportunity, abundance, and hope.
7. Diana cared for those without homes, the rejected, the sick, and all others, too.
8. For lunch, I'm having a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, juice, and a cookie.
9. Deena's favorite makeup shades are light pink, peaches and cream, auburn, and fawn beige.

Commas

In a Series

Items in a series can be words, phrases, or even clauses. Think of each whole item as one chunk of information. Use commas to keep each chunk separate.

➡ Standing in line, buying our tickets, and finding our seats took us an hour.

Our team was the first to beat Hoover High, the second to win three seasons in a row, and the first to have local TV coverage during our games.



Add commas where they belong.

1. Wally planned to go to the store, pick up the groceries, and return home by noon.
2. That was before Ralph showed up, took over his car, and changed all the plans.
3. Ralph wanted to drive to the beach, check out who was there, and catch some rays.
4. When they got to the beach, a volleyball game was just getting started, teams were being selected, and they needed two more players.
5. Ralph loved spiking the ball, digging for saves, and blocking other players' spike attempts.
6. Wally enjoyed keeping score, going for drinks, and keeping out of the way of the volleyball.
7. Ralph thought they made a good team, since they stayed out of each other's way, did different things, and he got all the attention.
8. As he drove Ralph to the hospital, Wally agreed that Ralph's final shot would have been great, made volleyball headlines, and gotten Ralph a spot on the Olympic team if Ralph hadn't tripped over his feet.

Commas

In a Series

If all the items in a series are connected by the words **and** or **or**, you don't use a comma to separate them.

➔ We could watch TV, play cards, or tease my little brother.
We could watch TV **or** play cards **or** tease my little brother.

Jon keeps socks, old report cards, and his pet mouse in his top drawer.
Jon keeps socks **and** old report cards **and** his pet mouse in his top drawer.



Add commas where they belong.

1. At the hospital, Ralph went on and on and on.
2. He had to tell everyone about his great shot and his great moves and his spectacular ability.
3. Wally was glad to be out, finished and on his way home.
4. Ralph could find someone else to take him home tomorrow and listen to his stories and sympathize with his incredible bad luck.
5. Wally liked Ralph when he wasn't bragging, seeking attention or hogging the limelight.
6. When Ralph was unsure of himself or uncomfortable with the situation or with completely new people, he was hard to take.
7. He would overcompensate by talking loud or laughing boisterously or trying to be Mr. Charm.
8. If he would just be himself, take it easy and let other people tell about themselves, more people would like him.
9. Wally didn't know if he should tell Ralph straight out or let him be or give him subtle hints.
10. Ralph was running low on friends and running out of chances and running out of time.

Commas

In a Series

You don't have to use a comma before the last item in a series if the meaning is clear without it. If you need a comma to make the meaning clear, add it. If you're not sure about the meaning, but you know it's the last item in the series, use a comma.

- ➔ *correct* The Birdman shakes, rattles and rolls.
correct The Birdman shakes, rattles, and rolls.

✎ Add commas where they belong.

1. When you go scuba diving, be sure to bring tanks, a wetsuit, a mask, a snorkel and a regulator.
2. Some of the different types of diving are wreck diving, cave diving, night diving, and ice diving.
3. You can dive in rivers, lakes, quarries and the ocean.
4. Diving is for men, women, girls and boys.
5. There are specialty courses for navigation, deep diving, photography and rescue diving.
6. Some of the skills beginning divers learn are using a snorkel, clearing your mask, and doing the fin pivot.
7. There are ratings for open-water diver, advanced diver, rescue diver, divemaster, and instructor.
8. People dive in the Caribbean, Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans.



Commas

In a Series

Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives that modify the same noun.

- ➔ *incorrect* Frankie the Ferret is an adorable energetic lovable pet.
correct Frankie the Ferret is an adorable, energetic, lovable pet.

Sometimes the last adjective in a series is part of the noun. If you took the adjective away, the noun would change its meaning. Don't use a comma before an adjective that acts like it is part of the noun.

- ➔ *incorrect* Worms were everywhere that wet, rainy, spring morning.
correct Worms were everywhere that wet, rainy spring morning.



Add commas where they belong.

1. Emil's incredible, difficult, long hike
2. a long, hot, humid summer evening
3. Gene's dirty, old, smelly slippers
4. an exciting, free rock concert
5. a sudden, loud, piercing thunderclap
6. tangy, fresh, delicious brussels sprouts
7. a valuable, engraved, gold locket
8. an awesome, mysterious, surprising trick
9. the amazing, new, totally, fat-free chocolate dessert
10. Marty's long, boring campaign speech



Commas

In a Series

Sometimes a word in a series of adjectives modifies another modifier, not the noun at the end of the series. Don't use a comma to separate these modifiers that need to stay together to make sense.

➔ *incorrect* Lisa has a cute, brand, new, fluffy, Persian kitten.

correct Lisa has a cute, brand new, fluffy, Persian kitten. (*Brand* modifies *new*.)



Add commas where they belong. The names of people are underlined.

1. There are many computer geeks, powerful computers, and network connections at the Micro Café.
2. Slide Rule Louie had cool moves, fast fingers, and the best brain on the block.
3. The delivery of keyboards, color monitors, modems, and disk drives was received with excitement.
4. With new equipment, would Slide Rule Louie create new programs, games, software solutions, or simulations?
5. When Louie starts cooking on the keyboard, you see flying fingers, wild colors, and cool animation.
6. As Louie walked into the Café, people stopped, moved closer, stared and tried to guess what he would do.
7. Among those around Louie were Brad, CD Charlie, Pat, Mousepad Mike, and Harry.
8. Louie had his books, handwritten notes, floppy disks, and CD's.
9. The anticipation, quiet and expectation hung heavily in the air.
10. Slide Rule Louie was ready to make awesome magic, creative code, and fun games.

Commas

Nonessential Information

Nonessential information in a sentence is words that add information, but aren't necessary to the meaning of the main sentence. Use commas to set off nonessential information.

➡ Scamp, scared by the thunder, hid under my bed until the storm stopped.


Notice the difference in meaning in the two sentences below.

➡ *essential* The girl who is in ninth grade is the captain of our team.

There is more than one girl. "Who is in ninth grade" tells which girl is captain of the team.

nonessential The girl, who is in ninth grade, is the captain of our team.

The main information is that the girl is the team captain.

 Underline the nonessential information in each sentence. Then add commas where they belong.

1. My dog, who is five years old, is not the smartest animal in the world.
2. Last Saturday, my mom's day off was a case in point.
3. It all started as you can imagine at breakfast.
4. Mom, always planning wanted to know what we were going to do.
5. The we, to be specific was the dog and yours truly.
6. Rather than keeping quiet, as a smart dog would, Bowser jumped up and wagged his tail.
7. Bowser's tail, which is quite bushy, started dusting the kitchen table.
8. In most cases, especially when Mom's around that would have been fine.
9. Bowser's tail swept the dishes not yet cleaned, that morning, to the floor.
10. Then Bowser, who has a huge tongue, began licking the food off the broken dishes.
11. That my friends is just one reason Bowser hasn't won awards for intelligence.

Commas

3 Introductory Words and Phrases

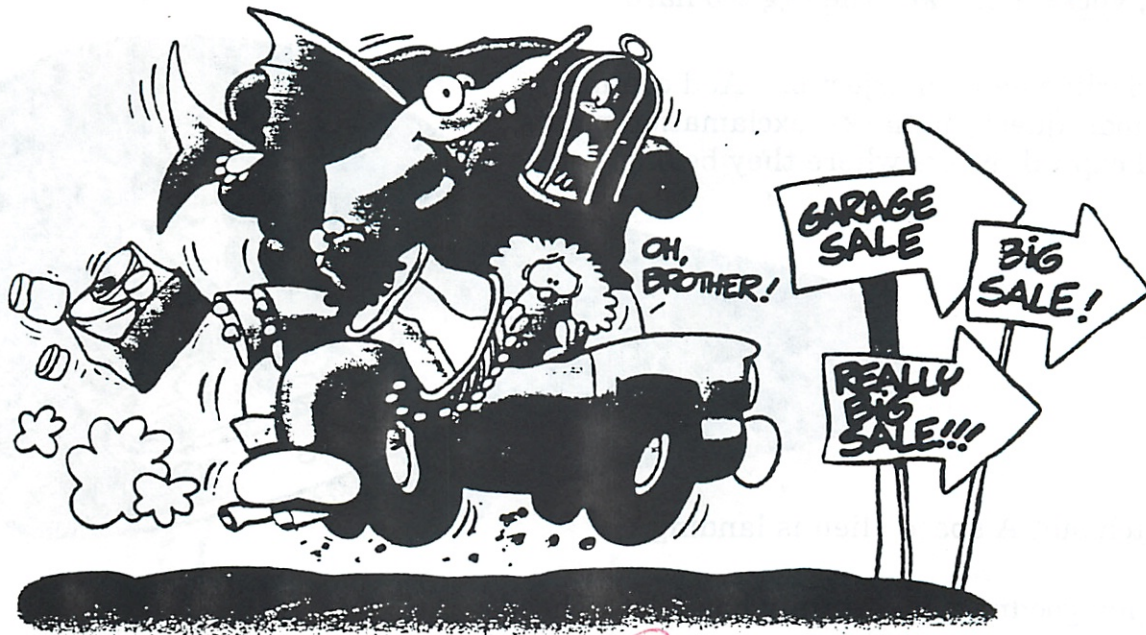
An introductory element is a word or words that introduce, or begin, the main part of a sentence. Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the main sentence.

➔ Well, I'll see you later. Come to think of it, I'm late for school. Yes, I am.

So, what's new with you? Why, you look totally confused!



Underline each introductory word or word group. Add commas where they belong.



At this rate, we'll never get where we're going. You see every time my dad sees a garage sale sign, he has to stop. Why you never know, when there might be an undiscovered treasure. In fact, we have never yet found any treasures. However that doesn't stop Dad. No sir he checks out every single garage sale. Clearly there will not be a garage sale left unexamined by his eager eyes. As you may notice our car keeps getting loaded down with more and more things. Remember these things are not junk. No indeed they are potential treasures awaiting discovery.

Commas


Interjections

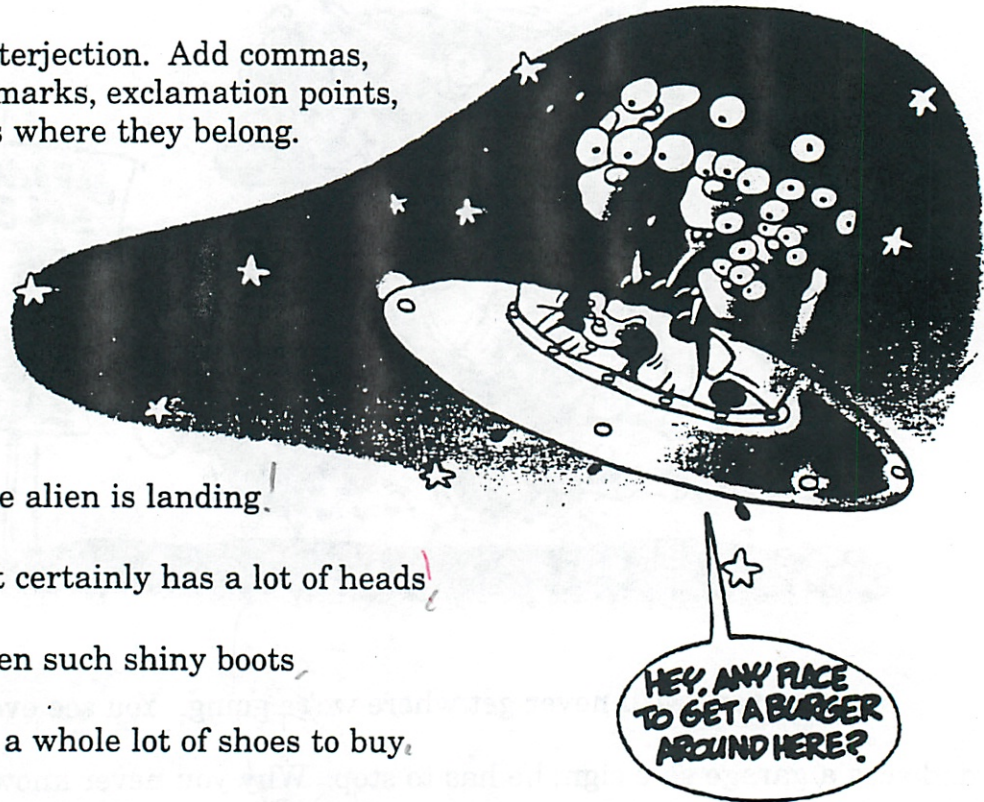
Interjections are words that express emotions, like *wow* or *yikes*. If an interjection is strong, use an exclamation mark after it. If an interjection is mild, use a comma after it to separate it from the next sentence.

➔ Yikes! What happened to my bike? Man, the wheels are all smashed up.

Use a comma to separate individual interjections that are joined into the same comment.

➔ Oh, yuck! I cracked the egg too hard.

 Underline each interjection. Add commas, periods, question marks, exclamation points, and capital letters where they belong.



1. Watch out! A space alien is landing!
2. Oh my goodness, it certainly has a lot of heads!
3. Wow, I've never seen such shiny boots.
4. Fifteen feet, that's a whole lot of shoes to buy.
5. Wahoo! It looks like a one-alien foot-stompin' parade.
6. Wait! If it has two stomachs will it have two belly buttons.
7. Man, how many eyes are in each head.
8. Hmmm, with four eyes how would it hook on eyeglasses?
9. Hold on! would you call it "eight eyes" if it had glasses?
10. Watch it! don't call the alien "eight eyes" if it can hear you!

Commas


5 Prepositional Phrases

If a sentence begins with just one prepositional phrase, you don't need a comma after it unless the phrase is parenthetical (in my opinion, by the way, etc.) or you need a comma to avoid confusing readers.

- ➔ *parenthetical* On the other hand, freckles are better than pimples.
- no confusion* In the top drawer you'll find some safety pins.
- avoids confusion* With chocolate, banana splits taste just right.

If a sentence begins with two or more prepositional phrases, use a comma after the last one in the series.

- ➔ Near the new store on the corner of Oak Avenue and Main Street, there's a place to post a sign if you lose your pet.

