

## Chapter 20

# End Marks and Commas

## Periods, Question Marks, Exclamation Points, Commas

In speaking, you use voice inflections and pauses to make your meaning clear. In writing, you use marks of punctuation such as end marks and commas as substitutes for these inflections and pauses.

Be sure to use proper marks of punctuation when you write or revise your compositions. If you learn the rules in this and in the following chapters and apply these rules, your compositions will be not only correct but also easier to understand.

### END MARKS

End marks -periods, question marks, and exclamation points -indicate your purpose. For instance, if you intend to state a fact, you use a period to end your statement. (For a classification of sentences according to purpose, see Chapter 2, pages 75-76.)

#### 20a. A statement is followed by a period.

Periods follow declarative sentences, sentences that make statements. Notice in the second example directly below that a declarative sentence containing an indirect question is followed by a period.

**EXAMPLES** Nancy Lopez won the tournament. [declarative sentence]  
Sarah asked what was the matter.

#### 20b. A question is followed by a question mark.

Use a question mark after interrogative sentences.

**EXAMPLES** What if an earthquake strikes?  
How can a fish drown?  
Was the bus on time?  
Where is it? There?

A direct question may have the form or word order of a declarative sentence. Since it *is* a question, however, it is followed by a question mark.

**EXAMPLES** A fish can drown?  
The bus was on time?

Be sure to distinguish between a declarative sentence which contains an indirect question and an interrogative sentence, which asks a direct question.

**INDIRECT QUESTION** He asked me what kept her away. [declarative]

**DIRECT QUESTION** What kept her away? [interrogative]

### 20c. An exclamation is followed by an exclamation point.

**EXAMPLES** Ouch!  
Wow! What a game!  
Look out!

Sometimes declarative and interrogative sentences show such strong feeling that they are more like exclamations than statements or questions. If so, the exclamation point should be used instead of the period or question mark.

**EXAMPLES** I simply cannot solve this puzzle!  
Can't you be quiet for a minute!

### 20d. An imperative sentence is followed by either a period or an exclamation point.

As with declarative and interrogative sentences, imperative sentences, particularly commands, may show strong feeling. In such cases, the exclamation point should be used. When an imperative sentence makes a request, it is generally followed by the period.

**EXAMPLES** Close that door!  
Please close that door.  
Look at the clowns.

Sometimes, to be courteous, a writer will state a command or request in the form of a question. Because of the purpose, however, the sentence is really an imperative sentence and is therefore followed by a period or an exclamation point.

**EXAMPLES** May I interrupt for a moment.  
Will you stop that noise!

### 20e. An abbreviation is followed by a period.

**EXAMPLES** A. E. Housman [Alfred Edward Housman]  
Mr., Jr., Dr. [Mister, Junior, Doctor]

Calif., Mass. [California, Massachusetts]

B.C., A. D. [before Christ, *anno Domini*]

Ave., St., Rd. [Avenue, Street, Road]

lb., oz., in., ft. [pound or pounds, ounce or ounces, inch or inches, foot or feet]

If an abbreviation comes at the end of a statement, do not use an extra period as an end mark.

**EXAMPLE** Mrs. Valdez has never been to Brooklyn, N.Y.

**BUT** Have you ever been to Brooklyn, N.Y.?

Some frequently used abbreviations and abbreviation of government agencies and international organizations are correctly written without periods. Abbreviations in the metric system are often written without periods, especially in science books.

**EXAMPLES** TV, IQ, FM, UFO, ROTC, USAF, UN, rpm, km, cm, ml,  
kg

When in doubt about whether to use periods, consult your dictionary.

**EXERCISE 1.** Copy the following sentences, inserting periods, question marks, or exclamation points.

1. What a score
2. What is the score
3. I asked what the score was
4. Roman troops invaded Britain in 54 BC
5. By AD 800 Baghdad was already an important city
6. Dr Jonas E Salk developed the first effective polio vaccine
7. Why is absolute zero theoretically the lowest temperature possible
8. Please explain why absolute zero is theoretically the lowest temperature possible
9. Is there a complete absence of heat when the temperature is absolute zero
10. Yippee A color TV in our hotel room

**EXERCISE 2.** Correctly using periods, question marks, and exclamation points, write ten sentences as directed on the following page.

