

LANGUAGE ARTS *punctuation*

PERIOD ●

Use: to end a sentence that makes a statement or that gives a command not used as an exclamation.

→ *Example:* Wash the dishes, and then take out the garbage.

Use: after an initial or an abbreviation.

→ *Examples:* Mary J. Jones, Mr., Mrs., Ms.

COMMA ,

Use: to separate words or groups of words in a series.

→ *Example:* I used *worms, minnows, larva, bread balls and bacon* for bait.

Note: Some stylebooks and instructors require a comma before “and” in a series.

→ *Example:* He *ran, jumped, and yelled.*

Use: to separate an explanatory phrase from the rest of the sentence.

→ *Example:* Escargots, *or snails,* are a delicacy that I relish.

Use: to distinguish items in an address and in a date.

→ *Examples:* John Doe, 290 Main Street, Middtown, IN 48105

September 20, 1960

Use: to separate a title or an initial that follows a name.

→ *Example:* Joseph Jones, Ph.D.

QUESTION MARK ?

Use: at the end of a direct or indirect question.

→ *Example:* Did your relatives invite you to visit them this summer?

Use: to punctuate a short question within parentheses.

→ *Example:* I am leaving tomorrow (is that possible?) to visit my cousins in France.

APOSTROPHE ’

Use: to show that one or more letters or numbers have been left out of a word to form a contraction.

→ *Examples:* do not = don’t | I have = I’ve

Use: followed by an *s* is the possessive form of singular nouns.

→ *Example:* I clearly saw this young *man’s* car run that stop sign.

Use: possessive form of plural nouns ending in *s* is usually made by adding just an apostrophe. An apostrophe and *s* must be added to nouns not ending in *s*.

→ *Example:* bosses = bosses’, children’s

COLON :

Use: after words introducing a list, quotation, question or example.

→ *Example:* Sarah dropped her book bag and out spilled everything: books, pens, pencils, homework and makeup.

SEMICOLON ;

Use: to join compound sentences that are not connected with a conjunction.

→ *Example:* It’s elementary, my dear Watson; the butler is clearly responsible.

Use: to separate groups of words.

→ *Example:* I packed a toothbrush, deodorant and perfume; jeans, a raincoat and sweatshirts; and boots and tennis shoes.

QUOTATION MARKS “ ”

Use: to frame direct quotations in a sentence. Only the exact words quoted are placed within the quotation marks.

→ *Example:* “I don’t know,” she said, “if I will be able to afford the vacation.”

Use: to distinguish a word that is being discussed.

→ *Example:* Mr. Jones suggested I replace the word “always” with “often” in my theme.

Use: to indicate that a word is slang.

→ *Example:* Julie only bought that outfit to show *casual* style.

Use: to punctuate titles of poems, short stories, chapters, entire course titles, chapters of books and articles found in magazines, newspapers and encyclopedias.

→ *Examples:* “You Are My Sunshine,” “Violence in Our Society,” “The Road Not Taken”

SINGLE QUOTATION MARK ‘ ’

Use: to punctuate a quotation within a quotation.

→ *Example:* “As a child, my favorite movie was ‘Wizard of Oz,’” answered Joe.

EXCLAMATION MARK !

Use: to express strong feeling.

→ *Example:* Help! Help!

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