 Add commas where they belong.

W. C. Fields (1880?-1946) was a great film comedian. Among the memorable things about his comedy style, many of his sarcastic comments are still well known. On his tombstone, his epitaph reads something like "All things considered, I'd rather be here than in Philadelphia." With such an epitaph, W. C. Fields didn't seem fond of Philadelphia. I on the other hand like Philadelphia quite a bit. For example, near the historic district the mint is a fascinating place to visit. The cobblestone streets of the old town are now bumpy alleys and walkways. On my way home from school on some afternoons, I take shortcuts through these alleys and walkways. Once I tried to ride through them on my bicycle. In no time as you can imagine, I was bounced out of my skull. Maybe W. C. Fields liked riding on his bicycle. Above all other reasons, that might be why he chose that epitaph.

Commas

↳ Adverb Clauses

Adverb clauses often tell you about the setting of a sentence. They give information about where, when, why, or how something in the main sentence happened. Use a comma after an adverb clause at the beginning of a sentence.

↳ While we watched the movie, Stephanie made Gus a birthday cake.

The words in the box are adverbs that often begin an adverb clause.

when before so that until if as long as
since while unless whether as though
wherever though although where after whenever



Add a comma after each adverb clause that begins a sentence.

Whenever we took my kid sister Harriet out in public, she always embarrassed us. Even if you tried really hard, you couldn't imagine more outrageous outfits than she wore. After a few embarrassing events with her, my brother and I ^Tvowed never to go out in public with her again.

Since she knew we were concerned about her outfits, one day Harriet dressed up like a fairy princess. Although that seemed harmless, Harriet was no ordinary fairy princess. Whenever she heard a bell ring, she would wave her fairy wand and bong people on the head. As long as we kept walking very fast, no one got very upset. Until we stopped for the light on Fifth Street, we thought we could get Harriet home without major problems. As if time had stopped, this light would not turn from red to green. As we waited for the light to turn, an ice cream truck came toward us. Before we could cross the street, Harriet heard its bell. Though I'd like to continue this story, my head pounds just thinking about it!

Commas

Appositives

An appositive is a word or words right after a noun that rename or explain that noun. Use commas to separate an appositive from the rest of the sentence.

➔ Your thyroid bone, or Adam's apple, protects your vocal cords.

Tonight we're going to a concert by Tubby Tomlin, the famous tuba player.



Underline each appositive. Then add commas where they belong to separate the appositives from their main sentences.

1. Melissa was brought up by the right people, the perfect manners people.
2. They, the perfect manners people, wouldn't even think of using the same fork for both salad and dessert.
3. When they eat or drink, they always hold the pinkie, the smallest finger, higher than the other fingers.
4. They say, "Good breeding, the right stock, always shows."
5. Melissa, our sister, always asks permission before leaving the dinner table.
6. She, Melissa, makes my brothers and me sick.
7. We, the cool guys, think manners that don't make any sense are stupid.
8. Melissa counters, "You, my ignorant brothers, need so much training that it's not worth the effort."
9. Wait a minute! Melissa, our snooty sister, has the same parents we do.
10. If having perfect manners, is genetic inherited from your parents we're doomed!

Commas


Appositives

Most often, you could take an appositive out of a sentence without changing what the sentence means. Sometimes the appositive is so important to the meaning of the noun it modifies, you don't use a comma to separate it from the rest of the sentence.

- ➔ *no comma* The book *Goosepimples* is on sale this week.
comma *Buzz*, our school newspaper, comes out every other week.

Notice the difference between these two sentences:

- ➔ *no comma* My brother Chad turns 13 this month.
I have more than one brother.
- comma* My brother, Chad, turns 13 this month.
I only have one brother, Chad.

 Add commas where they belong.

1. Maureen wanted to see the movie *Action on the Bloody Frontier*.
2. John wanted to see a more romantic movie *The Promise of Love*.
3. Maureen wondered what John, her friend, was thinking.
4. Last week, Maureen had seen the movie *The Monster Who Ate Everyone* with Jason another friend.
5. Jason Maureen's preferred movie companion considered himself her only boyfriend.
6. Of all the boys she knew, though, Maureen's favorite was her friend John.
7. Perhaps she could transplant Jason's bloodthirsty movie taste into her favorite boyfriend John.
8. John the chosen boyfriend had no idea he was Maureen's favorite boyfriend.
9. John asked Maureen out to see the movie *Run, Girl, Run*, but she was busy.
10. After seeing Maureen with Jason, John, a very confused fellow stopped asking Maureen out.

Commas


Direct Address

When you talk to someone directly in a sentence, you use the person's name or refer to the person directly. Use commas to set off direct addresses.

➔ Did you know, Rachel, that your left foot is bigger than your right?

Jason, my feet are none of your business.



 Add commas where they belong.

1. Karim, we have to get serious about building this great pyramid.
2. We need more water, Rafi, for the workers.
3. The logs, Faisal, must be delivered over here.
4. Well, now, Joseph, how many slaves will arrive today?
5. Yasir, locate living quarters for the new arrivals.
6. Has the limestone quarry run out of stone, Abdel?
7. Get enough slaves, Ptolemy, to ensure that there is plenty of stone.
8. I want you, Habu, to get the hemp woven into hauling ropes.
9. Amun of Thebes, you bring me good news about the stone masons.
10. We will use your camels, Sheik Hammad, for hauling stone up inclines too steep for slaves.
11. Ah, Cleopatra, it is no fun organizing the building of a pyramid.

Commas

Parenthetical Comments

A parenthetical comment is extra information in a sentence. Here are some expressions that are often parenthetical comments:


I think	I hope	I'm sure	for example	however
naturally	of course	in fact	by the way	after all

If you want readers to pay close attention to a parenthetical comment, don't set it off with commas. If you want readers to pause or give little emphasis to a parenthetical comment, use commas to set it off from the rest of the sentence.

➔ I hope you took your shower today.

You will, I hope, take a shower someday.

Sometime before picture day, I hope, you'll take a shower.

 Add commas where they belong.

1. Mary Jane in fact was the most sarcastic person in the world.
2. There was nothing and I mean nothing that she wouldn't say.
3. If it came into her head small head that it was she would say it.
4. It didn't matter who, including family, she offended.
5. She would smile, such a sweet little smile, naturally before she nailed you.
6. Then she met, if bumping into someone, is meeting Bad-Mouth Bob.
7. Bad-Mouth Bob as you may have guessed had the worst mouth around.
8. He wasn't just disgusting, although he was that, he was also mean.
9. He was to understate it, downright cruel.
10. When they met, it was love, although it seemed more like war at first slight.
11. Did you catch, by the way the pun, at the end of sentence ten?

Commas

0 Tag Questions

One way to find out if your listener agrees with you is to add a question at the end of your sentence. This kind of added-on question is called a **tag question**. It is tagged onto the end of a sentence. Use a comma to separate a tag question from the main sentence, and use a question mark at the end of the tag question.

plain sentence

with tag question

- ➔ You all want more homework. You all want more homework, don't you?
That's a silly idea. That's a silly idea, isn't it?
We don't need more homework. We don't need more homework, do we?



Add a tag question to each sentence. Change the period to a comma and add a question mark at the end of your tag question. The first one is done for you.

1. We don't want me to get angry, do we?
2. You wouldn't want me to get wet in this rain, now do you?
3. I know you care for me, don't you now?
4. It's true no one is happy when I'm miserable, right?
5. Let's see if we can find a solution, can we?
6. I could ride in your nice, dry car, can i
7. That wouldn't get your seats too wet, would it now.
8. After all, I am your superior. Right then.
9. This is a fine situation. isn't it?
10. You can't believe they drove off and left me, Do you?

Commas

Contrasting Elements

when you want to contrast things to explain what you mean, use a contrasting element. A *contrasting element* is a short phrase that starts with a word like *not*, *but*, *unlike*, or *never* and gives contrast to the main sentence. Use commas to set off a contrasting element from the rest of the sentence.



➔ Ted, unlike Brad, never burps in public.



Underline each contrasting element. Add commas where they belong.

1. The twins like fast-paced action games, not mind games.
2. They liked playing with people who couldn't tell them apart, not people who knew them.
3. ? These people thought the twins moved too fast for one person more like two people.
4. Hide-and-seek unlike dodgeball, was perfect for the twins.
5. Only one twin never both could be with the other players at a time.
6. When a twin was a hider, not a seeker, the plan would work.
7. The known twin would run away from never toward the hidden twin.
8. The seeker was being watched by two twins, not just one.
9. When the seeker got close to one twin, as opposed to the other, the fun began.
10. That was when the hidden twin, could run never walk to home base.

Commas

Dates

Use a comma to separate parts of complete dates (month, day, and year) in sentences. You don't need a comma if it's just the month and the date or the month and the year.

➡ I was born on July 22, 1848, in San Francisco.

On Monday, May 12, 1997, a tornado touched down in our town.

Dad moved to a new apartment in April 1997.

We're having a party on September 20 at Mike's house.



Add commas where they belong.

On March 10, 1990, a statistics professor told me this math trick. If you ask 30 people for their birthdays, the odds are very good that two of them celebrate their birthdays on the same date each year. The first time I tried it March 11, 1990, it worked like a charm. Something reminded me of this trick last week, just in time for our neighborhood block party. That would be a great time to try it again, even with only 28 people.

Once I explained the trick to everyone, we started making a list of our birthdays. I was born on August 26, 1989, in Albany, New York. Geno Rizzo was born on May 10, 1990, in Syracuse. His brother was born April 19, 1992, and his mother was born April 21, 1964. Kareem Jackson was born June 5, 1989, in New York City. His dad was born January 6, 1966, during a blizzard. Yolanda Royce was born on August 26, 1990. It worked! Yolanda and I both share the birthday August 26.

Try it with your class or your neighborhood. Make a list of the month and date of everyone's birthday. I bet at least two people in your class have the same birthday!

Commas

Addresses

Use a comma to separate parts of addresses in sentences unless the parts are joined by a preposition.

➔ Margaret and Ray live at 1825 Oaks Street, Vero Beach, Florida, for ten years.

Margaret and Ray live at 1825 Oaks Street in Vero Beach, Florida, for ten years.



Add commas where they belong.


1. Is 235 North Main Street, Springfield, Missouri your current address?
2. You were clocked in front of 126 Maple Street in Wilton, Iowa going 55 miles per hour.
3. From there to 360 Maple Street, at the edge of town, Wilton is a 35-miles-per-hour zone.
4. I trailed you all the way to 777 Unlucky Boulevard here in Tipton, Iowa.
5. You may pay your fine at 100 West Main Street, Des Moines, Iowa.
6. Your court date is September 12, 1999 at 333 1st Street in Des Moines.
7. If you can't afford a lawyer, contact the public defender at 10 2nd Street, Des Moines, Iowa.
8. I suggest the safe driving school held at the Mercer Building, 1515 26th Avenue, Moscow, Iowa.
9. The people at the Safety Institute on 300 Chevrolet Drive in Detroit, Michigan want you to use your seat belts.
10. You may get your license after posting bond at 1223 Headquarters Avenue, Wilton, Iowa.

Commas

4 Letter Openings and Closings

Use a comma after the opening and closing of an informal letter.

➔ Dear Aunt Jenny, Sincerely, Your buddy,

 Add a comma after each opening and closing.

<p>1. Dear Ms. Workmehard, The dog ate my homework. The attached gooey mass of almost paper is all that is left. Hope it doesn't make too much of a mess. Very truly yours, Sam Studios</p>	<p>2. Dear Dad, Send money. I can't tell you why. I don't think they'll be coming after you. You can trust me. Your loving son, Jerry</p>
<p>3. Dear Mom, Camp Swampfly isn't too bad. I think I'll enjoy it more once they let me out of the hospital. Sincerely, Anita</p>	<p>4. Dear Dynoblast, Please send me your latest catalog. Your chemistry sets are the best. This time I'll read the directions first. Maybe we won't need new windows again. Yours truly, Freddy Fearless</p>


Commas

Titles

Use a comma after a name followed by a title abbreviation, such as *Rosey Hansen, R.N.* In a sentence, use commas to set off the title abbreviation from the rest of the sentence.

➔ Martin Luther King, **Jr.**, was named after the German religious leader Martin Luther.

David Marks, **Ph.D.**, wrote a book about how worms talk to fish.

 Add commas where they belong.

1. Harry B. Doubtful M.D, didn't believe he was the father of his children.
2. Robin Graves Ph.D, wanted DNA samples to prove whose child was whose.
3. Harry's wife, Ann E. Mall DVM was angry with her husband.
4. Harry thought Will B. Brief LL.D, would be the best lawyer for marital problems.
5. Ann thought marriage counseling with Mary N. Haste Ph.D, would be better.
6. Harry and Ann called their friend Len D. Money CPA for his opinion.
7. Len D. Money CPA said, financially speaking, Ann and Harry should stay married to each other.
8. Mary N. Haste Ph.D, knew she could save the marriage.
9. Will B. Brief LL.D, didn't agree, so he consulted a social worker.
10. Sylvia Lining MSW insisted that Harry and Ann learn to talk to each other honestly.


Commas

Compound Sentences

An **independent clause** is a group of words that can stand alone as a sentence. Use a **coordinating conjunction** (*and, but, or, nor, for, or so*) to join two independent clauses together to make one sentence. Use a comma before the coordinating conjunction.

➔ *two clauses* It's going to start raining soon. We'd better go inside.

sentence It's going to start raining soon, **so** we'd better go inside.

 Rewrite each pair of independent clauses into one sentence. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in each sentence you write.

1. There will be a test tomorrow, ^{so} I should study tonight.

2. Mrs. Lincoln is not an easy teacher. Her tests are hard.

3. My favorite TV show is on tonight, ^{so} I want to watch it.

4. I'm responsible for myself, ^{so} I have to decide whether to watch TV or study.

5. Tonight's show is about dinosaurs, ^{and} The test is on geography.

6. I like dinosaurs, ^{and} I also like geography.

7. I could just watch the show, ^{and} I could study before the TV show.

8. That is a good solution. There is no problem.


Commas

1) Compound Sentences

Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins two independent clauses into one sentence (*and, but, or, nor, so, yet, and for*). Don't put a comma after the conjunction.