1. One sentence stating a fact
2. One sentence making a request
3. One exclamation

4. Two direct questions
5. Two declarative sentences containing indirect questions
6. One imperative sentence that shows strong feeling
7. One imperative sentence that does not show strong feeling
8. One courteous command in the form of a question

## COMMAS

Like other marks of punctuation, commas are necessary for clear expression of ideas. As you read the following sentences aloud, notice how the placement of the comma affects the meaning of each sentence.

**EXAMPLES**        When your friends help, you stop working.  
                           When your friends help you, stop working.

If you fail to use necessary commas, you may confuse your reader.

**CONFUSING**      My favorite cousins are Bonnie Gail Billy Joe Calvin Joan and Rana. [How many cousins?]

**CLEAR**             My favorite cousins are Bonnie Gail, Billy Joe, Calvin, Joan, and Rana.

The rules and exercises that follow will help you learn the correct use of commas.

### 20f. Use commas to separate items in a series.

Notice in the following examples that the number of commas in a series is only one less than the number of items in the series.

**EXAMPLES**        Students, teachers, parents, and visitors attended the picnic.  
                           [nouns]

The happy, carefree, enthusiastic picnickers thoroughly enjoyed the outing. [adjectives] .

They swam, sunbathed, played games, ate, and chatted.  
                           [verbs]

They roamed over the hill, through the fields, down to the lake, and across the bridge. [prepositional phrases]

Suddenly a storm broke with a crashing of thunder, a flashing of lightning, and a downpouring of rain. [gerund phrases]

Those who had walked to the picnic, who had brought

small children, who had no umbrellas or raincoats, or who had worn good clothes dashed to a nearby farmhouse.  
[subordinate clauses]

When the last two items in a series are joined by *and*, you may omit the comma before the *and* if the comma is not necessary to make the meaning clear.

**CLEAR WITH COMMA OMITTED:** Sugar, coffee and celery were on sale last Saturday.

**NOT CLEAR WITH COMMA OMITTED:** We elected our class officers: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. [How many officers were elected, three or four? Does one person serve as secretary and treasurer, or are two people needed for separate jobs?]

**CLEAR WITH COMMA INCLUDED:** We elected our class officers: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

Some writers prefer always to use the comma before the *and*, whether or not it is necessary for clarity. Follow your teacher's instructions on this point.

• **NOTE** Some words – such as *shoes and socks*, *rod and reel*, *needle and thread* – are used in pairs and may be set off as one item in a series: *For supper we had ham and eggs, lettuce and tomatoes, and ice cream and cake.*

(1) If all items in a series are joined by *and* or *or*, do not use commas to separate them.

**EXAMPLES** I bought a tie and a shirt and a hat. Hubert or Roy or Shirley can build the float.

(2) Independent clauses in a series are usually separated by semicolons. Short independent clauses, however, may be separated by commas.

**EXAMPLES** The wind blew furiously through the trees; lightning flashed across the sky; thunder boomed and rolled; rain poured down.

The wind blew, lightning flashed, thunder boomed, rain poured down.

## 20g. Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives preceding a noun.

**EXAMPLE** That is a rough, narrow, dangerous road.

When the last adjective in a series is thought of as part of the noun, the comma before the adjective is omitted.

**EXAMPLES** I collect foreign postage stamps. A vain, talkative disc jockey annoys me.

Pairs of words like *postage stamp*, *disc jockey*, *car key*, *movie star*, *stock market*, and *living room* are considered as single units – as though the two words were one word, a compound noun. In the previous sentences, *foreign* modifies the unit *postage stamp*; *vain* and *talkative* modify *disc jockey*.

A good test to determine whether the adjective and noun form a unit is to insert the word *and* between the adjectives. In the first sentence, *and* cannot be logically inserted: *foreign and postage stamps*. In the second sentence, *and* would be logical between the first two adjectives (*vain and talkative*) but not between the second and third (*talkative and disc*). If *and* fits sensibly between the adjectives, use a comma.

Another test is to change the order of the adjectives. *Talkative, vain disc jockey* would be correct, but not *postage foreign stamps* or *disc talkative jockey*. If the order of the adjectives cannot be reversed sensibly, no comma should be used.

