

THE WORLD OF PUNCTUATION



Punctuation marks are the "traffic signals" of a language. When correctly used, they guide the reader through the text and makes comprehension easier. However, when incorrectly placed, they can also change the meaning of a sentence.

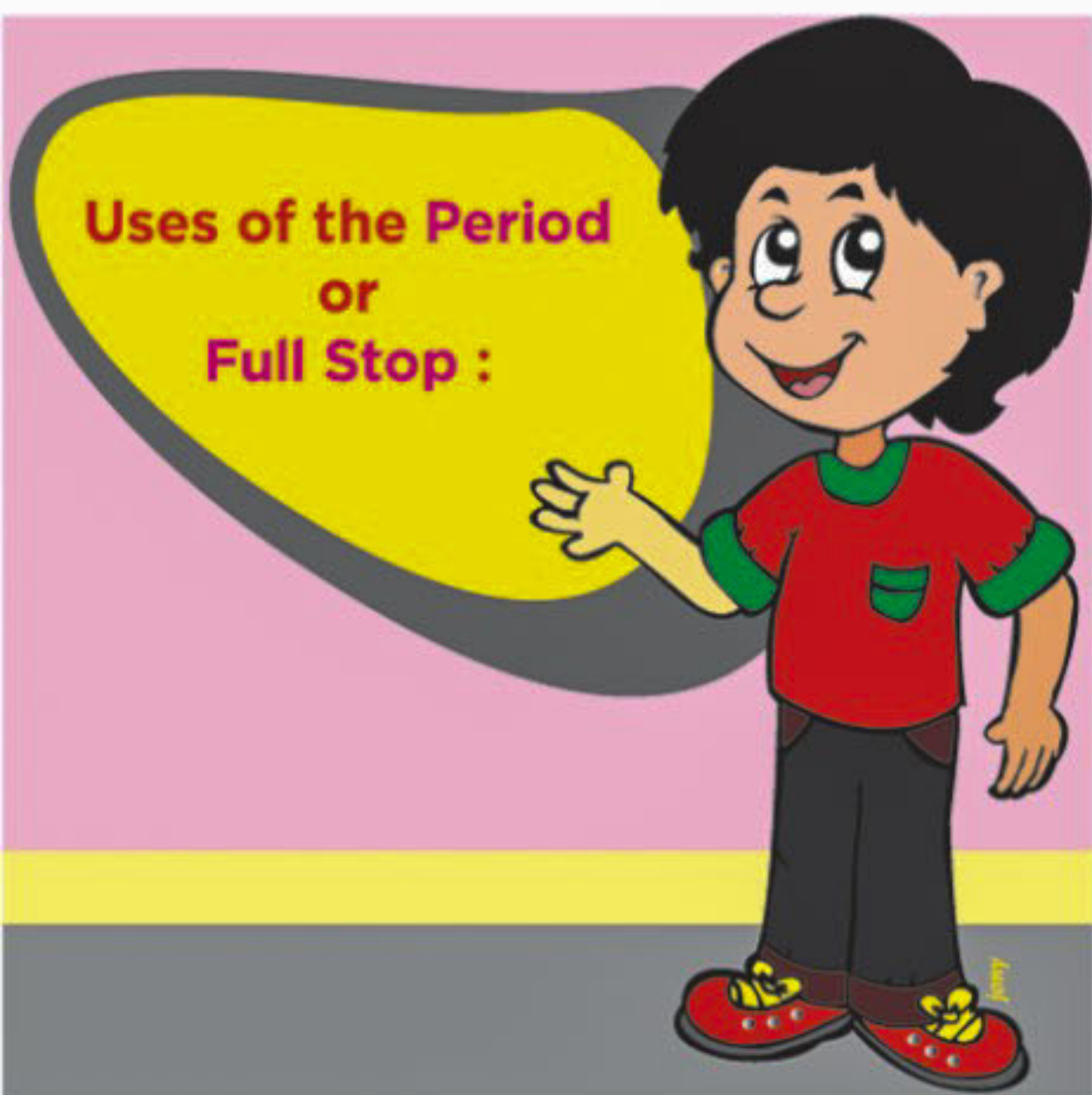
Consider the following example:

Original text:
A woman without her man is nothing.

Punctuated text 1:
A woman, without her man, is nothing.

Punctuated text 2:
A woman: without her, man is nothing.

Below is a discussion on the uses of different punctuation marks such as the comma, apostrophe, semicolon, colon, hyphen, quotation, and ellipses.