→ *incorrect* Our dog chases birds **and**, we're glad she never catches any.

correct Our dog chases birds, **and** we're glad she never catches any.

 Rewrite each sentence pair as one sentence. Use a comma before the coordinating conjunction you use to join the sentences together.

1. We had been gone for days. ^{and} Our dog, Rascal, was happy to see us.

2. We opened the car door. ^{and} Rascal jumped right in.

3. The window wasn't open very far. ^{so} Rascal couldn't jump out.

4. He slobbered everywhere. ^{so} I'd have to clean up the drool all over the car.

5. His hair was all over the back seat. ^{now} Someone would have to vacuum it.

6. I offered to clean up the drool. ^{and} My brother didn't offer to do anything.

7. Rascal started barking. ^{so} Mom told him to calm down.


8. We laughed. ^{but} Mom didn't see the humor.

Commas

U Compound Sentences

Usually, you use a comma and a coordinating conjunction to join two independent clauses into one sentence. If both clauses are short, you can omit the comma if the meaning is clear without it. The coordinating conjunctions *and* and *or* are often used for this type of compound sentence.

- ➔ *no comma needed* You lead **and** I'll follow.
comma needed You are the perfect choice to lead, **and** I will gladly follow.
- no comma needed* Don't shout **or** I'll hold my breath.
comma needed Don't even dare to shout, **or** I'll hold my breath forever.

 Rewrite each sentence pair as one sentence. Use a coordinating conjunction to join the sentences, and add commas where you need them.

1. I'm not a picky eater, ^{and} I'll try anything.

2. You took that smelly cheese out, ^{or} I'm leaving.

3. I said I'd eat anything, ^{but} I was wrong.

4. I won't eat that smelly cheese, ^{because} it smells as bad as it looks.

5. Put that ugly, smelly cheese away, ^{or} I'll leave.

6. Now the whole room stinks, ^{and} I can't stay.

7. You're going to open a window. You think the smell will go away quickly.

8. You ate some of the stinky cheese, ^{now} your breath still smells awful.

Commas

To Prevent Misreading

Use a comma to separate words that might be confusing without the comma.

- ➔ *confusing* Before the party seemed like a good idea.
correct Before, the party seemed like a good idea.



Add commas where they are needed.


1. Once the mixture is blended, add the sifted flour.
2. Aware of the noise, the band leader closed the door.
3. She who laughs last, laughs best.
4. But for a tense second, the audience enjoyed the performance.
5. A ring on the other hand, would be too expensive.
6. Once discovered, caves with fine caverns can become famous.
7. Now refreshed, the hikers continued their dangerous climb.
8. Earlier, bus passengers could get change when they paid their fares.
9. Once revolutionary, telephones and TV's have become routine home equipment.
10. While we were kicking, the principal visited our swimming training.
11. With children around, sharp things can be dangerous.
12. For once, Brad's shoes are tied and his socks are clean.
13. Not knowing for sure, I guessed at the answer.
14. By the way, she already asked someone to walk her home.
15. Suddenly famous, Rachel had to wear sunglasses and a hat to avoid her fans.
16. With exercise, athletes' muscles get even stronger.

Commas

8 Run-on Sentences

A **run-on sentence** is two or more sentences joined incorrectly into one sentence. Other names for a run-on sentence are a **run-together sentence** and a **fused sentence**. To fix this kind of error, break the run-on sentence into two or more sentences or use a conjunction to join the sentences correctly.

- ➔ *run-on* Deb has sung in school concerts, she has never sung on TV before.
corrected Deb has sung in school concerts. She has never sung on TV before.
corrected Deb has sung in school concerts, **but** she has never sung on TV before.
corrected **Although** Deb has sung in school concerts, she has never sung on TV before.

 On a separate piece of paper, rewrite each run-on sentence correctly. Use commas where they belong.

1. I am always late for the class after gym class, ^{as that} the room is clear on the other side of the school.
2. If I don't take a shower, I can make it to class, ^{but} everyone in the class would wish I didn't make it.
3. My choices are to be late or to be stinky, ^{I think} that is not much of a choice.
4. In the summer, I can go outside and take a shortcut, ^{However,} that doesn't help me in the winter.
5. I think the principal set up my schedule, ^{so} I always get in trouble, ^I it seems I have to visit her every day.
6. She said she doesn't want to see me in her office again for being late, ^{so} I asked her how I can get from one end of the school to the other.
7. The principal looked at my schedule, ^{and} she asked how it got set up this way. ^{me}
8. She moved my gym class to the end of the day, ^T that solved the problem. ^{of who I was late}
9. Maybe the principal didn't set up my schedule to get me in trouble, ^{but} she was good about fixing it.
10. I guess principals can be helpful, too, ^N none of my classmates had better hear me say that, I'll lose friends forever.

5
Name _____ Date _____

107. RUNNING AWAY WITH RUN-ON SENTENCES

A run-on sentence is a sentence with too much information or inadequate punctuation. In this exercise, put a check mark beside a sentence that is NOT a run-on sentence. If the sentence is a run-on, put an X on the space at the beginning of the sentence and then correct the problem. Then put the first word of the sentence (for the incorrect sentences) in order in the spaces at the top of the page (e.g., the word from the first incorrect sentence goes in the first space on the left and so on).

The words in the spaces will answer the following question:

If a plane crashed on the Canadian and American border, in which country would you choose to bury the survivors?

Nowhere ! Why would you
Bury Survivors !

- ___ 1. The snow has stopped; we can go home now because the roads should be clear.
- X 2. Nowhere will you find such a happy bride, she radiates her happiness, her groom must be so lucky to have chosen her as his wife.
- X 3. Why did she write her essay on *Romeo and Juliet*, I would like you to know that she never even finished the play in fact she ended up renting the movie because she had no time to read the play.
- ___ 4. In Alaska, winter is more than one season; it's the four seasons combined into a twelve-month marathon.
- X 5. Would you like to visit Las Vegas someday there is lots to do even if you don't like gambling.
- X 6. You will find that people who live in New York think it is crazy to live in LA and people who live in LA think it's crazy to live in New York then there are the rest of the Americans who think it is crazy to live in either New York or LA.
- X 7. Bury compost in the backyard but do not let my neighbor see you do it he doesn't believe in composting.
- ___ 8. Survivors are the types of people who make it through difficult times or situations, my grandmother became a survivor when she won her battle with cancer.

Proofreading



Proofread this story. Add commas where they belong.

I'll never forget Saturday June 11, 1994. It all started out normally enough and I thought it would be a lazy summer Saturday. That was before Larry Minton Ph.D. showed up at my apartment at 522 West 23rd Street Minot, South Dakota. You wouldn't think that one person could spoil a day would you? Well you just don't know Dr. Minton. Someday maybe even in this century, I'll be able to meet with Minton without any disasters. If you think we were going to have a normal meeting that Saturday, you're wrong.

It didn't matter to Larry that I had to mow the lawn, clean the garage, pick up the mail and get groceries. No that conceited, arrogant, pushy, vain Larry wanted his special problem to take center stage. Although I tried to tell him I was too busy for another one of his adventures, he told me we were off to the Amazon rain forest in Brazil. He had my ticket and all I had to do was pack a few things for jungle hiking.

"You know" I protested, "I have a life too!" Larry explained that he had contacted all of my teachers, and they agreed that a trip to the Amazon rain forest would be an educational experience. They would furthermore, be happy to allow me to accompany such a renowned anthropologist as Dr. Lawrence Minton.

Well there you have it, one minute I was going to the grocery store and the next minute I was on my way to Brazil. The funny thing is that was the most planned, normal, sane thing that happened to us on that adventure.

Comma Review

EXERCISE 3. Some of the sentences below need commas; others do not. If a sentence is correct, write *C* after the proper number. If a sentence needs commas, copy the word preceding the comma, and write the comma after it.

EXAMPLE 1. Open the window look up the street tell me what you see.

1. *window, street,*

commas
in
a
series



1. Crabs and lobsters are both shellfish.
2. Man o' War Citation and War Admiral were three famous racehorses. *Smarly Jeno*
3. The pilot boarded the plane checked her instruments and prepared for takeoff.
4. Denise has guppies and goldfish and mollies in her home aquarium.
5. The writer opened her book and began to read one of her short stories to the audience.
6. Our dog will play dead roll over and stand on its hind feet for a piece of meat.
7. The police shone their spotlights down the street along the walls and into the yards.
8. Abraham Lincoln was a rail-splitter an attorney, and finally the President of the United States.
9. Eleanor Roosevelt's courage her humanity and her service to her country will always be remembered.
10. The tornado took a heavy toll in lives and property.

commas
in
a
series →
2 or more
adjectives

63

EXERCISE 4. Some of the following sentences need commas; others do not. If a sentence does not need additional punctuation, write *C* after its number on your paper. If it needs punctuation, copy the word preceding the needed comma, and write the comma after it.

1. Among Thomas Edison's 1,100 inventions were the phonograph the incandescent light and the motion picture camera.
2. Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" is an exciting humorous short story.
3. Smoking has been shown to be a costly dangerous habit.
4. The hammer anvil and stirrup are three tiny bones which carry sound waves to the brain.
5. Before becoming a peace officer, Wyatt Earp had been a surveyor a stagecoach driver, and a buffalo hunter.
6. According to Greek mythology, three Fates spin the thread of life measure it and finally cut it.
7. Shakespeare created such famous characters as Brutus Juliet and Falstaff.
8. Falstaff was a fat jolly fellow who liked to brag.
9. He pretended to be wise loyal and brave.
10. When he faced two men in battle, he begged for mercy ran away from the fight and later bragged about his bravery.

The Comma (II)

Use a comma after every item in a series except the last. These items may be nouns, verbs, modifiers, phrases, or other parts of the sentence.

The dog barked, jumped, and rolled over. (verbs)

Sam, Susan, Steve, and Scott went home. (nouns)

Use commas after the adverbs *first*, *second*, *third*, and so on.

Check these two things: first, find your notebook; second, make sure that you have paper.

When two or more adjectives precede a noun, use a comma after each adjective except the last one.

The forlorn, hungry dog followed us home.

When two adjectives are used together to express a single idea, commas are not used.

We bought a *shiny red* wagon for my little brother.

Using Commas Correctly To Separate Items. Add commas where they are needed in the following sentences.

1. Linda and Nancy sent out invitations planned the menu decorated the house and waited for their guests.
2. Please write letters to Mr. and Mrs. Rogers Dr. Young and Mr. Williams.
3. The sun rose roosters crowed and the day began on the farm.
4. The campers noticed several things: first the moss on the trees; second the damp dirt; and third the broken twigs.
5. Eagle Scouts do their work quickly carefully and accurately.
6. The wild howling gale whipped the sea into treacherous foaming peaks.
7. Have you seen a dragon fly a cigar box or a cake walk?
8. We study history math science and language arts.
9. *Uncharted Stars Star Born* and *Marooned in Orbit* are books I've read and enjoyed.
10. First the lights went out; second thunder clapped; third I hid.

The Comma (III)

Use a comma to separate an introductory word or group of words from the rest of the sentence.

No, I don't like spinach.

Closing his eyes, Bill sat through the horror film.

The comma may be omitted if there would be little pause in speaking.

At last the game ended.

Use commas to set off words or groups of words that interrupt the flow of thought in a sentence.

This fabric, on the other hand, is pre-shrunk.

There are, I believe, three choices.

Using Commas To Set Off Words Correctly: Add commas where necessary in the following sentences. One sentence is correct.

1. Obviously we could not go in the rain.
2. The hamburger on the other hand was rare.
3. Finding himself in real danger, Joe called for help.
4. Usually we go to Michigan on vacation.
5. Boy is that a nice jacket!
6. Basically this story is well written.
7. My this food is disappointing.
8. Smiling widely Charlie showed us his loose tooth.
9. By the way here's the book I borrowed.
10. Yes we can fill your order.
11. Maybe I can come.
12. Unfortunately the soccer match was canceled.
13. Oh I guess so.
14. After all she is your sister.
15. That work by the way is the best I can do.
16. Everyone we were told should listen carefully.
17. There is however one condition.
18. For one thing that model car doesn't work.
19. Pointing his finger the witness identified the defendant.
20. Well we're getting ahead of our story.

65

Confusing Words

Use the article *a* before words beginning with the sounds of *all* other letters.

EXAMPLES *a* bat, case, dog, fish, goat, house
a jack, king, liar, man, nut, pet
a queen, rat, ship, truck, unicorn
a very nice person, whale
a yellow submarine, zebra

Notice that no *x* word is given. Almost all words that begin with *x* are said with *z* sounds; for example, *xylophone*. *X-ray* begins with an *e* sound, like that in *extra*.

Accept/except: *Accept* means "to agree to receive something." It is a verb.

EXAMPLES It is hard to *accept* criticism.
 It is easy to *accept* money.

Except means "leaving out" or "but." It is a preposition.

EXAMPLES I'll eat everything *except* that raw green pepper.
 Everyone came *except* Barb.

EXERCISE 1 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Then fill in each blank with *accept* or *except*.

1. I will not accept a dare.
2. I like all sports except football.
3. Don't accept his excuse for hitting that little child.
4. Everyone except Toni has been to my house.

CHAPTER

8

COMMON
CONFUSIONS

This chapter will help you review some of the words that are most often confused or used incorrectly in the English language. You will learn why these mistakes may happen and what you can do to correct them.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING

See Article,
P. 254

A/an: Use the article *an* before words that start with the sounds these letters stand for: *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*.

EXAMPLES *an* apple, ape, axe, awful thing
an egg, elephant, ear, extra piece
an igloo, idiot, ill person
an ox, orange, only child, honest person
an uncle, umpire, unhappy person

Advice/advise: *Advice* is a noun that means "an opinion, information, or suggestion that someone gives."

EXAMPLES Her *advice* was to stay out of fights.
That sounds like good *advice* to me.

Advise is a verb that means "to give an opinion, information, or suggestion."

EXAMPLES I *advise* you not to get into a fight.
She *advises* everyone to go.

EXERCISE 2 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Then fill in each blank with *advice* or *advise*.

1. Her best friend always gives her good advice.
2. That friend would always advise her not to lie.
3. I took her advice.
4. I advise you to quit shoving.