**EXERCISE 3.** Number your paper 1-10. Copy each series below, inserting commas wherever needed.

**EXAMPLE** 1. Eva caught bass catfish and perch.

1. *bass, catfish, and perch*

or

1. *bass, catfish and perch*

1. George Washington Carver derived from the peanut such items as ink coffee beauty cream and pigments.
2. My little sister can read write add and multiply.
3. Sulfur is used for manufacturing matches plastics paper and insect sprays.
4. She lowered her long curled dark eyelashes.
5. It was an unusual attractive floor lamp.
6. Mosquitoes hummed crickets chirped mockingbirds sang and frogs croaked.

7. A wise monkey is supposed to hear no evil see no evil and speak no evil.
8. On the surface of the moon are round deep craters and steep rugged mountains.
9. Do you want French dressing mayonnaise or vinegar on your salad?
10. Robert Browning says that youth is good that middle age is better and that old age is best.

**EXERCISE 4.** Number your paper 1-10. Think of an appropriate series of words, phrases, or clauses for each blank below; then write each series, properly punctuated, after the corresponding number on your paper.

1. \_\_\_ are among my classmates.
2. We noticed \_\_\_ all along the highway.
3. The \_\_\_ movie star attracted huge crowds on opening night.
4. Our teacher said that \_\_\_.
5. I want \_\_\_ for my birthday.
6. The \_\_\_ autumn leaves are beautiful indeed.
7. You can make high grades by \_\_\_.
8. A \_\_\_ woman won the marathon.
9. Today symbols of success include \_\_\_
10. A considerate person \_\_\_.

**EXERCISE 5.** Write ten sentences, each one containing a correctly punctuated series, as follows:

Two sentences with a series of nouns

Two sentences with a series of verbs

Three sentences with adjectives in a series

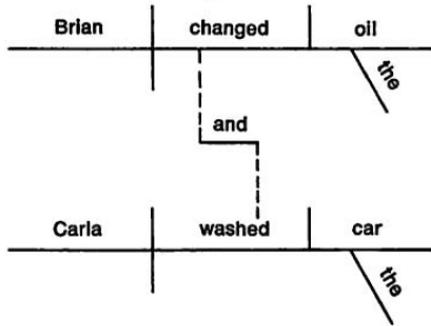
One sentence with a series of subordinate clauses

Two sentences with a series of phrases

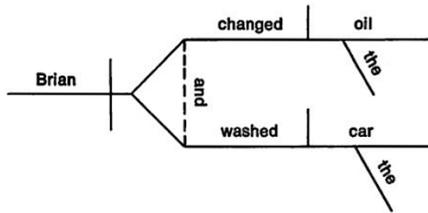
**20h. Use a comma before *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, and *yet* when they join independent clauses.**

A comma goes before a coordinating conjunction when a completed thought is on *both sides* of the conjunction. Do not be misled by compound verbs, which often make a sentence look as though it contains two independent clauses. Compare the structures of the two sentences on the following page.

**COMPOUND SENTENCE** (two independent clauses) Brian changed the oil, and Carla washed the car.



**SIMPLE SENTENCE** (one subject with a compound verb) Brian changed the oil and washed the car.



Study the following correctly punctuated compound sentences, noticing that independent clauses (with a subject *and* a verb) are on both sides of *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, and *yet*.

Into the garbage pail she flung the burned cake, and her mother helped her start another. All of us were at the game, but Quincy was at the movies.

Either the gift was lost in the mail, or she has forgotten to thank me. He did not come to my birthday party, nor did he even bother to answer the invitation.

Natalie Levy will no longer sell magazine subscriptions to everyone in our neighborhood, for she has finally saved enough money for college.

The critics hated the play, yet it ran for six months.

• **NOTE** A comma always goes before *for* and *yet* joining two independent clauses. The comma may be omitted, however, before *and*, *but*, *or*, or *nor* when the independent clauses are very short and when there is no possibility of misunderstanding.

**EXAMPLE**            The lights were off and the door was locked.

**EXERCISE 6.** Many sentences in this exercise contain clauses joined by the conjunctions *and, but, or, nor, for, yet*. Do not copy the sentences. Number your paper 1-20. Decide where the commas should come, and write on your paper after the proper number the word preceding each comma; add the comma and the conjunction following it. If a sentence is correct as it is written, write C (for *correct*) after the proper number on your paper.

**EXAMPLES**            1. New York led in the first inning by two runs but Houston was leading in the third inning by a score of six to two.

