

Tikrit University

College of Education for Humanities

Department of English



Subject: Essay

Class: 3rd

Punctuation

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Punctuation

Punctuation is a device used to assist the reader. Every punctuation mark the writer uses means something. Some of the symbols indicate that he has reached the end of a sentence; something others separate one part of a sentence from the next part. It takes the place of changes in tone, variation, and pauses, facial signs, etc., by which a speaker makes his meaning clear.

Without the punctuation marks we cannot see the relationships among the words and groups of words.

- End Punctuation Marks :

When we come to the end of a sentence we must put a punctuation mark. The symbol we use will depend on the kind of sentence we have written.

There are three symbols we can use to mark the end of a sentence:

1. The full stop (.)
2. The question mark (?)
3. The exclamation mark(!)

1. The full stop :

It is the most important punctuation mark. It is used at the end of a sentence.

e.g. I met him while I was on my way to the market.

2. The Question Mark

(a) It is used at the end of a sentence. e.g.

What are you doing?

Where is the post office?

(b) Do not use a question mark with an indirect question,

An indirect question is really a statement about a question and therefore ends with a full stop, e.g.

He asked us “where we were going”.

(c) The question mark may be used to indicate doubt.

He was born in 1900(?) and died in 1980.

3. The Exclamation Mark

It is used after exclamations or exclamatory sentences. It indicates surprise, e.g.

What a nice car you have!

What a lovely sunset!

Non-End Punctuation Marks

1. The Comma (,): The comma indicates a short pause. Commas help to clarify the meaning of written sentences.

As a general rule, a comma should be used whenever a slight pause is to be made.

e.g. Mr. Jones, our neighbor, owns a car.

The omission of a comma or the insertion of a comma in the wrong place can give an entirely different meaning from what you intend.

A- The main uses of the comma are as follows:

- (1) The days of the week are: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday
- (2) Shakespeare's best plays include: Hamlet, Macbeth and King Lear.
- (3) I think, Sir, that you Are wrong.
- (4) Paris, the capital of France, is a very interesting city.

B- To mark off words and phrases like however, indeed, therefore, first of all, for instance, no doubt, in fact,

e.g. He was, in fact, the best student in the class.

C- In double sentences to Separate two co-ordinate clauses when the Second subject is expressed,

e.g. I asked what he was doing, and he answered that he was writing a composition.

E- In direct speech, where break is made in the speech to indicate who is speaking.

DIRECT He said, "I am going home."

2. The Semicolon (;)

The semicolon marks a longer pause than is indicated by a comma. The semicolon should be used when you want the reader to see that the thoughts contained in two independent clauses are closely related. It can show that a number of short sentences are linked in meaning. e.g.

- (1) The professor asked the student to close the door of the classroom; there was too much noise out in the hall.
- (2) He had a bad cold; therefore he had to stay in bed

3. The Colon (:) The colon marks a longer pause than the semicolon or comma.

It is used before a list I have three brothers: Ahmed, Ali and Waleed

Enclosing Punctuation Marks

1. Brackets () []

(a) Brackets, round () or square [] are used to enclose any words which are not grammatically necessary to the sentence, but which are added by the way of explanation or as an aside. The words inside the brackets are said to be in parenthesis.

I know (at least, this is what I have been told) that he lost much money in the business,

2. Inverted Commas (“ ”) or Quotation Marks (" ")

(a) Inverted commas are used to enclose the exact words spoken by somebody, either in conversation with someone else or to himself as a thought.

The old gentleman was very worried. "I did have a ticket," he said. "That's all right; sir, answered the inspector kindly. "I „ve got plenty of time.

(b) Inverted commas are also used to enclose quotations from speech or from books, and before and after the titles of books, plays, magazines, newspapers, etc.

My favorite book of linguistics is Roach's "English Phonetics and Phonology," said the student.

- Punctuation Marks Used within the Word

1. The Apostrophe (')

(a) The apostrophe is used to indicate. that a letter (or more than one letter) has been missed out.

I'm = I am

You're = you are

It's = it is

haven't =have not

(b) An apostrophe is used with the letters after a noun to show possession. When one person is the owner, an s is added to the owning word.

The man's hand Ali's book

2. The Hyphen (-)

(a) A hyphen is used to make compound words. It shows close connection between two words or two parts of a word

Mother-in-law president-elect

a bad-tempered man two-sevenths

a kind-hearted woman twenty-seven

(b) It is used to link a prefix to a base: pro-Soviet, pan-Arab, anti-Nazi.

(c) It is used to indicate that a printed word at the end of a line is not complete.

3. The Abbreviation Dot

It resembles a full stop in shape. It is used:

(a) After abbreviation: Mr. = mister Dr.=Doctor e.g. = for example P.T.O = Please turn over

(b) Notice that with capitals it is not used: GB, UN, USA, 'etc.', but used in expressions like: i.e., e.g.: p.m., a.m., and so on.

1. Capital Letters (a) Every sentence, and, in poetry; every line, must begin with a capital letter.

(b) Proper nouns, and adjectives derived from them, must begin with a capital. A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place or thing. A proper adjective is derived from a proper noun.

Iraq - Iraqi Spain - Spanish Shakespeare - Shakespearian

(c) All the important words in the titles of books, plays, etc. must begin with capital. Articles (a, an, the),

"**R**omeo and **J**uliet" "

"**A** Man for **A**ll **S**easons"

The Articles

the articles, **a**, **an**, and **The**. **a** is used when it immediately precedes a word beginning with a consonant sound: **a** book, **a** tree, **a** university. **an** is used when it immediately precedes a word beginning with a vowel sound: **an** apple, **an** ancient city,

NOTE: It is the **sound**, not the actual letter, that determines the form of the indefinite article:

a university /ju:nivɜ:səti/ an old /əuld/ television. an hour /aʊə/