Am not, are not, is not/ain't: *Ain't* is a word that some people may use in speaking to stand for *am not, are not, or is not*. *Ain't* has a long history of use. However, it is generally accepted only for very informal usage.

WRITE I *am not* chewing loudly.
not
I *ain't* chewing loudly.

WRITE He *isn't* doing anything.
not
He *ain't* doing anything.

WRITE We *aren't* going.
not
We *ain't* going.

When you speak or write, use *am not, aren't, or isn't* instead of *ain't*.

EXERCISE 3 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Use *am not, are not, or is not* in place of *ain't*.

1. I ain't going to do it.
2. That letter ain't at my house. ^{is not}
3. The buses ain't here yet. ^{are not}
4. I ain't asking again. ^{am not}

All right/alright: *All right* is correctly written as two words. *Alright* is not a word in English.

Almost/most: *Almost* means "very nearly."

EXAMPLES She is *almost* fifteen.
Almost everybody in my class is older.

Most can mean "more than anything else."

EXAMPLES It was the *most* horrible movie I ever saw.
She was the *most* excited person I've ever seen.

Most can also mean "the greatest amount."

EXAMPLES She had *most* of the junk hidden somewhere.
We have come *most* of the way.

Sometimes *most* can mean "almost all."

EXAMPLES I like *most* vegetables.
I am here *most* of the time.

Most should not be used as a short form of *almost*.

WRITE She is *almost* done.
not

She is *most* done.

WRITE She ate *most* of the cookies.
not

She ate *most* all the cookies.

EXERCISE 4 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Replace *most* with *almost* wherever it is needed. Some sentences do not need correcting.

1. Most everything was done for them.
2. Most of them came late.
3. She likes most of those.
4. She likes most all of those.

Already/all ready: *Already* means "by this time" or "before now."

EXAMPLES I *already* know how to read.
I have learned that *already*.

The words *all* and *ready* are two different words which mean "all of something is ready."

EXAMPLES They are *all ready* to learn how to drive.

Is everyone *all ready* to go?

Do not confuse the one word *already* with the two words *all* and *ready*.

WRITE Most of us are *all ready* to leave.
not

Most of us are *already* to leave.

WRITE Are we *all ready*?
not

Are we *already*?

EXERCISE 5 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Fill in each blank with *already* or *all ready*.

1. They must be there 2 to go.
2. The students are 2 there?
3. Are we 2 there?
4. Are they 2 now?
5. I think I've 1 done it.
6. We are 2 to leave.

Can/may: *Can* means "to know how to do something" or "to be able to do something."

EXAMPLES I *can* do algebra problems better than geometry problems.
I *can* dance if I want to.

May means "something is possible or likely" or "someone is to be allowed to do something."

EXAMPLES She says she *may* come if she has time.
May I go?

Use *may* when you mean "to ask or give permission."

WRITE *May* I have it?
not
Can I have it?

WRITE You *may* go now.
not
You *can* go now.

EXERCISE 6 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Put *may* or *can* in each blank.

1. You know you can do it, if you try.
2. No, you may not go now!
3. Can you work those problems?
4. She may have the answer.
5. May we try, too?

Can hardly/can't hardly: *Hardly* means "barely."
Can hardly means "can barely."

EXAMPLES He *can hardly* do it.
(It's hard. He can barely do it.)

I *can hardly* reach it.
(I can just barely reach it.)

Always write *can hardly*, never write *can't hardly*.

WRITE I *can hardly* see.
not

I *can't hardly* see.

WRITE I *can hardly* understand.
not
I *can't hardly* understand.

Cannot/can not: Both ways of writing the word are all right. They both mean "not able to." *Can not* gives more emphasis to a statement.

EXAMPLE She *cannot* be here. She *can not* be here.

Could have/could of: People write *could of* by mistake. When you say *could have* quickly, it usually sounds like "could've." "Could've" sounds like "could of," and so you may write it down wrong.

WRITE I *could have* done it.
not
I *could of* done it.

WRITE She *could have* been a great diver.
not
She *could of* been a great diver.

Good/well: *Good* means "better than the usual or the average."

EXAMPLES This is really *good* ice cream.
He did a *good* job.

Well means "in a way that is good or pleasing."

EXAMPLES She did it *well*.
He really draws people *well*.

Good is an adjective, a word that describes a noun.

EXAMPLES She's a *good* friend.
That's a *good* place.

Well is usually an adverb, a word that describes a verb.

EXAMPLES She runs *well*.
That works *well*.

WRITE She sings *well*.
not
She sings *good*.

WRITE He did the job *well*.
not
He did the job *good*.

EXERCISE 7 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Fill in each blank with *good* or *well*.

1. He did that well.
2. What a good job she did.
3. Joan is running well now.
4. That was very well done.

I/me: *I* means "the person speaking or writing."

EXAMPLES *I* am very thirsty.
I like hot dogs.

Me means "the person who receives the action" or "the person something is done to."

EXAMPLES She likes *me*.
The donkey bit *me*.

WRITE Andy and *I* went downtown.
not

Andy and *me* went downtown.

WRITE Beth and *I* will go.

not

Beth and *me* will go.

EXERCISE 8 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Fill in each blank with *I* or *me*.

1. I saw the dog. The dog saw me.
2. She doesn't like me. I don't like her.
3. I pushed Harry. Harry pushed me.
4. She and I took Paul and John to the movies. Then Paul and John took her and I to the hamburger stand.
5. They like her and me. She and I like them, too.

Its/it's: *Its* is a possessive word. The letter *s* on the end either means "ownership, owning something,"

or it means that "the thing which follows is a part of it."

EXAMPLES *I* like the sweater because of *its* color. (*Color* is a part of it.)
Do you like *its* looks? (*Looks* is a part of it.)

It's means the same thing as *it is*. The apostrophe (*'*) stands for the missing letter *i* in the word *is*.

EXAMPLES *It's* not fun to play with someone who cheats.
It's ready now.

EXERCISE 9 Copy the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Correct any mistakes in the use of *its* and *it's*.

1. I like *it's* color.
2. I think *it's* mine.
3. Get out of *its* way.
4. *It's* a pain in the neck.
5. *It's* theirs.
6. What is *its* meaning?

Learn/teach: *Learn* and *teach* have different meanings. Someone *teaches* something to someone. Someone *learns* something from someone.

Remember: A learner or student *learns from* a teacher. A teacher *teaches* something to a learner.

Lie/lay: *Lie* has two meanings. One is "to tell an untruth."

EXAMPLE Do not *lie* to me about the money.
The other meaning for *lie* is "to lie down."

EXAMPLE *Lie* on the couch to rest.

The past tense of the *lie* meaning "an untruth" is regular.

EXAMPLE He *lied* about the money.

The past tense of the *lie* meaning "to lie down" is irregular.

EXAMPLE She *lay* on the couch to rest. (The action of lying is in the past.)

Lay is the verb to use when you put something down.

EXAMPLE I will *lay* the gun on the desk.

EXERCISE 10 Write the following sentences on a piece of paper. Fill in each blank with the correct form of *lie* or *lay*.

1. He lay on his back and looked at the sky.
2. The old Bible lay on the bookshelf.
3. If you lie again, how can I ever believe you?
4. Lay down your weapons and surrender.
5. You tricked me because you lied to me.

OK, O.K., Okay/all right: All of the three spellings of *okay* are common. In writing, it is usually better to use *all right* instead of *okay*.

Set/sit: These two words are often confused. *Set* is the word to use when you put something in a certain way or place:

EXAMPLES He *set* the knife down.
She *set* the table.

Sit is the word to use when telling about an action of a person or an animal.

EXAMPLES Teachers always make students *sit* down.

The lions *sit* quietly.

WRITE I will *set* it down.
not

I will *sit* it down.

WRITE Please *sit* down.
not

Please *set* down.

EXERCISE 11 Write these sentences on a sheet of paper. Fill in the blanks with *set* or *sit*.

1. Please set sit by me.
2. She set the platter on the table.
3. He will sit by the window.
4. Jack set the table.

Should have/should of: People write *should of* by mistake. When they say "should have" quickly, it usually sounds like "should've." "Should've" sounds like "should of," and so people may write it down wrong.

WRITE I *should have* done it.
not
I *should of* done it.

WRITE She *should have* been a great player.
not
She *should of* been a great player.

Those/them (there): *Them* and *them there* should not be written instead of *those*.

To/too/two: These three words are pronounced the same. They are *homonyms*. The word *to* usually introduces another word or group of words.

EXAMPLES *to* him, *to* the lake, *to* be pleased
Too means "also."

EXAMPLES I want some, *too*. I can do it, *too*.
Two is a number meaning "one more than one."

EXAMPLES He had *two* pet snails. i had *two*,
too.

Because all three words are said alike, they may cause spelling problems.

EXERCISE 15 Write the following sentences on a sheet of paper. Correct every spelling error in the use of *to*, *too*, or *two*.

1. ~~To~~^{Two} snails are two many.
2. If you knew snails, you'd think so, ~~too~~.
3. She took hers ~~too~~ the zoo.
4. I took my ~~too~~ the zoo, two.

Who/whom: *Who* and *whom* are different forms of the same word. In most cases, *who* is used.

EXAMPLES *Who* tried the hardest?
Who wants some gum?

Who should not be used after a word like *to*, *from*, or *for*.

WRITE *to whom*, *for whom*, *from whom*
not
to who, *for who*, *from who*

Whose/who's: These two words are pronounced alike. They are *homonyms*. *Whose* is a form of *who* that shows ownership or possession.

EXAMPLES *Whose* house did you go to? (Who owns the house?)
I know *whose* mitt that is. (I know who the mitt belongs to.)

Who's is a form of *who* and *is*. The apostrophe (') takes the place of the letter *i* in the word *is* or the letters *ha* in the word *has*.

EXAMPLES She's always the one *who's* right.
Who's got the nerve to try it?

Remember: Use *who's* only when you mean *who is* or *who has*.

EXERCISE 16 Write each of the following sentences that has a *whose/who's* error in it on a sheet of paper. Correct the error.

1. ~~Whose~~^{Who's} going to tell her she won all that money?
2. ~~Whose~~^{Who's} motorcycle is that?
3. I know ~~who's~~^{whose} money that is.
4. ~~Whose~~^{Who's} allowed to watch the late horror movies?
5. ~~Whose~~^{Who's} the boy whose hanging around there?

Your/you're: These two words are pronounced alike. They are *homonyms*. *Your* is the possessive form of *you*. It shows ownership.

EXAMPLES It is *your* problem now.
Did you get *your* letter from the table?

You're stands for *you* and *are*.

EXAMPLES *You're* my best friend.
Are you sure *you're* right?

EXERCISE 17 Write each of the following sentences on a piece of paper. Choose the correct homonym.

1. (You're/Your) mother called today.
2. She said that (you're/your) to go to your grandmother's house.
3. (You're/Your) willing to do (you're/your) best for her, aren't you?
4. She's often said (you're/your) her favorite.
5. (You're/Your) great aunt has said that (you're/your) her favorite, too.

REVIEW EXERCISE A

Number your paper from 1 to 10. Next to each number write the correct form from those in parentheses.

EXAMPLE It was (a/an) exciting party,
(accept/except) for the ending.

an, except

1. Would you (advise/advise) Velma to (accept/except) the invitation?
2. (Isn't/Ain't) it (all right/alright) to go?
3. She is (almost/most) too late to (accept/except).
4. It was (almost/most) (a/an) unexpected party.
5. She had (all ready/already) planned to be (all ready/already) when the time came.
6. She (all ready/already) knew she would be among several friends.

7. The time between getting ready and going seemed (almost/most) forever.
8. She (can hardly/can't hardly) wait.
9. She (could of/could have) been (all ready/already) much earlier.
10. The early part was the (almost/most) interesting, but the ending (could have/could of) been more fun.

REVIEW EXERCISE B

For each of the following sentences, follow the same instructions as given for Review Exercise A.

1. The (good/well) scores go to those who play (good/well).
2. If Wally and (I/me) practice, he and (I/me) can both win.
3. (It's/Its) going to be a close match for him and (I/me).
4. As the match neared (it's/its) end, my feet felt like lead.
5. Wally had me (set/sit) down so he could (learn/teach) me to correct a mistake.
6. He told me I (should have/should of) made (them/those) easy shots.
7. "(They're/There) easy," he said, "when the opponents feed (there/their) shots to you."
8. I said I would (try and/try to) make (these here/these) shots in the future.
9. "(Who's/Whose) ball was that?" he shouted, when the ball whistled by (to/too) fast for either of us.
10. "It was (your/you're) ball," I answered, "because it came (to/too) you."


Writing Skills

CLICHE: AVOID IT LIKE ~~THE PLAGUE~~ BAD BREATH

"Quick as a wink" is how fast you'd like to get your homework done. "A mind like a steel trap" is what you need to prepare for exams. "Faster than a speeding bullet" is what you hope your time will be on your next cross-country run.

These phrases do communicate because they are familiar—perhaps too familiar! They are trite, hackneyed, ordinary, overused, worn out, unoriginal, and utterly predictable. Therefore, they lose their punch. Good writers avoid them like . . . bad breath?

Use your imagination to create the strongest and most original substitutes possible as replacements for the clichés associated with these phrases.

- 
1. Busy as an ant
 2. Hard as a rock
 3. Slow as a turtle
 4. Smart as Bill Gates
 5. Nervous as a jitter bug
 6. Light as a feather - a piece of paper
 7. Uncomfortable as a lump
 8. Funny as a comedian
 9. Bald as a barber
 10. Sweet as chocolate

Make up some fresh, new phrases that can be substituted for these clichés.

11. Not worth the paper it's printed on Don't waste your money
12. Fit to be tied _____
13. Raining cats and dogs The rain will neck you down
14. Feeling down in the dumps In a hole
15. Looked like the back side of bad weather Good weather
16. They don't see eye-to-eye They don't agree
17. Head over heels in love In love alot
18. Together through thick and thin They stick together
19. Spreads like butter spreadable
20. Feathered his nest improved his house

Name _____

Basic Skills/Writing 6-8*

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SUBTRACTION ACTION

If you are a middle school student, you can probably think of several people in your experience who often overexplain things, using more words than you ever needed or wanted to hear. *Economy* is a word normally associated with money, but it is also a very important idea in communication. *Verbose* (look that up!) people appear to misunderstand something about listeners. They don't see that listeners pay more attention when the speaker or writer uses only the words really needed to relay a message clearly and forcefully. One of the most difficult things a writer has to do is to subtract words. "Extra" words are not necessarily incorrect; they just clutter and sometimes confuse the message.