1. *runs, but*

2. Ethan whispered something to Philip and quickly left the stadium.

2. *C*

1. The long drought that had crippled the farmers and ranchers finally ended for day after day the rain came down in sheets.
2. The beds of streams that had long been dry came to life and the caked soil became green with grass.
3. For a time the ranchers rejoiced for their cattle began to grow fat.
4. There was plenty of water now for crops and livestock yet the rains did not stop.
5. Small streams turned into raging rivers and the rivers became large lakes greedily engulfing the countryside.
6. Frightened sheep huddled on the hilltops and the carcasses of many fat cows floated down the rivers.
7. The levees broke and water flooded the towns.
8. A levee broke in my hometown and torrents of water covered the city square.
9. Not only were places of business ruined as merchandise floated out broken doors and windows but several persons were drowned when their houses were washed away.
10. Soon the American Red Cross set up first-aid stations near the town and provided food and clothes for the homeless.
11. Neighboring cities began to chip in with their relief dollars and merchants pledged twenty percent of their sales receipts for the Flood Fund.
12. The state legislature passed an emergency appropriation bill to help the flood victims and the national government came forward with assistance for the disaster area.

13. At last the weather became more merciful and settled down to normal.
14. The bright sun and dry winds came forth to challenge the angry streams and rivers.
15. The clean-up job took tremendous courage and hard work yet stores soon opened for business.
16. Squads of rescue workers helped ranchers to clear away debris and farmers to replant crops.
17. Civic organizations did not fail to anticipate a possible typhoid epidemic nor did they forget to combat the hordes of mosquitoes infesting the once-flooded area.
18. There were some tragic consequences of the deluge but the flood had good psychological effects.
19. Both farmers and ranchers could now hope for good crops and green pastures for the first time in seven years.
20. People laughed as they gave credit to the new governor for breaking the drought or they moaned upon hearing someone mention the incoming “flood” of mail.

## 20i. Use a comma to set off nonessential clauses and nonessential participial phrases.

A nonessential (or nonrestrictive) clause or participial phrase adds information that is not necessary to the main idea in the sentence.

As you read the following sentences aloud, pause and lower your voice to indicate that each bold-faced clause or participial phrase is not essential to the basic meaning of the sentence.

**NONESSENTIAL CLAUSES:** Ella Riley, who likes animals, wants to be a veterinarian.

The National Bank and the Merchandise Mart, which were firetraps, were tom down.

I read about Sequoya, whose invention of an alphabet aided other Cherokees.

**NONESSENTIAL PHRASES:** Senator Stewart, hoping for a compromise, began a filibuster.

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, written by Lewis, Carroll, has become a classic.

Each bold-faced clause or phrase above can be omitted because it is not essential to identify the word it modifies. For example, the first clause, *who likes animals*, does not identify Ella Riley; neither does the first phrase, *hoping for a compromise*, identify Senator Stewart. Each of them may be omitted without affecting the meaning of the main idea: *Ella Riley wants to be a veterinarian. Senator Stewart began a filibuster.*

However, when a clause or phrase is necessary to the meaning of a sentence, or when it tells *which one*, the clause or phrase is *essential* (or *restrictive*), and commas are *not* used.

Notice how the meaning of each sentence below changes when the essential clause or phrase is omitted.

**ESSENTIAL CLAUSES** Students who pass the test will have a day off. All buildings which were firetraps were tom down.

I'd like to throw every hat that I buy on sale into the garbage can.

**• NOTE** An adjective clause beginning with *that* is usually essential.

**ESSENTIAL PHRASES** Senators hoping for a compromise began a filibuster. [Not all senators; just the ones hoping for a compromise.]

A book written by Lewis Carroll has become a classic. [Not any book, but one by Lewis Carroll.]

**EXERCISE 7.** Seven of the following sentences contain nonessential clauses; copy and properly punctuate these sentences. Three sentences are correct as they are written; for these, write C (for *correct*) after the proper number on your paper.

1. Daisy Maude Snyder who is my second cousin will visit me next week.
2. We take the *Shreveport Times* which has especially good editorials.
3. Highways that have eight lanes are built for speed and safety.
4. You should know my father who likes to tinker with anything mechanical.
5. All people who travel often should learn how to pack properly.
6. Theodore Snead who has a short haircut seems friendly.
7. I attend Cottonwood High School which has an enrollment of 368.
8. All contestants who answer this difficult question will receive a prize.
9. The hognose snake which some people fear is not poisonous.
10. In "The Gift of the Magi" which is a very beautiful short story the two

main characters who are deeply in love make sacrifices in order to buy gifts for each other.