There are only two uses of the period (also known as "full stop" in British English):

• To mark the end of a sentence expressing a statement (if you are unsure whether the words constitute a sentence, look for a verb which is an essential component of a sentence)

• To signify an acronym - [N.A.T.O. for North Atlantic Treaty Organization (although increasingly it is acceptable and even preferable not to use full stops in such cases)]

Note: A common mistake is to use a comma where a full stop should be used,

Uses of Comma :

1) In a list
Oxford comma ~ the comma before "and" or "or" in a series of items.

Example:
Ham, eggs, and chips

2) Before dialogue
Example:
Mark said, "Good morning!"

3) Mark out additional information
Example:
The girl, who is wearing a pink shirt, is my sister.

4) Before a conjunction (e.g. and, but, or, for, while, yet) introducing an independent clause
Example:
The boys wanted to stay up until midnight, but they grew tired and fell asleep.

5) Enclose parenthetical expressions (additional information) between commas
Example:
The best way to see a country, unless you're pressed for time, is to travel on foot.



Note: When in doubt over where to use a comma, try reading the sentence out loud and, generally speaking, commas should be used where you pause for clarification or breath.

Uses of Apostrophe :

1. Indicates a possessive in a singular noun

Example: The café's menu



But when the possessor is a regular plural, the apostrophe follows the "s."

Example: The café's menus

Note:

With modern names ending in "s" (including biblical names and any foreign name with an unpronounced final "s"), the "s" is required after the apostrophe.

Keats's poems
St. James's Square
Charles's coffee mug

With names from the ancient world, it is not.

Achilles' heel
Archimedes' screw

If the name ends in an "iz" sound, an exception is made:

Bridges' score
Moses' tablets
Jesus' disciples

2. Indicates time or quantity.

Two Week's Notice
The Café will open in two month's time.

3. Indicates the omission of figures in dates

Example: Batch '08 is so excited to graduate.

4. Indicates the omission of letters

Example: The training starts at 8 o' clock every day.
The gov't is set to battle the insurgents in Basilan.

It's (it is) your turn.

It's been several years (It has been several years).

5. Featured in Irish names such as O' Neal and O' Casey.

'O = Of (?)
'O = anglicisation of "ua" meaning grandson

6. Indicates the plural of words

The do's and don'ts of speaking
She didn't welcome his but's and and's.

Note: The apostrophe doesn't have to appear in the plurals of abbreviations (e.g. DVD's) or plural dates (e.g. 1980's)

Remember: Possessive pronouns do not require an apostrophe

Possessive Pronouns:
Mine Ours, Yours Yours, His Theirs, Hers Theirs, Its Theirs

Uses of Semicolon :

1) Separate two related sentences where there is no conjunction (such as "and" or "but"), and where using only a comma would be ungrammatical.

Example: She is a good writer; she has published several books.

2) Organizes syntax thought where many commas are used

Example: We bought dairy products like milk, butter, and cheese; vegetables such as carrots, potatoes, and spinach; and some fruits like bananas and mangoes.

3) Linking words such as "however," "nevertheless," "also," "consequently," and "hence" require a semicolon.

Example: He spent a lot for the campaign; however, the majority of the public saw through his pretense and did not vote for him.

Uses of Colon :



1) Separates statements "placed boldly in dramatic opposition"

a. Lawrence could not speak: he was drunk.
b. Man proposes: God disposes.

It is also used when the second statement reaffirms, explains or illustrates the first

2) Starts lists

a. Please purchase the : furniture, glassware, ingredients, and linen.

3) Sets off book and film subtitles from the main titles

a. Gandhi II : The Empire Strikes Back

4) Separates dramatic characters forming a dialogue:

Philip: How do you get to Cebu?

o Anne: You can go there by plane, by ship, or by bus

Read the following sentences and insert the proper punctuation mark for each sentence.

- When is your birthday ____
- I love pizza ____
- I am in elementary school ____
- One example will explain what I mean ____
- My bus stops at the next corner ____
- Do you like to read ____
- I love to skateboard ____
- Do you have a library card ____
- My favorite subject is science ____
- Where are you going with your cousin ____
- I was so scared ____
- My grandmother is an archaeologist ____
- Suddenly it occurred to me to try something different ____
- The fireworks were spectacular ____
- What are the odds of winning the lottery ____
- What is your favorite season of the year ____
- Twenty percent of the people in my class wear glasses ____
- Do you know how fast a cheetah can run ____
- Mrs. Thompson screamed, "I have had it up to here ____"
- Do you like sunrise or sunset the best ____

Read the text below and then punctuate it correctly. You can punctuate it in a number of ways!