Example:

Verbose - There were these two, young, frightened teenagers who were always saying how they were so afraid of dentists.

Better - The two teenagers were afraid of dentists. (Eleven words can be eliminated!)

See if you can eliminate the unnecessary words in the following sentences. (You may occasionally need to replace or reposition a word or two.)



1. It seems that the only reason that she refused his invitation to the dance was that she didn't have anything to wear. The only reason she refused the dancing invitation

it was she couldn't wear anything

2. We couldn't hear the words to the song on account of the fact that the track was too loud.

The music was too loud, so we couldn't hear the words to the song

3. The room was square in shape. A square room

4. If students cooperate together, they can outwit the teacher. We can outwit

the teacher, if we cooperate

5. The thing that was so bad was John's attitude. John's attitude was bad

6. In my opinion, I think the assignment is unfair

7. He drew three round circles on his paper. I drew 3 circles

8. Actually, I think the bald principal is kind of cute

9. Chad is a great player who really plays well. keep it

10. What I would really like is a new friend. I want a new friend

11. My parents are overprotective; they watch and monitor and examine everything I do.

Everything I do my parents overprotect so parents watch

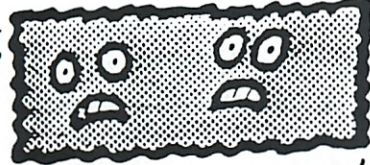
12. Waitress, what is today's soup du jour of the day? what is the soup of

the day

Name _____

ESCHEW OBFUSCATION

"Sitting in the dark,



the story was scary!"

The title of this activity is a tongue-in-cheek expression that means "avoid making anything difficult to understand!" It's a good motto for writers! "Sitting in the dark, the story was scary!" Have you ever seen a scary story sitting in the dark—all by itself? Poor little story! This sentence is silly, but not unusual. Careless writers cause all kinds of strange occurrences. See if you can repair the damage by rearranging each of the following sentences to more clearly show its intended meaning.

1. While cleaning the attic this morning, a mouse scared me.

2. Paddling quietly along in the canoe, the moon shone brightly.

3. I read about the bank robbers who were caught in the morning paper.

4. Having collapsed in a convulsion of laughter, the students were worried that the teacher would never regain consciousness.

5. To earn enough money for the prom, Mr. Blake gave Joey a job mowing his lawn.

6. The fans booed the football players in the stands.

7. While eating her cat food, Mom noticed that Fluffy had a burr in her paw.

8. As a child, my mother taught me many lessons.

9. There was a tiny cottage behind the junkyard that was very beautiful.

10. On the top shelf of my locker, I could not find my math book.

11. He sold ice cream sodas to the children with tiny umbrellas in them.

12. The eighth graders were punished after the fire alarm prank by the principal.

Name _____

Basic Skills/Writing 6-8

A LITTLE RIDDLE THAT RHYMES IN THE MIDDLE

Clever title, huh? It sort of rolls off your tongue! Sound is one element that makes language so intriguing. One way to arrange the sounds of a language for easy listening is to create short poems that are filled with words that tickle your ears.

There's nothing quite so gooey
There's nothing quite so chewy
As a brown and gooey
Brown and chewy
Piece of caramel candy.

It sticks to your teeth
Above and beneath
Thick and glue-y
Brown and chewy
Soft and gooey
Caramel candy

— a first grade collaboration



The trick is to stick some silly sounds together intelligently!

In the poem and in the single sentence following the poem, underline the words that are especially fun and interesting to say and hear. Then choose from the words below some that you just like and use them to create a short poem or a group of playful sentences that will be fun to read aloud. (Of course you may use your own fun-to-say words, rather than those in the list.)

mush, crush, hush, brush, rush
little, fiddle, riddle, ka-diddle, kid'll, middle, piddle
fuzzy, fishy, funny, flirt, flitter, flutter, funky, flip
snooze, schmooze, ooze, goos, choose, chews, cruise, moos, news, bruise, zoos
sprinkle, wrinkle, crinkle, twinkle
spooks, gadzooks, dukes, kooks
toodle, doodle, kaboodle, strudel, poodle, noodle
scabby, crabby, flabby, blabby, gabby
bodacious, boggle, bogeyman, brusque, bouillabaisse, bubbles, Budapest, buggy
hyphen, gopher, Philadelphia, pharaoh, graph, paraphrase, telephone, phlox
missionary, fishing, slosh, Ishtar, mishmash, mush
parsimonious, sauerkraut, hypotenuse, tessellate

Note that words that are fun to say together usually share some common sounds at the beginning, end, or middle or they have a pleasing rhythm when read one after the other.

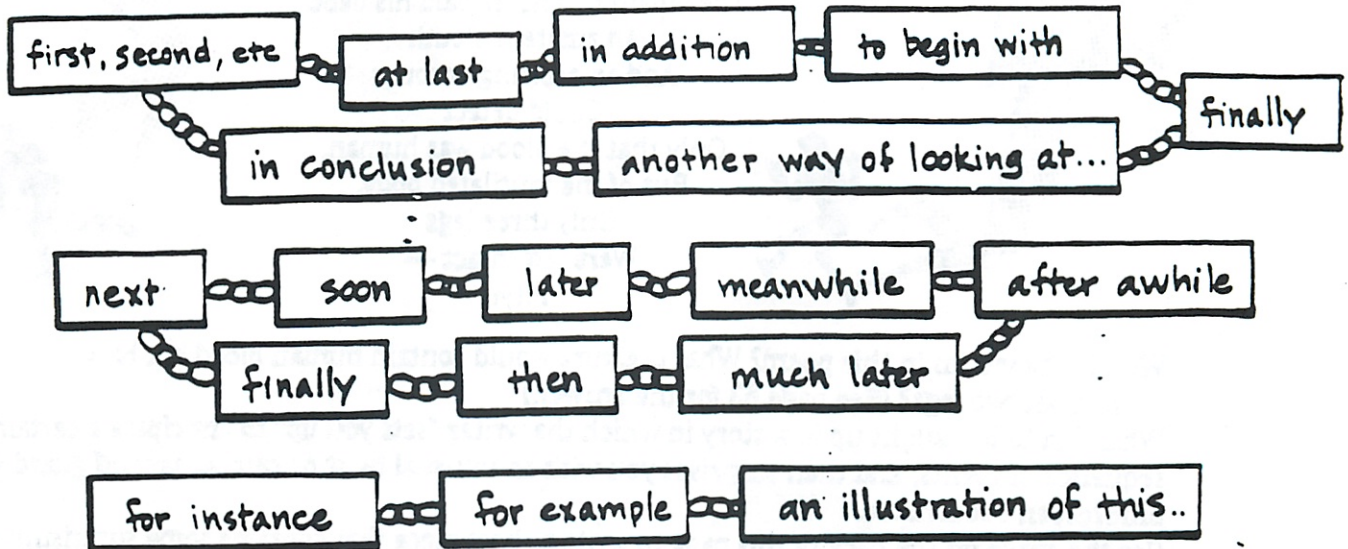
Name _____

THE MISSING LINKS

You've probably had a conversation with someone who suddenly changed the subject. You were left wondering what planet he or she was on. It's confusing and frustrating when a conversation jumps to a new subject without any transition or connection.

Writers sometimes have a bad habit of doing the same thing. But this problem is easily resolved by learning to use a few simple expressions that link or connect ideas. Here's how it works!

Each part of a piece of writing showcases a thought or idea. To connect those thoughts and ideas to one another and make sentences flow smoothly, you need to choose from your list of "links" (words or phrases that bridge together, or connect, one idea to the next one).



Other connecting words:

therefore
as a result
accordingly

however
consequently
on the other hand

instead
nevertheless
because of this

likewise
similarly
in spite of this

Write a composition of about 300 words in which you focus on making your thoughts flow smoothly, clearly showing your reader the relationship between each sentence or paragraph and the one that follows. Choose a topic that explains how, why, or in what order something is done. This will give you practice using your store of connecting words.

Topics:

- How to memorize 100 facts for a test
- Why you should never fully believe an advertisement
- How not to fail an exam
- How not to win your parents' trust and confidence
- How to talk your mom into letting you have a pet boa (tiger, iguana)
- A day in the life of a middle school marvel—OR, you name it...

Name _____



GOTCHA!

Up a long, rickety staircase,
Behind a creaking, rusty-hinged door
In a dark and musty attic space,
Cramped by cast-off objects, strangled by cobwebs
And obscured by decades of dust,

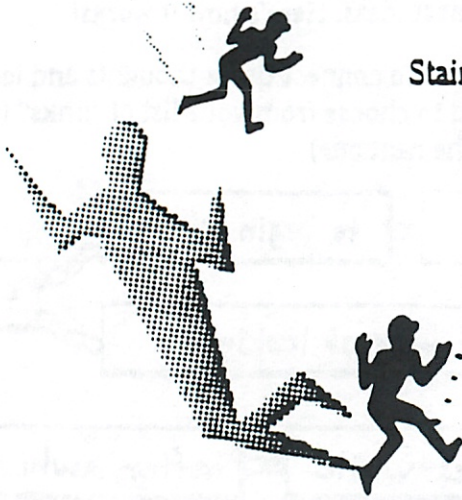
BLOOD

Stained a rough hewn floor where, long ago,
A murder had taken place . . .

A murder for which
The villain had never paid his debt.

An amateur sleuth
And an aspiring coroner
Could detect

Only that the blood was human,
But of the mutilated body,
Only three legs
Were left intact —
Pity!



Who is the victim in this poem? What creature would contain human blood but have more than two legs? (See page 63 for the answer.)

What fun to be caught up in a story in which the writer "sets you up" to anticipate a certain sequence of events, and then surprises you with an unusual twist or catches you off guard with an unforeseen occurrence.

Use the space on the back of this page to write a short piece that contains some surprising element. Perhaps the list below will spark an idea, but you may, of course, generate your very own!

IDEAS:

An unseen speaker
An accident
An earthquake
A storm reveals something unusual
Caught!
An explosion (of any kind)
A secret revealed
A dream that wasn't a dream

Unexpected visitor
A reversal of roles
A beginning that is an end
The shadow
A noise in the night
Flash Flood!
The trunk in the attic
The wrong person in the right place

A locked door
What's missing?
A map to an unknown place
An unusual code
A computer virus
A stampede in the circus
The lost cave
Mysterious mushroom

Name _____

BRAINBUSTER BONANZA

Clever Christopher could make up the best brain busters in Boston, but no one could ever solve them because the details were told in such riotous sequence as to befuddle even the most intelligent puzzle freak.



Use the space below to rewrite the clues in proper sequence. As you write, do any editing you feel will improve the flow of the piece and make it easier to read. You may even delete unnecessary words or information. Then try to guess the solution to Christopher's brainbuster.

The man asked his housekeeper to forward his mail while he was gone. Was he doing the right thing, or was he being unfair? He called home to ask what had happened. The man apologized and promised to mail the key. A wealthy businessman from Boston left home on a three-month vacation trip. When he got home, he fired the housekeeper on the spot. Two weeks after he arrived at his vacation villa, he had received no mail. She explained that he had forgotten to leave the key to his mailbox. He was fortunate to have a very responsible housekeeper. Immediately thereafter, he went to the post office and did so. A month later, he still had received no mail, though the housekeeper had told him there was a considerable pile in the box.

(Answer page 63)

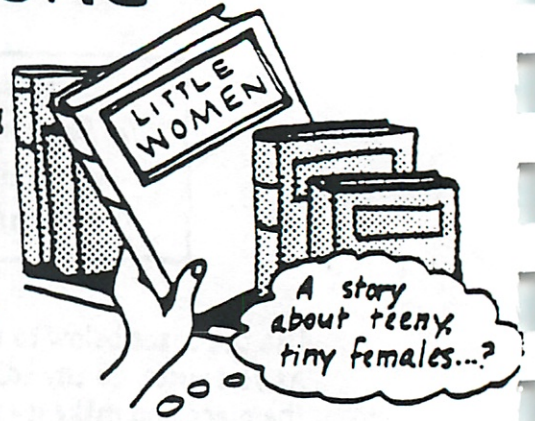
BRAIN BUSTER SOLUTION

Name _____

Basic Skills/Writing 6-8*

COMIN' ON STRONG

When you are looking for something to read for enjoyment, what attracts you to a particular book or story? What is that "something special" that begs you, "Read me! Choose me!" Sometimes it's the subject, or the book cover, or an illustration. Often, it is the title. However, there are a multitude of classic stories that do not have particularly smashing titles. Some are listed below. For each title familiar to you, create what you would consider a more appealing title for that story. Then add to the list several other books you have read, and suggest a new title for each.



Charlotte's Web _____

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer _____

Robin Hood _____

A Christmas Carol _____

Mary Poppins _____

Pocahontas _____

The Yearling _____

The Story about Ping _____

Cinderella _____

Pinocchio _____

Romeo and Juliet _____

Hamlet _____

The Cay _____

Animal Farm _____

The Three Bears _____

The Black Pearl _____

Hoops _____

The Old Man and the Sea _____

Pilgrim's Progress _____

Johnny Tremain _____

The Wind in the Willows _____

Souder _____

Treasure Island _____

West Side Story _____

Your Additions: _____

What is the title of your favorite book? _____

What is the best book title you can remember? _____

Name _____

MAKING WORDS SING



A. TUM TUM TUM TUM TUM TUM

B. TUM ta-ta , TUM ta-ta , Tum Tum Tum



Use
Use
sit:
Pr

Read these two lines aloud to yourself.
Try to clap each syllable as you read; clap loudly on the tums, softly on the ta's.
Which line has the most interesting rhythm?

If you chose line B, you already understand something very important about rhythm in literature. When the rhythm of a sentence is active and playful, it sweeps the reader along. It has a whole different motion than a line that just marches along to a straight beat.

Whenever you write a sentence, read it aloud to yourself so you can hear how it sounds. If it flows smoothly, like a song, it has good rhythm. Read these two charming poems by the same young author. Both are lovely sensory experiences. Each uses well-chosen, delightful words and ideas. Can you tell which has better rhythm—sings or flows more easily as it is read aloud?