**EXERCISE 8.** The following sentences contain participial phrases, some essential and some nonessential. If a sentence is correctly punctuated, write *C* (for *correct*) after the proper number on your paper. Copy the other sentences, punctuating them correctly.

1. All students, planning to attend the Student Council meeting, will be excused from class at two o'clock.
2. Louis Pasteur working hard in his laboratory took time out to treat people for rabies.
3. The fifty-story Civic Center, located on the corner of Main Street and Daniels Place, dominates the skyline of the city.
4. Every child, enrolling in school for the first time, must be vaccinated for polio.
5. Their youngest daughter loved by everyone is not at all spoiled.
6. Anyone seeing a suspicious character should notify the police.
7. A long-distance telephone call received on one's birthday is always welcome.
8. My left big toe, badly bruised by the blow, began to swell.
9. Mrs. Danby trying not to smile offered to help us put on the stage make-up.
10. The "House of Tiles" built in Mexico City during the sixteenth century is now famous as the "House of Sanborn."

**EXERCISE 9.** Number your paper 1-25. Many of the following sentences contain nonessential clauses or participial phrases and therefore require commas. The other sentences, however, require no commas and are correct. If a sentence is correctly punctuated, write *C* (for *correct*) after the proper number on your paper. If a sentence is incorrect, copy on your paper the word that should be followed by a comma and place the comma after it.

**EXAMPLES**

1. A novelist whose latest book is a best seller gave a talk at our school.

I.C

2. Betty Furness acclaimed as a consumer advocate gave a talk at our school.

2. *Furness, advocate,*

1. Ellen Barnes who is captain of the basketball team is an honor student.
2. Players who are late for practice will be sent back to the locker room.

3. We are looking for high school students who are interested in a Saturday job.
4. My friends knowing how much I like crazy sweat shirts gave me several of them for my birthday last month.
5. Some members of the audience thinking the show was over left their seats.
6. The new library which is in the center of the campus is easy to get to.
7. Anyone looking for some good detective novels should consult Barry who collects them.
8. Last night's rock concert reviewed in this morning's newspaper was the best I ever heard.
9. A telephone directory that lists phone numbers by address rather than by name is used by telephone operators.
10. All crew members who were washed overboard swam to safety.
11. Panoramic views of the Grand Canyon can be seen from the South Rim which is open all year or from the North Rim which is closed in winter because of snow.
12. Barbara Jordan had been a member of the Congressional committee which examined the evidence against the President.
13. *Robert's Rules of Order* which is still a popular guide to parliamentary procedure was first published in 1876.
14. A few students having completed their assignment early were excused from class.
15. Psychokinesis which is otherwise known as P K is the influencing or moving of physical objects by willpower.
16. People who like people are usually well liked.
17. Some road signs and markings that may not seem important to the daytime driver may be very important to the nighttime driver.
18. World population which is increasing faster than the food supply is a major concern.
19. Anyone believing in good-luck charms is superstitious.
20. The luxurious dirigible *Hindenburg* which was built in Germany in the 1930's exploded as it arrived in New Jersey killing thirty-six people.
21. Hurricanes that start in the eastern Caribbean usually follow a northwestward course toward the east coast of the United States.
22. Mr. Werler who is curator of the zoo says that television fascinates gorillas.
23. Windsurfing is a sport that requires balance, strength, and a knowledge of sailing.

24. Golf sometimes called the most frustrating sport is, nevertheless, surprisingly popular.
25. Since its publication about thirty years ago, *The Lord of the Flies* written by William Golding who was then an English schoolmaster has been read by millions of students.

### 20j. Use a comma after certain introductory elements.

(1) Use a comma after words such as *well, yes, no, why*, etc., when they begin a sentence.

**EXAMPLES**      **No**, I have not answered her letter.  
                         **Why**, surely you haven't forgotten already!

(2) Use a comma after an introductory participial phrase.

**EXAMPLES**      **Pausing for a moment in the doorway**, the teacher smiled at the class.  
                         **Frightened by the noise**, the pigeons flew from the roof.

(3) Use a comma after a succession of introductory prepositional phrases.

**EXAMPLES**      **Near the gate at the end of the lane**, I watched the wild stallion race out of the corral.  
                         **In paintings by modern artists**, colors are often very bright.

A short introductory prepositional phrase does not require a comma unless the comma is necessary to make the meaning clear.