What a fantastic place the safari park is Why haven't you been to visit There are mischievous monkeys giant giraffes and crawling crocodiles As for other animals the list is endless lions elephants peacocks pythons and so many more There is something to watch all the time a monkey swinging from a climbing frame a peacock catching food a lion climbing a ladder If you are interested in food a delicious menu is available with indoor and outdoor eating Are you still too busy to visit Surely not The park is open every day between 8am and 8pm So book a date now The animals are expecting you

Read the text below and then punctuate it correctly. You can punctuate it in a number of ways!

the safari park is thriving everyone is really happy the weather is amazing we have sunny days and high temperatures the cafés ice cream is really popular we are close to the middle of july july and august always bring more children children make ideal visitors they pay attention to the animals and they eat a lot our caring keeper has had a wonderful idea he is teaching the monkeys new exercises if he is successful there will be many benefits our customers the visitors will gain pleasure the monkeys his pupils will have fun john the keeper may win an award however small

Find the answers in next MONDAY issue

From the list below, choose one word which could be used in place of the language shown in bold without changing the meaning of the sentence. Remember that you may need to change the form or in some cases the grammatical class of the word:

No KEY will be provided for the following EXERCISE. Use your dictionary and find out the meanings.

- Over the previous ten years, we have seen an enormous growth in the number of home personal computers.
- Lecturers often speak more loudly and more slowly when they want to stress an important point.
- One important function of newspapers is to uncover dishonest behavior and wrong-doing by those in power.
- The organisation of the company has changed completely, with far fewer senior managers.
- The decision to give longer prison sentences indicated a hardening of the government's attitude towards drug offenders.
- The new computer system created a lot of interest among potential customers.
- When the government increased the tax on petrol, there was a resultant rise in transport costs.
- In the first instance, the blood passes out of the heart, through the lungs and along the arteries before reaching the small blood vessels within the skin.
- Until the sixteenth century, the idea that the Earth moves around the Sun was regarded as a ridiculous idea, whereas today we accept this concept as completely normal.
- Pollution is a problem which has an effect on every country today.
- Most economists forecast that China will become a leading world economy in the twenty-first century.
- One difficult aspect of writing an essay is selecting material which is relevant to the topic and excluding irrelevant information.
- The company has experienced a number of significant changes in the last few years.
- The first thing to do is to choose the courses which you would like to study and then look at each university prospectus.



ANSWER KEY TO THE LAST EIS PAGE ACTIVITIES (DATED DECEMBER 14, 2015)

- KEY 1**
1 the 2 a 3 the 4 - 5 the 6 The 7 the 8 - 9 a 10 the 11 - 12 the 13 the 14 - 15 - 16 the 17 the 18 - 19 the 20 the 21 - 22 the 23 - 24 a/- 25 the 26 a 27 the 28 the 29 a 30 -
- KEY 2**
a) the, the b) --, a c) the, -- d) a, a e) a, --, the f) the, --, an g) The, -- h) The, the i) the, the j) the, --
- KEY 3**
b) On this record the twins play a piano duet.
c) Halfway through the meal we realized what the waiter had said. d) If a / -- Mrs Hilliar phones, say I am away on a trip. e) There is wonderful scenery in the Eastern part of Turkey. f) The cocker spaniel is one of the most popular pet dogs. g) There is going to be fog and cold weather all next week. h) I spent a very interesting holiday at Lake Coniston in England.
i) We are against war in general, so of course we are against a war like this between a superpower and a developing country. j) Burglaries are definitely on the increase.
- KEY 4**
a) the b) the, a / the, a, a c) a, -- d) The, -- e) --, the, the, the / --, the f) the, the g) the / --, -- h) a, --, the i) The, the j) The, the, the
- KEY 5**
The word processor and the calculator are without a shadow of doubt here to stay, and in the many respects our lives are the much richer for them. But the teachers and other academics are claiming that we are now starting to feel the first significant wave of their effects on a generation of the users. It seems nobody under the age of 20 can spell or add up any more. Even several professors at leading universities have commented on the detrimental effect the digital revolution has had on the most intelligent young minds in the country. The problem, evidently, lies with the automatic spellcheck now widely available on the word processing software. Professor John Silver of the Sydney University, Australia, said: "Why should we bother to learn how to spell correctly, or for that matter to learn even the most basic of the mathematical sums, when at the press of a button we have our problem answered for us. The implications are enormous. Will the adults of the future look to the computer to make the decisions for them, to tell them who to marry or what the house to buy? Are we heading for a future individual incapable of the independent human thought?"