Love is the color of lemon drops
Love smells something like cinnamon spice
Love feels like satin against your cheek
Love is a favorite song sung twice.

Friendship is rosy red
Friendship smells like cookies baking
Friendship sounds like jingle bells
Friendship is soft and comfortable.

The rhythm of the first poem flows more easily, partly because it is more playful and more regular. The alliteration (cinnamon spice, song & sung) and rhyme (spice & twice) also help to make it more enjoyable and fun to hear.

To practice writing words that sing, follow the instructions on the next page, page 25.

Use with page 25.

Name _____

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MAKING WORDS SING, CONTINUED

Use with page 24.

Use this space to create some short poems of your own. Follow the model of the Love and Friendship poems on the first page, using the senses to "show" the qualities of each idea. Practice writing sentences that have lively rhythms. See if you can make them sing!

A practice poem: **ANGER**

Anger is the color of _____.

Anger sounds _____ and _____.

Anger feels _____ as _____.

Anger smells like _____.

FEAR

WORK

JEALOUSY

COOL

(YOUR TITLE)

Name _____

Basic Skills/Writing 6-8*

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BODACIOUS BEGINNINGS

A. "Nothing . . . A big, hard, cold lump of nothing . . . was stuck in the pit of my stomach, and it wasn't going to go away."

OR

"Kris and I had a fight. It was one of those battles nobody wins."



B. "Charity was a very unconventional angel."

OR

"Gadzooks!"

"Gadzooks??? What kind of language is that for an angel?"

The words you choose to begin a piece of writing are the readers' invitation to "come in." The words must be strong enough to cause the readers to believe it is worth their time to set aside whatever else they may wish to do in order to read. Writers often call these openings a "hook," because, hopefully, they hook the readers. Which of each pair of beginnings above best catches your attention and hooks you to want to read on? There is no right answer.

For at least five of the ten items below, create a smashing opening that you believe will command your readers' rapt attention. Then give each of your intended stories a compelling title.

1. the story of a storm _____
2. a warning about food poisoning _____
3. a report on safety inspections of elevators _____
4. a thriller about the capture of an international spy _____
5. a description of the best meal you ever ate _____
6. a news story of an alleged alien attack _____
7. a graduation speech _____
8. a soccer newsletter _____
9. a love letter _____
10. a memo to the school board about students' rights _____

Use with page 27.

Name _____

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

Hutch never knew for sure whose shadow he had seen projected on the window that stormy night. But the following spring, while mulching the rose beds beneath that window, his shovel unearthed a pipe—a graceful, ebony pipe bearing a carved Egyptian symbol.

Don't you just love an ending like that—the kind that strings you along almost to the last syllable? Or do you like happily-ever-after endings?

Imaginative endings are great fun to write. With a creative ending, you can:

- ... resolve a question, dilemma, or crisis completely
- ... leave the reader totally hanging
- ... leave the reader slightly mystified
- ... teach a lesson
- ... ask a question
- ... thoroughly surprise the reader with a striking turn-about
- ... use any other tactic you think will work



To write an ending, you first have to have an idea of what the piece might be about. That's where to start. Think about how to end:

- ... a report of a mysterious disappearance
- ... a vigorous protest against something you abhor
- ... a caution against a dangerous activity
- ... a wild adventure tale
- ... an unbelievable escapade into the future
- ... an apology for something you weren't all that sorry about
- ... a sad account of a disappointment or tragedy



Use with page 29.

Name _____

LINE PUZZLES

Sometimes a short, abrupt sentence can make the perfect statement. On other occasions, a longer, more complex sentence best expresses what you want to say. It is difficult to write a piece that has an appealing combination of sentence length and structure. To practice this skill, work the following exercise, "Line Puzzles."

On this page and the next are four groups of short, choppy sentences. Practice your skill at "line puzzling" by combining and rearranging the sentences in the groups to form a well-composed paragraph of various sentence lengths. Be sure it will engage the reader and "flow"—read smoothly. (Feel free to change the sequence, add connecting words, etc.). Use extra paper if you run out of space here.



I have a cat.
Her name is Lacy Daisy.
That's because she is unquestionably feminine.
She also likes long, leisurely siestas.
She sips, rather than laps milk.
She tilts her head saucily.
She expects to be pampered.
She's a tease.
I love her.

Storms are scary.
They announce themselves in different ways.
Tornadoes are so sudden.
You have little time to prepare.
You can't defend yourself.
You can know too far ahead of time about a storm.
Hurricanes come slowly.
Then you have to worry longer.
You can see rainstorms boiling up in the distance.
Then they roar in on a thunderbolt.
They can come slow or fast.
However a storm arrives, I get extremely nervous.
I wish they could be stopped somehow.
I'd like to make a law against them.
I'd stamp them "Canceled!"
I would click them off like a TV.
I can't control nature.
Nature is a lot like life.
You just have to let it happen.



Use with page 31.

Name _____

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LINE PUZZLES, CONTINUED

Use with page 30.



Saturday was a bummer.
It was raining.
The telephone rang at 6:00 A.M.
No one was up.
It was a wrong number.
Drat!
The toilet wouldn't flush.
The top had been left off the garbage.
The dog dragged the trash all over the yard.
The paper delivery service hit the window.
It cracked.
My father swore.
My mother cried.
I forgot my piano lesson was changed—to Tuesday.
I rode my bike six blocks in the rain before I remembered.
That made me miss a phone call.
It was from a girl.
She'll probably never call again.
I ate cold pizza for lunch.
I got sick.
I went back to bed.

I broke up with my boyfriend today.
Well, that's not exactly true.
He broke up with me.
I didn't want this.
It wasn't my choice.
Jana told me that Brad told her.
Jesse told Brad that Mike was getting tired of me.
But Mike told Jesse not to tell anyone.
And Jesse told Brad not to tell that he told.
Brad told Jana he'd kill her if she told me.
But she did.
I asked Mike if it was true
I prayed he'd say, "No."
But he said, "Yes."
Well, he's a jerk anyway.



Name _____

MOOD MADNESS

Words are the tools a writer uses to "set the stage" for his or her story. The examples below illustrate how a writer sets the mood of a poem or drama in the opening lines. Notice how each author uses these lines to create an atmosphere which will influence his reader. On the lines under each piece, see if you can identify its mood by writing a few precise words or phrases that describe the feel or atmosphere the author has created.

from *Plato's Apology*

"How you, O Athenians, have been affected by my accusers, I cannot tell; but I know that they almost make me forget who I was--so persuasively did they speak; and yet they have hardly uttered a word of truth..."

from
"On Returning to Dwell in the Country"

"Long I have loved to stroll among the hills and marshes
And take my pleasures among the woods and fields..." *Tao Chien, ancient 4th Century Chinese poet*

from Marlowe's
The Tragical History of the Life & Death of Dr. Faustus

"Now that the gloomy shadow of the night,
Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
Leaps from the Antarctic world into the sky
And dims the heavens with her pitchy breath,
Faustus, begin thine incantations
And try if devils will obey thy hest . . ."

Use with page 33.

Name _____

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MOOD MADNESS, CONTINUED

Use with page 32.

Pretend you are planning to create stories on the topics below.



Write opening lines that determine the mood needed to "set the stage" for each of your new works. Just for fun, write an intriguing title for each one that is guaranteed to grab a reader's attention.

A WILD TALL TALE:

A MYSTERY:

A JUNGLE ADVENTURE STORY:

A LONG, NARRATIVE POEM ABOUT VIKINGS:

Name _____

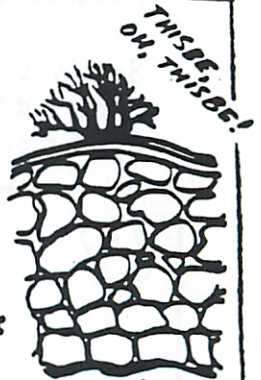
"HOW TERRIBLY TRAGIC," SOBBED THE READER

BINGO! This is exactly how a writer wants his or her reader to respond to a sad story. One of the saddest stories of all time is the love story of Pyramus and Thisbe. It is retold below, but the portion which appears in italics is fairly dull and awkward. Make it come alive by rewriting just this part in dialogue form. Your dialogue must be true to the story, but you should make the conversation as fascinating and suspenseful as possible. Be sure to use proper punctuation and paragraph breaks so that the story flows easily and the reader can clearly tell who is speaking. Otherwise, he or she won't be sobbing at the end! (Use a separate piece of paper.)

Long ago, there were two young lovers who lived next door to one another. Sadly, an exceedingly thick wall divided the two properties, and they were forbidden by their parents to see one another. However, as is most often the case, true love "finds a way," and the lovers talked in secret by communicating through a small chink in the great wall. One night, as the two lovers met in the shadows, they made a daring plan.

Pyramus told Thisbe that he could no longer live without the freedom to see her. Thisbe said that she was also longing to be with Pyramus—see him and talk to him without fear of being discovered. Pyramus replied that he had thought of a way that they could meet. Thisbe was anxious to hear his plan. Pyramus explained that, on the next holy day, each would get permission from his or her parents to visit the chapel in a nearby park in order to say prayers. He said that, near the chapel, was a lovely tree with thick, white blossoms. Thisbe should meet him there, just as the chapel bells struck three o'clock. Thisbe agreed excitedly. She dreamed aloud about how they would then run off together and be married and live happily ever after.

Tragically, Thisbe went to the chapel early. As she arrived, she was met by a lion in her path. Frightened, she ran to hide behind the chapel to wait for Pyramus. In her flight, she lost her veil which was picked up by the lion who had just finished a bloody dinner. As Pyramus approached at the three o'clock bell, he observed the lion tearing at the now bloody veil. Of course, he assumed that the lion's dinner had been his precious Thisbe. Distraught with guilt that he had brought his lover to such a violent death, he took a knife from his belt and stabbed himself. As he lay dying, Thisbe peered out from her hiding place. She ran to Pyramus, but only in time to hear his last words of devotion for her. Finally united with her lover, she could not let him go alone. She took the knife from his hands and stabbed herself in the heart. The two lay together under the lovely tree whose white blossoms turned red as they drew the lovers' blood from the earth. The tree stands as a memorial to them, even to this day!



Name _____

Basic Skills/Writing 6-8*

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ALPHABETICS

Young children are intrigued with the sounds of a language. The repetitive, playful sounds of the alphabet can become very effective tools to help them learn how to use their language. Simple rhymes such as these are joyous for them to say.

B GOES BUMP
AND I CAN JUMP!



P is for punchin'
Mmmm is for munchin'
C is for crunchin'

See if you can make up an alphabet-based rhyme to go with each of the flash cards below. Decorate them, cut them apart, and try them out on your favorite kindergartner or preschooler. Then go on to the more sophisticated alphabet activity on page 36.

C is for cat
and a cat eats a bat

F is for fun
Let's go have some fun

S is for school
Don't you like school

M is for me
Isn't fun to be me!

Sparkling ideas: How about . . . an animal alphabet, Christmas or other holiday alphabet, baseball or sports alphabet, music alphabet, an edible alphabet, a literary alphabet, a history alphabet . . .

Name _____

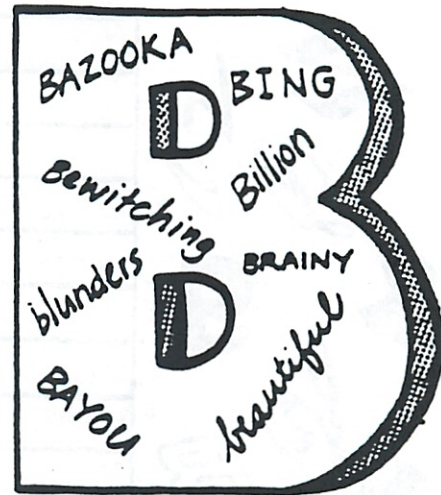
MORE ALPHABETICS

On page 35, you wrote some alphabet rhymes for little kids. Now change your audience focus and test your skill at a more sophisticated form of "alphabetics" by creating a poem like the one below. This poem will showcase your nomination for "Most Fascinating Letter of the English Alphabet." Use the poem below as a model, but don't be confined by approach or form. You can write whatever kind of a poem you wish. Just make sure that it makes a big deal out of that letter of the alphabet. Use the space on the following page, page 37.

ALPHABETICALLY SPEAKING

B was born with a bang!
It's Bewitching
Brainy
and Beautifull
B has a Billion in the Bank
And Believes in the Bible.
It has seen a Bazooka
in the Bayou
And a Bawdy Bartender
on a Balcony.
B Buzzes, Bops, Bites and Blabbers.
And it Beguiles,
Bedazzles and Bewilders.
It's been both a Bachelor and a Bigamist.
B is always on its Best Behavior,
Except when it Blunders
Into Bootlegging.

Marguerite & Leon, Grade 5



SHAN'T SURVIVE SANS SSSSSSSSS

Vote for S

It starts off some of the super-est stuff
Seven—the most perfect number
Scrumptious and sumptuous
Shush and slosh and smithereens.
You need it to snooze or sneeze or smooch.
S is great in the middle, too.
Without it you don't have kisses or wishes,
whispers or tessellations
And what a great ending! S my favorites:
mess and bless, wish and kiss (again!)
Stop and sign up for SSSSSSSSSS!

Tamara, Grade 6

Use with page 37.

Name _____

Basic Skills/Writing 6-8

ALPHABETICS, CONTINUED

Use with page 36.

This is a place for you to advertise one letter. Show it off. Impress everyone with how great it is. You might start by spending some time with your dictionary. Build a list of words (on a piece of scrap paper) that begin with this letter. That will give you good ideas and get you started with your poem.

I nominate the letter A as THE ALPHABET'S MOST FASCINATING LETTER, and here's why:

A
 Albert
 Ambitious
 Africa
 Australia
 American
 abandon
 abbreviate
 (AAA)
 Abacus
 above
 absent
 absolute
 accident
 accelerate
 account
 ad
 age
 align
 allow
 almond
 always
 Amazon
 auto
 authentic

Z h
 L y
 R g
 k Flip
 B
 v f
 less
 Q
 t i x
 F
 n o
 e p

A the letter above all
 Always pick A its been to lots of places
 like Antalia, Africa, and Amsterdam
 Now, don't forget America!
 Ambitious A always uses an abacus
 A is absent from accidents
 However, A likes to abbreviate
 AAA - American Automobile Association
 AA - Alcoholics Anonymous
 A - in school for awesome
 A is first, it is above all
 A is always authentic
 He once was accused of a crime
 Stealing Albert's apples.
 Although A was agitated
 A still stands for acid rain
 A is as strong as Achilles in Athens
 A is adaptable to every situation
 So, adopt A today, and appreciate it too!