**EXAMPLES**      **In this state** we have a sales tax.  
                         **In this state**, taxes are comparatively high. [The comma is necessary to avoid reading *state taxes*.]

(4) Use a comma after an introductory adverb clause.

**EXAMPLES**      **After Pablo Casals had played the cello recital**, the crowd gave him a standing ovation.  
                         **Until we found the source of the fire**, everyone was searching nervously through closets and wastebaskets.

**EXERCISE 10.** The sentences in this exercise contain introductory elements. Decide where commas should be used. Copy on your paper the word preceding each comma, and place a comma after it. Number your answers to accord with the number of the sentences. If a sentence does not

require a comma, write *C* (for *correct*) after the appropriate number.

**EXAMPLES**

1. Known in China four thousand years ago falconry is an ancient sport.

1. *ago*,

2. Like a hawk a falcon has a crooked beak.

2. *C*

1. Although falconry is no longer a popular sport a small number of people still enjoy it.
2. Having sharp claws and hooked beaks falcons are by nature good hunters.
3. Instead of using guns or other modern weapons some hunters capture and train falcons.
4. After learning to fly a female falcon is taken from the nest and tamed.
5. Until the falcon becomes accustomed to living around humans it wears a hood.
6. Covering the eyes and most of the head this leather hood helps the hunter control the falcon.
7. When the falcon has the hood on the hunter carries the bird into a field.
8. In the field is the desired game.
9. When the hunter sees a crow or a pigeon and takes the hood off the falcon quickly attacks the game.
10. Besides a hood other equipment is used in falconry.
11. Attached to the falcon's legs jesses are short leather strips with bells.
12. If a falcon should bring down game out of sight these jesses help the hunter find the spot.
13. During the hunt falconers usually wear heavy leather gloves.
14. When they are training a young falcon to hunt they also use lures.
15. Used properly lures teach falcons to attack certain birds.
16. Containing pieces of meat and the wings of a bird the lures quickly attract falcons.
17. Within seconds a hungry falcon usually pounces upon the lure.
18. Yes falcons become trained in a short time.
19. Since a falcon's speed and accuracy are tremendously effective guns are unnecessary.
20. In the field with a trained falcon hunters often use a dog to flush and retrieve the game.

**20k. Use commas to set off elements that interrupt the sentence.**

Two commas are used around an interrupting element -one before and one

after.

**EXAMPLES** He, of course, won't be there.  
Linda, by the way, sends her regards.

Sometimes an "interrupter" comes at the beginning or at the end of a sentence. In these cases, only one comma is needed.

**EXAMPLES** Nevertheless, I think we should go.  
Therefore, the answer is wrong.  
I don't know why, however.

(1) Appositives and appositive phrases are usually set off by commas.

**EXAMPLES** Everyone, even his enemies, respects him.  
An extremely talented dancer, Chita Rivera received an ovation.  
I often play tennis, a lively game.

Sometimes an appositive is so closely related to the word preceding it that it should not be set off by commas. Such an appositive usually has no modifiers; that is, there is no appositive phrase.

**EXAMPLES** my sister Elizabeth                      we girls  
the poet Countee Cullen                      us students

**EXERCISE 11.** Number your paper 1-20, and copy (1) the word preceding the appositive (if any), (2) the appositive or appositive phrase, and (3) the word following the appositive or appositive phrase (if any). Correctly punctuate the appositives; not all of the sentences will need commas.

**EXAMPLE** 1. My sister Helen discussed air pollution with Mr. Mays the owner of a garage and with Hiram a car dealer.  
*1. sister Helen discussed*  
*Mays, the owner of a garage, and*  
*Hiram, a car dealer*

1. "Ecology" an obscure word not many years ago has become a popular term today.
2. The word's origin is *oikos* the Greek word for "house."
3. Ecology is the study of an enormous house the world of all living things.
4. Ecologists study the bond of a living organism to its environment the place in which it lives.
5. Humans one kind of living organism affect their environment in both

beneficial and harmful ways.