Name _____

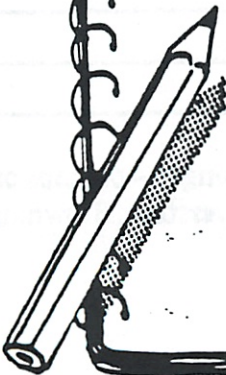
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TELL - TALE ART, CONTINUED

Use with page 38.

_____ :
(your title)

A parody on _____ with apologies to _____
(title of original work) (author)



Name _____

Basic Skills/Writing 6-8*

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TELL - TALE ART

(Poe - king Fun at the Famous)

Poking fun at familiar or famous writers and their writing is a sure way to get a reader's attention. If the reader agrees, he or she will cheer; if he or she is offended, he or she will grimace in disgust—either way, your writing has been effective!!

Parody (a spoof or play on words or ideas) is a favorite literary tool for poking fun. It can be used as a joke or meant to be satirical or ironic.

Example:

Silly - (Original) "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."
(Parody) "A bird in the hand is likely to soil the hand."



Serious - (Original) "Children should be seen & not heard."
(Parody) "Children should not be seen as a herd."



- I.** Try writing a parody or two, using familiar poems, rhymes or sayings as your models. Read your parodies aloud to friends or classmates and enjoy their responses!

Suggestions for a first try:

"Jack Be Nimble," "Jack & Jill," "Little Boy Blue," "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary,"
"Roses Are Red," "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," "Time flies when you're having fun,"
"Don't count your chickens until they hatch" ...

- II.** Now, on the next page, write a parody on a poem or piece that is a bit longer—perhaps one of your favorites from Wordsworth, Frost, Sandburg, Rossetti, Longfellow, Silverstein, Browning, or Shakespeare.

Use with page 39.

Name _____

FUN WITH MULTIFARIOUS FORMS

A writer's message may be delivered to a reader in **multifarious** (look it up) forms! One simple idea can be written as a slogan, a song, a poster, a story, a chant, a speech, a letter, or a rhyme. Identify a wish or dream you have, and express your idea in as many different forms of writing as possible. On this page you will find an example idea and a variety of forms of writing you might use to express it to a reader.

IDEA— I wish I had a horse!

A PLAY

A horse! My kingdom for a horse!



Wm. Shakespeare's
"Richard III"

A WANT AD

Wanted—Equine beast
of excellent quality.
Royal lineage preferred
over brawn or speed.
Contact I. Thackeray at
Brighton Eaves,
Cornwall.

A POEM

Oh, how I wish I had a horse,
A beast of elegant stature, of course —
Not the drudge of a farmer's land
Or a racer trained by a jockey's hand,
But a steed who is spirited, fearless and free,
A powerful creature of majesty!
But should my magical equine dream
Melt like a dollop of sweet ice cream
In the heat of harsh reality,
I'll have any beast of fair quality!

A TONGUE
TWISTER

My speedy steed supersedes the speed of a velocipede!

Captain of the Horse Guard
Her Majesty's Royal Stables
Kensington Palace
London

31 W Brighton Eaves
Cornwall
9 October, 1997

Dear Sir,
I am writing to inquire whether you might be acquainted with a horse of elegant stature who may have proved a bit spirited for the rigorous formal duties of the horse guard and is therefore available for purchase. If so, please respond to the above address. Anxiously and humbly awaiting your kind response.

Your fellow equestrian,
Ian Thackeray

A LETTER

Use with page 41.

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FUN WITH MULTIFARIOUS FORMS, CONTINUED

Use with page 40.

Express a dream or wish of your own in three or four of these multifarious forms: limerick, chant, cartoon, couplet, haiku, mystery, fantasy, recipe, me-poem, contract, jingle, menu, news story, advertisement, résumé, announcement, ode, bumper sticker, photo essay, song, tribute, gossip column, speech, play, banner, conversation, or tall tale.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing a dream or wish.A large, empty circular box with a black border, intended for writing a dream or wish.A medium-sized, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing a dream or wish.A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing a dream or wish.

Name _____

101

ABORT REPORT BOREDOM

The word *report* immediately sends a signal to the brain that says, "YAWN!" The dictionary definition of the word is even more of a yawn: *A detailed, formal, factual account or summation, the purpose of which is to inform.*

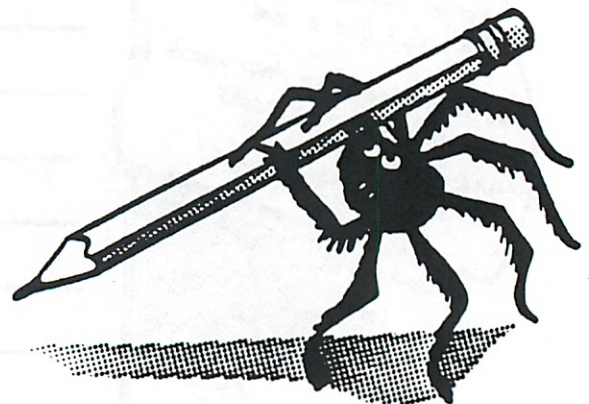
But a report doesn't have to be boring! If it is written well, a report can uncharacteristically make the reader's ears perk up, eyes bug out, or whole body dance. Well, okay . . . at the least, it should be written in a manner that makes the information easily readable and understandable for the reader. If it can be entertaining, that's a plus!

Guidelines to Help You Write Dynamic Reports

1. **Choose and limit your subject:**
Enough material must be available to make a report worthwhile, but not so much that you can't cover the big ideas in a few pages.
2. **Locate source materials:**
Keep looking until you have found information that is fascinating to you. If you're bored, you will have difficulty making it interesting for your reader. (Don't forget that people can be resources.)
3. **Take notes:**
Record only the details that are most important and have intense reader appeal.
4. **Make a brief outline or plan for your report:**
An opening (including a strong thesis or topic statement) that grabs the reader's attention
A body of riveting, reader-friendly supporting information
A strong conclusion that makes the reader glad he read your work
5. **Write a smashing, memorable account that flows easily and keeps your reader begging for more, beginning to end. You can do it!!**

Suggested Topics:

- How to Really Ace a Test
- The Language of Dolphins
- Pet Peeves of Middle School Teachers
- Poisons that Lurk in Your House
- Sleepwalking
- How Lead Gets Inside a Pencil
- Ventriloquism
- Tarantulas—Tame or Terrifying?
- . . . or a topic of your own choosing



Name _____

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SENSE-SATION!

SurroundSound® is an advanced audio technique that envelopes the listener with sound from all sides. You may have heard it in a movie theater.

A powerfully written description creates the same kind of sensation for the reader; it doesn't just tell you about something, but rather, makes you see it, feel it, experience it.

Read Taylor Siegrist's description of fear. See if you agree that he has skillfully put the reader into a situation which makes him or her experience this emotion, rather than just read about it.

FEAR

The moon settles behind a thick mass of swirling clouds. You take a fleeting, desperate glance behind you and descend along the steep path into the portentously poised valley; An enormous, tangled maw of black forest gradually opens before you, and wisps of darkness clutch at your beating heart.

Phantom specters glide through the night, reaching into your soul with their scrawny, dead fingers. Ghosts dance in your mind's eye, their cold images sending chills down your spine into the core of your being. The night burgeons into a living, writhing entity which strives to strangle you in inescapable terror. The silence is interrupted only by your pulse, echoing against the valley's dark sentinels.

Thoughts of escape race in your head, then explode into hazed visages of grim torture and grizzly death. Alone, terrified, you fall to the ground, hoping for comfort in the earth's embrace. Unfortunately no solace can hide you from the pale rider in the night.



Is your heart beating a little faster than when you began reading? Perhaps you are shaking uncontrollably or your hair is standing erect on your head. If so, Taylor's piece is effective.

Choose one of the emotions listed on the next page (page 45), or identify another of your own. Use this to write a descriptive piece that causes the reader to feel that emotion intensely. Some suggestions are given to help you get started.

Use with page 45.

Name _____

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ROGUES' EXPOSÉ

Expository writing? Sounds terribly stuffy and academic, doesn't it? But look at the root of the word *expository*—*expose*. Aha! That provides a different perspective. Writing that exposes makes the unseen seen—takes its covers off and shows the reader what's underneath. Now that sounds much more intriguing!

A written piece of this sort is sometimes called—guess what—an *exposé*; *exposé* is defined as *an exposure of something discreditable*. (The dictionary's second meaning is much less exciting—*an exposition of facts*.)

Below is a list of some of the most famous convicted criminals, rogues, and scalawags of all times. Choose a name to research. See if you can locate a body of information about this person or group of persons that will pique the interest of readers your age. Then write an *expository* piece that tells the highlights of the story (What made him/her/them turn to crime? What made them so "successful?" What flaw or circumstance caused their downfall or demise?). Begin writing about your chosen rogue at the bottom of this page. Use the back of the paper for more room.



John Wilkes Booth

Sirhan Sirhan

Bruno Richard Hauptmann

Bonnie & Clyde

William & Emily Harris
(Hearst kidnapping)

Al Capone

Gotti or Gambini families

Baby-Face Nelson

Benedict Arnold

Lizzie Borden

de Medici Family

Genghis Khan

Frank and Jesse James

Name _____

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PERFECTION DETECTION


How would you describe each of the six characters listed below?

Under each title, make a list of qualities or attributes you associate with that kind of person. Then choose your favorite and use the outline on the following page to plan a characterization (description of that person's character). Do not merely repeat the words and phrases you have listed. Create precise word pictures that will show the reader that person's character through his or her speech and behavior.

Example:


NOT - Ben makes an ideal friend because he is unselfish.

RATHER - "What would you like to do?" Ben always asks me, before he expresses his preference. He once loaned me his car to go to a job interview while he walked to the store in the rain to buy groceries for his mother.




An ideal friend


An absolute bore




An honor student




A high school hero/heroine





A lovable pest



A memorable teacher/coach

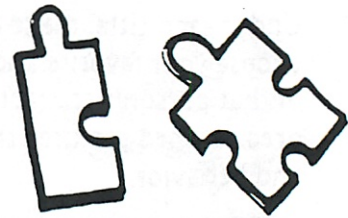
Use with page 49.

Name _____

PERFECTION DETECTION, continued

Use with page 48.

A PLAN FOR WRITING A CHARACTERIZATION



I. A captivating title to command the reader's attention:

II. A masterful opening statement that will invite the reader to want to know my person:

III. Several follow-up sentences that introduce the major character traits I see in this person:

IV. A very strong body (one or more paragraphs) that will include these examples of behavior to support statements made in my opening paragraph:

V. Ideas I will use in a concluding paragraph that will summarize the character I have presented and make my reader glad to have read this piece:



Name _____

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SUPERSNOOP



Your mission, supersnoop, is to choose a fictional or real character about whom information will be easy to track down. Pose as this person and create a journal of 3–10 entries, chronicling experiences, events, thoughts, and ideas related to his or her life. Use the space provided on the next page (page 51).

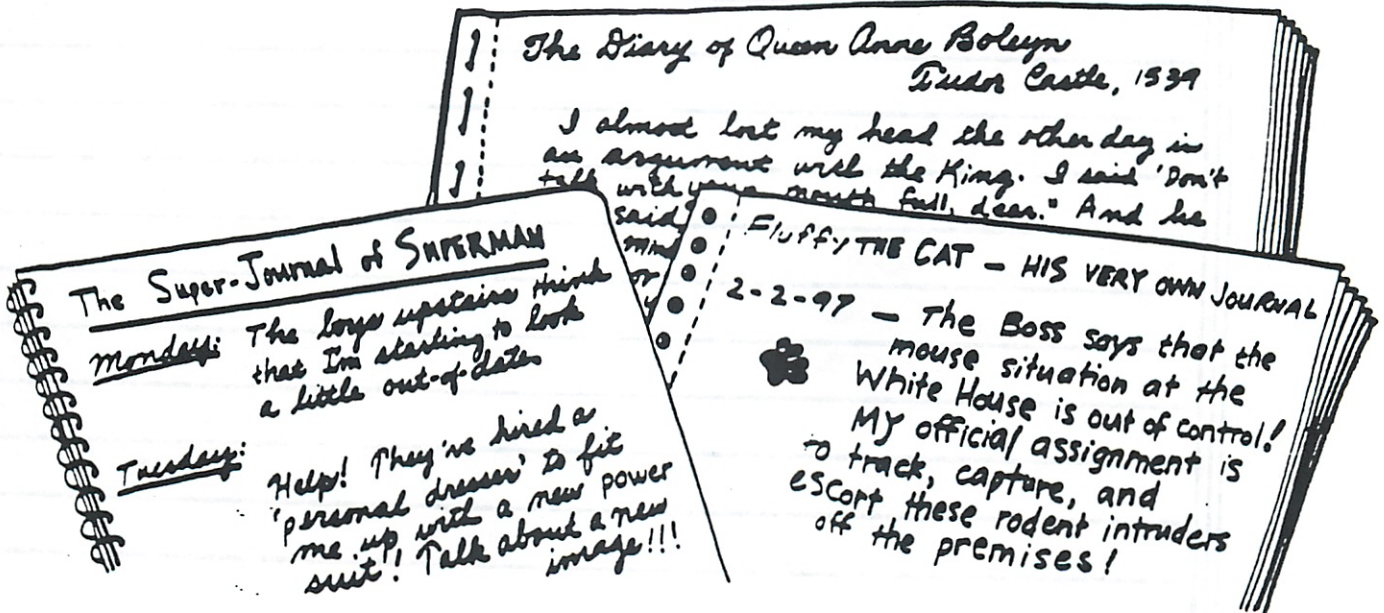
The entries may be sequential (dated in chronological order) or random. When a reader has read all the entries, he or she should be able to identify the ‘owner’ of the journal.