6. My sister Helen is worried about the environment.
7. She and many of her friends attended Earth Day a festival devoted to ecology.
8. An amateur photographer my sister prepared a slide show on soil erosion in Grant Park.
9. One of many displays at the Earth Day festival my sister's presentation attracted wide attention.
10. The mayor a member of the audience soon promised to appoint a committee to correct the problem.
11. The folk-singing group The Travelers gave a short concert during the festival.
12. Among other displays was a set of graphs illustrated charts that showed the condition of air, land, water, and animals in the United States.
13. Air quality a major concern of environmentalists showed improvement.
14. The charts showed that automobile emissions the greatest cause of air pollution have decreased.
15. Land development in the past fifty years has reduced the total acreage of coastal wetlands the home for millions of animals.
16. Insecticides are being produced in greater quantity than ever before an alarming statistic.
17. More than two hundred varieties of wildlife creatures in all parts of the United States are threatened by extinction.
18. Mr. Lewis the compiler of all these statistics talked with me briefly about the environment.
19. The ecologist Professor Blake joined us.
20. We all agreed that the community the place where we live and work is the environment we can help the most.

**EXERCISE 12.** Use each of the following items as an appositive in a sentence of your own. Be sure to use commas if necessary.

- |                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Linda              | 6. the life of the party         |
| 2. a nuisance         | 7. a girl sitting near me        |
| 3. my neighbor        | 8. the candidate to elect        |
| 4. a good teacher     | 9. a book for young people       |
| 5. Bernice and Maggie | 10. the man that you should meet |

(2) Words used in direct address are set off by commas.

EXAMPLES That program, **Florence**, has been changed.

Miss Nelson, may I leave class early?  
Please answer the doorbell, Elsie.

**EXERCISE 13.** Copy and correctly punctuate the following sentences.

1. Do you remember Patty what Romeo's last name is?
2. Mr. President I move that we adjourn.
3. Please let me go to the movies Dad.
4. Yes Mrs. O'Neill I shall be glad to help you.
5. What is the answer to the riddle my wise friend?

(3) Parenthetical expressions are set off by commas.

Parenthetical expressions are side remarks adding information or relating ideas. When writing, you should ordinarily use commas to set off parenthetical matter.<sup>1</sup>

The following expressions are commonly used parenthetically:

*consequently, however, moreover, nevertheless, therefore, after all, as a matter of fact, at any rate, for example, for instance, in fact, in my opinion, in the first place, of course, on the contrary, on the other hand, generally speaking, I believe (guess, know, hope, think, suppose), to tell the truth.*

**EXAMPLES** He did not, however, keep his promise.

After all, I couldn't have known.

People prefer dark clothes in winter, generally speaking.

Some expressions may be used both parenthetically and not parenthetically. Compare the following pairs of correctly punctuated sentences; read the sentences aloud.

**PARENTHETICAL** However, did you do that?

To tell the truth, he tries.

Mom, I think, will approve.

**NOT PARENTHETICAL** However did you do that?

He tries to tell the truth.

I think Mom will approve.

**• NOTE** A contrasting expression introduced by *not* is parenthetical and must be set off by commas.

**EXAMPLE** It is the spirit of the giver, not the gift, that counts.

**EXERCISE 14.** Number your paper 1-10. Copy the following: (1) the word (if any) preceding each interrupter, (2) the interrupter itself, and (3) the word (if any) following it. Supply the necessary punctuation.

**EXAMPLE** 1. However your plan in my opinion might work.

1. *However, your plan, in my opinion, might*

1. To tell the truth I have never seen a flying' fish-
2. I do know however that some birds can swim.
3. No person of course can see everything in existence; everybody has to depend upon the word of authorities.
4. My father is I believe an authority about fish that can fly.
5. In fact he has seen a Catalina fish fly as high as twenty feet in the air.
6. Having large fins not wings this fish skips along the top of the water and then suddenly leaps skyward.
7. This fish generally speaking is about a foot or a foot-and-a-half long.
8. There are other animals that fly without wings however.
9. Some squirrels for example can glide from one tree to another; they fly about at night not in the daytime.
10. On the contrary I am sticking to the truth; these squirrels use 'their tails as rudders and their skin as built-in parachutes.

**EXERCISE 15.** Use each of the following items as a parenthetical or an interrupting element in a correctly punctuated sentence of your own.

**EXAMPLE** 1. our new drama coach

1. The main speaker was Mrs. Wilkins, our new drama coach.

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. the umpire          | 6. Michigan         |
| 2. for instance        | 7. my friend        |
| 3. well                | 8. no               |
| 4. as a matter of fact | 9. I think          |
| 5. therefore           | 10. on the contrary |

**20I. Use a comma in certain conventional situations.**

(1) Use a comma to separate items in dates and addresses.

**EXAMPLES** My family moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, on Monday, May 4, 1981.

On May 4, 1981, I changed my address to 645 Commerce Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902.



## SUMMARY OF USES OF THE COMMA

### 20f. Use commas to separate items in a series.

(1) If all items in a series are joined by *and* or *or*, do not use commas to separate them. -

(2) Independent clauses in a series are usually separated by semicolons. Short independent clauses are sometimes separated by commas.

### 20g. Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives preceding a noun.

20h. Use a comma before *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, and *~* when they join independent clauses.

20i. Use a comma to set off nonessential clauses and nonessential participial phrases.

### 20j. Use a comma after certain introductory elements.

(1) Use a comma after words such as *well*, *yes*, *no*, *why*, etc., when they begin a sentence.

(2) Use a comma after an introductory participial phrase.

(3) Use a comma after a succession of introductory prepositional phrases.

(4) Use a comma after an introductory adverb clause.

### 20k. Use commas to set off sentence interrupters.

(1) Appositives and appositive phrases are usually set off by commas.

(2) Words used in direct address are set off by commas.

(3) Parenthetical expressions are set off by commas.

### 20l. Use a comma in certain conventional situations.

(1) Use a comma to separate items in dates and addresses.

(2) Use a comma after the salutation of a friendly letter and after the closing of any letter.

(3) Use a comma after a name followed by *Jr.*, *Sr.*, *Ph.D.*, etc. -

### 20m. Do not use unnecessary commas.

**REVIEW EXERCISE A.** Select from the following sentences all words which

should be followed by a comma. List these words on your paper, placing a comma after each one. Number your answers according to sentences.

**EXAMPLE** 1. No Madge I did not talk to Mr. Huey the manager of the bookstore.

1. *No, Madge, Huey,*

1. Looking for the lost car keys we searched under the car in the house on the porch and among the weeds.
2. Well I guess that Stan likes raisins not prunes.
3. Among the synonyms are humor wit sarcasm and irony.
4. After we had placed an advertisement in the evening paper we found the owner of the puppy.
5. This letter which is dated July 14 1981 is addressed to Mr. Nicholas Walters Sr. R.F.D. 3 Culver City California 90230.
6. I sold three tickets Caleb sold four Jill sold ten and Myrna sold twelve.
7. About ten o'clock on the morning of Saturday February 23 we entered the city limits of Hartford Connecticut.
8. Phyllis you know of course that Archie hates teas receptions and formal dinners.
9. We left Moravia which is a resort town in New York and drove on to Owasco Lake which is near Syracuse.
10. Wanting to be noticed the baby jumped up and down in her crib and shook the railings and whimpered piteously.

**REVIEW EXERCISE B.** Using the Summary of Uses of the Comma (*see previous page*), write sentences of your own to illustrate the rules, as follows:

1. Three sentences illustrating rule 20f (illustrating both subrules)
2. Two sentences illustrating rule 20g
3. Three sentences illustrating rule 20h
4. Two sentences illustrating rule 20i, one containing a nonessential clause and the other containing a nonessential participial phrase
5. Four sentences illustrating rule 20j (one sentence for each subrule)
6. Three sentences illustrating rule 20k (one sentence for each subrule)
7. Three sentences illustrating rule 20l (one sentence for each subrule)

Write before each sentence the number of the rule it illustrates.

**REVIEW EXERCISE C.** Copy the following sentences, inserting end marks

and commas where necessary.

1. When Mr. Charles Chatham Jr. my geography teacher visited West Lafayette Indiana he toured the campus of Purdue University
2. Reading that book I learned that Ottawa not Montreal is the capital of Canada
3. Vera will you write to me at 237 Candona Drive Boulder Colorado 80303
4. That plant is I think a kind of cactus that is commonly called a prickly pear
5. Yes Acadia National Park which is on the Atlantic coast is only a short drive from Bangor Maine
6. In the second sentence on page 23 notice the lively vivid action verbs the introductory prepositional phrases and the two subordinate clauses
7. Libby leave the room shut the door and be quiet
8. Mrs. Hood assured me that she didn't mind my breaking the cup but I am going to see what I can do about finding her another one
9. Look out Jack That big angry Doberman pinscher almost bit you
10. Oh didn't you know that on March 5 1981 my family left Reidsville North Carolina and moved to Highland Park a suburb of Chicago Illinois