This can be a challenging and entertaining activity—especially if you do your job as a “supersnoop,” finding interesting and juicy information to include in your journal! Everything you write must be true to the reputation and personality of the character you are impersonating. You may have to do a bit of research to get the “good stuff!”

Remember that a journal may include all kinds of written material: very personal entries; thoughts and opinions on people and things; mini-essays related to politics, philosophy, social issues, literature, religion, moral issues, etc.; poetry; drawings or sketches; lists; notes or reminders to oneself, etc.

You can be anyone from Cruella DeVil to Winston Churchill, Mother Theresa, Hamlet, Michael Jordan, Chelsea Clinton, your English teacher, or the Pope. However, it is very important that you write in the voice and style you think that person would use—see and say things as you believe he or she would see and say them. (Of course, be sure that what he or she says is fascinating to read!)

Note: Trade journals with a friend and try to guess each other’s identity.



Use with page 51.

Name _____

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SUPERSNOOP, CONTINUED

Use with page 50.

Lined writing area for the story continuation.

Name _____

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180. NEW WORLD ADVENTURE

Humans have just been given notice that Earth will explode next Tuesday. Not everyone can be saved. A spaceship has been hastily constructed with room for four people and plenty of supplies. The spaceship will land on Mars where its four passengers are expected to keep the human race alive.

You will be put in a group of 4-5. You are the members of a committee who have been selected to choose the four people who will represent the human race on Mars. Remember, these are the ONLY humans who will start the new world. Your group must agree unanimously on your choices.

1. Dr. Albert Letson—56 years old, male, black, astronaut, has never fathered any children
2. Dr. Jamie Carson—33 years old, female, white, astronaut, scientist, mother of 1
3. Doug Reid—17 years old, male, white, athletic high school student, never had children
4. Pierre Lapone—73 years old, white, male, former governor, father of 3, speaks 5 languages
5. Hung Mei—31 years old, male, Asian, construction worker, father of 2
6. Jessica Seminuik—22 years old, female, Native American, professional actress, never had children
7. Shahzad Ali—28 years old, male, East Indian, doctor, father of 1
8. Kim Arnold—30 years old, female, black, high school math & science teacher, mother of 1
9. Brooke Salt—18 years old, female, white, high school drop out, pregnant with twins
10. Sam Kent—40 years old, male, computer scientist, never had children
11. Giau Chow—22 years old, male, Asian, computer science university student, never had children
12. Kim Koo—1 year old, female, Asian, in perfect health
13. Fatima Atma—16 years old, female, East Indian, very athletic, honors student, gave up a baby for adoption last year
14. Carla Henderson—26 years old, female, white, lawyer, mother of twins

YOUR FOUR CHOICES:

YOUR GROUP'S CHOICES:

Name _____

Date _____

179. THE SURVIVAL GAME

OBJECTIVE: This exercise is a fun way to try to convince other people to see things from your perspective. While you are trying to convince them to think a certain way, they are trying to convince you to see things from their perspective.

INSTRUCTIONS: It is the Fourth of July and the President has just announced that aliens have landed on Earth. You and your friends are escaping to a cabin. You have a fireplace and two beds in the cabin. The cabin is located near a fresh-water creek that flows into a lake 3 miles from the cabin. There is no electricity, running water, or food. You do not have time to gather many things to take with you. Below is a list of the things you might want. *You can only take 10 items.* Rank the items in order of priority. (#1 is the most important and #10 is the least important.)

Once you have chosen your items, get together with a small group and make a list of the 10 things you will take. Your group must agree on everything. Remember that everyone in your group will be staying at the cabin.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| _____ a canoe | _____ 2 paddles |
| _____ a knife | _____ 1 lifejacket |
| _____ a box of matches | _____ a pair of pants |
| _____ a knapsack | _____ a gun with extra bullets |
| _____ a quilt | _____ a fishing rod with tackle |
| _____ a map of the local area | _____ a compass |
| _____ 40 feet of rope | _____ a radio (battery-operated) |
| _____ a bar of soap | _____ \$300 in bills |
| _____ a pair of boots | _____ a Teddy bear |
| _____ 4 candles | _____ a battery-operated lantern |
| _____ 10 batteries | _____ a carton of cigarettes |
| _____ 3 loaves of bread | _____ 1 10-pound pail of granola |
| _____ a bedsheet | _____ 6 chocolate bars |
| _____ a raincoat | _____ a wool sweater |
| _____ a first-aid kit | _____ a credit card |
| _____ longjohns | _____ a cooking pot |
| _____ 1 package corn seeds and 1 package potato seeds | _____ toilet paper |
| _____ a television set | _____ a hairdryer |
| _____ a 12 × 12 tarp | _____ a feather duvet |
| _____ a pillow | _____ a fork, knife, and spoon |
| _____ a plate | _____ a mug |
| _____ 20 teabags | _____ 2 big jars of peanut butter |
| _____ 4 tins of stew | _____ a can opener |

Note: You do not know how long you will be living in the wilderness. The only clothes you are wearing at the moment are a pair of jeans, socks, underwear, shoes, and a T-shirt.

2. FIRST LINES

The first sentence of a novel or short story should entice the reader to want to read more. First lines usually:

- ➔ Draw the reader into the setting.
- ➔ Reveal something about the main character(s).
- ➔ Dive into the action of the story.

Examine the first sentences below from three famous novels. Comment on how each line effectively entices the reader to read more. Then examine the first line from the story you are currently reading and comment on it.

1. *"Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show."*

David Copperfield BY CHARLES DICKENS

2. *"They shoot the white girl first. With the rest they can take their time. No need to hurry out here."*

Paradise BY TONI MORRISON

3. *"The tropical rain fell in drenching sheets, hammering the corrugated roof of the clinic building, roaring down the metal gutters, splashing on the ground in a torrent."*

Jurassic Park BY MICHAEL CRICHTON

4. Title of book: _____

The first sentence of your story: _____

Your comments: _____

Name _____ Date _____

11. A SETTING TRAVEL AD

Advertising agencies hire copywriters to compose the "writing" part of ads. Pretend that you are a copywriter for an advertising agency in New York. Your company has been hired to create ads that will be published in travel magazines encouraging people to visit where the story you are reading takes place. Your job is to write persuasive and exciting copy that will accompany the visually appealing ad. In the space below, write the copy for the ad and indicate the type of pictures you think should be included. You may want to actually draw these pictures.

Title of Book: _____

Name _____ Date _____

23. IF I WON A MILLION DOLLARS

What would you do if you won a million dollars? Now think about three characters from the story you are reading. How would each of these characters spend a million dollars? Be prepared to explain to your classmates why you think each character would spend the money in the manner you have chosen. How does the character's personality determine his/her spending habits?

Title of Book: _____

1. Character's Name: _____

What would this character do if he/she won a million dollars?

2. Character's Name: _____

What would this character do if he/she won a million dollars?

3. Character's Name: _____

What would this character do if he/she won a million dollars?

38. SHOW, DON'T TELL

New writers are often advised, "Show, don't tell." For example, telling us that "Carl is cheap and inconsiderate" is not nearly so effective as *showing* these characteristics in action by writing: "Carl went up to the beggar and asked if he could spare a quarter because Carl resented spending money on a pay phone." Each statement below *tells* about a character or a place. Write a statement that *shows* what the character is like. For example:

Tell—It is hot outside.

Show—It is so hot outside that I could have fried an egg on the sidewalk.

1. TELL—North Dakota experienced a cold winter.

SHOW— _____

2. TELL—Zanida is hyper.

SHOW— _____

3. TELL—The Magic Kingdom is busy.

SHOW— _____

4. TELL—Mrs. Nguyen is scared of the neighbor's dog.

SHOW— _____

5. TELL—Mr. Dhaliwal is rich.

SHOW— _____

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Name _____ Date _____

50. STORY FILL-IN

Fill in a word (or words) of your choice any time a blank appears. Make sure the chosen word makes sense in the story.

Late one Friday after school, I was _____
through _____ when I suddenly saw a _____
spaceship landing in the _____. It looked
like a _____ and it made a noise like a _____.
The _____ looked like a _____.
My emotions were out of control—I felt incredibly _____.
I wanted to _____, but I could not. The _____
looked at me and invited me into the spaceship. I agreed and, in spite
of my _____, I entered. There were hundreds
of _____ inside. They gave me a gift of _____,
which made me feel at home. The _____ invited me to travel
to _____ in the spaceship. I said that I was up for the
adventure, so we left. When we got there, I met _____ and all
day the crew and I _____ and _____. By the
time we reentered the spaceship, I was exhausted, but I could not wait to get
home and tell my family.

Name _____ Date _____

51. WHAT'S IN A NAME

Novelists and playwrights carefully select the names of their characters. Some names are symbolic, while other names suit the characters' personalities. Imagine how differently people might perceive Willy Loman's character in Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* if, instead of Willy Loman, he had been named William Pensfield Arlington III.

Create names for the following characters that suit their role or personality.

1. An Oscar-winning actress

Glenda Wenda

2. A reporter for a sleazy tabloid newspaper

Sirk Middle-smirk

3. A coffee shop employee from a Southern town

Lyndee Walker

4. A Wall Street investment banker

Scott Peterson

5. A professional boxer

Steve "Hit 'em" Rock

6. A wheat farmer from South Dakota

Sean Wheady

7. A homeless beggar from a large city

Bob

8. A beauty pageant winner

Mrs. Brenda

9. A scientist

Dr. Stenbinger

52. CREATING A CHARACTER

Before writing a story, a novel, or a play, you should have an idea about what your characters, especially your main characters, will be like. Picture in your mind what they look like, act like, and think like. Know what motivates them, frightens them, and influences them. Use this worksheet before you write a story. Answer the questions about a character on whom you plan to base a story.

1. Is this character male or female? _____
2. How old is this character? _____
3. What is the character's name? _____
4. What does the character look like? _____

5. Where does the character live? _____
6. What are the character's favorite hobbies, sports, or interests? _____

7. What does this character do for a living? _____
8. Describe the character's personality. _____

9. What conflict is this character involved in? _____

10. What caused the conflict? _____
11. What other character is also involved in this conflict? _____
12. How does this character resolve the conflict? _____

13. What additional features about this character are important? _____

Name _____ Date _____

55. OPPOSITES CONVERSE

Imagine listening to a conversation between Beethoven and Shania Twain. It might go like this:

SHANIA TWAIN: So are you a country man or a rock 'n roll man, Beethoven?

BEETHOVEN: I think I prefer living in the country rather than an urban center. But I've never lived near a rock.

SHANIA TWAIN: No. I mean in music. Like what makes you want to dance?

Pick a character from List A who will have a conversation with a character from List B. Then write the dialogue between these two characters. Make sure each character talks the way he/she would in real life.

LIST A

- Amadeus Mozart
- William Shakespeare *W*
- Abraham Lincoln
- Mark Twain
- Queen Victoria

LIST B

- John Lennon
- Stephen Spielberg *S*
- Oprah Winfrey
- Shaquille O'Neal
- Meg Ryan

S: So what do you do for special effects?

W: You mean pigs guts!

S: No! Computer effects

W: What's a computer?

S: You don't know what one is how is your drama interesting?

W: Words, that's a man w/ words

S: Words? Don't your audience need to see it. What do you do for words?

W: You mean sards?

S: No light-sabers

W: What? Where do you get them?

S: From a computer

W: What's a computer?

Thing starts over

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Name _____ Date _____

57. WORD ADDING

Write a creative paragraph using as many of the 20 words listed below as possible. Your paragraph must make sense. It may be on any topic you like. (Use the back of this sheet if you need more space.)

- | | | | |
|--------|----------------|------------|----------|
| HAM | SHOPPING MALL | MITTENS | TRAIN |
| MARS | TENNIS BALL | MUG | ROCK |
| FLOWER | ROLLER COASTER | PICNIC | WHALE |
| CANDLE | STOP SIGN | VALENTINE | DINOSAUR |
| ARENA | LAB COAT | TELEVISION | OVEN |

One day I went to a shopping mall. First I went
into a

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58A. EXTEND-A-STORY STARTERS

Occasionally students have difficulty getting their extend-a-story started. Below is a list of story starters to assist the student who has writer's block.

1. He opened the closet door in his grandmother's house and could not believe what he saw.
2. The weirdest vacation she had ever taken was to a desolate place known to the locals as . . .
3. Karen and Pete built a time machine in the garage. It was finally complete and they were ready to go on their first journey back in time to . . .
4. Marni had never won anything in her life, but this time was different. She had just won a . . .
5. People never understood why the Reid family kept a _____ in their backyard. But they said they had their reasons.
6. A purple elephant fell from the sky and landed on . . .
7. On a calm evening in a place where nothing out of the ordinary happens, Claudette's car came to life and told her . . .
8. On a trip to Europe, something happened to me on the plane.
9. The genie told Ajay that he would become a famous person one day if he . . .
10. It was the game of a lifetime and the team should have won except . . .
11. When Dzuy was five years of age, the funniest thing happened to him in kindergarten. It all began when he . . .
12. Jason fell asleep in class and when he woke up a roller coaster was in the classroom. Then he noticed a . . .
13. Before he knew it he was flying to . . .
14. She wasn't sure why she volunteered to go to . . .
15. Strange things happen in the kitchen at 2 o'clock in the morning.

Name _____

Date _____

66. WRITING A GOOD THESIS STATEMENT

A thesis statement is usually one sentence (although occasionally it is more than one) that indicates the point of view of the essay, the arguments under discussion, and the order in which they will be discussed.

Here is a good thesis statement:

I like gymnastics because I have fun doing it, I find it a challenge, and I am good at it.

It is clear that the point of view of the essay concerns the reasons the author likes gymnastics. The three proofs that the author plans to use to support the claim that she/he likes gymnastics are:

1. She/he has fun doing it.
2. She/he finds it a challenge.
3. She/he is good at it.

In the essay, this author will write about the first point in the first body paragraph, the second in the second body paragraph, and the third in the third body paragraph.

Here are three poorly written thesis statements. Discuss why they are weak statements and then rewrite them to make them better.

1. In this essay I will discuss why smoking is bad for you.

2. My friends mean a lot to me.

3. The subject of this paper is that the United States is one of the most patriotic countries in the world.

4. There are lots of characteristics that make a person a good friend.

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