



Commas

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Agenda

- Defining commas
- The Oxford comma
- The problem with commas
 - Using them too frequently (comma splices)
 - Using them not enough
- Why commas matter
- Appropriate rules
- Helpful strategies
- Activity!





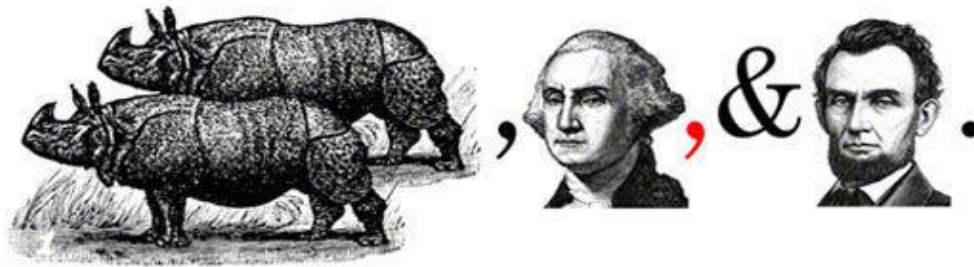
What is a comma?

- A comma is a punctuation mark used to separate two independent clauses in a given sentence.
- It can be used after an introductory phrase
- A comma can also be used to separate items which come in a list.
 - For example: I would like to buy bananas, apples, oranges and a watermelon at the store this afternoon
- Finally, a comma should always come right before a quote (always remember comma, quotes, capital)

The Oxford Comma

With the **Oxford Comma**:

We invited the rhinoceri, Washington, and Lincoln.



Without the Oxford Comma:

We invited the rhinoceri, Washington and Lincoln.





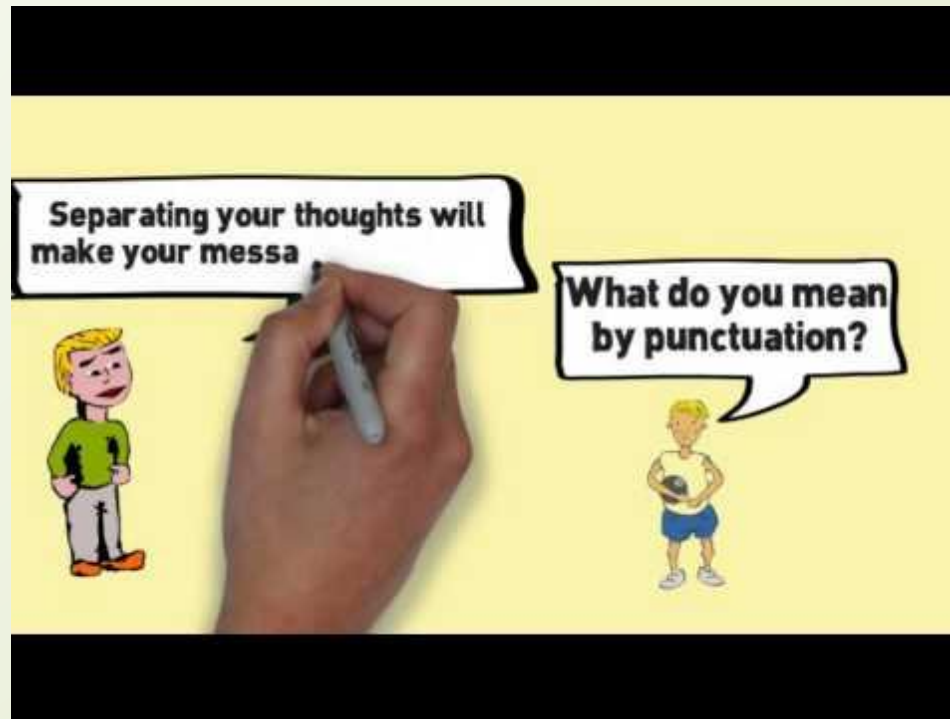
Comma Splices



- Many times, even after we follow grammatical rules, we'll find that the comma still seems awkward.
- Comma splices, “are similar to run-on sentences because they also incorrectly connect independent clauses. A comma splice occurs when two independent clauses are connected with only a comma.”
 - Example: “I took my dog on a walk, we stopped to talk to my friend.”
 - Corrections:
 - “When I took my dog on a walk, we stopped to talk to my friend.”
 - “I took my dog on a walk, and we stopped to talk to my friend.”
 - “I took my dog on a walk. We stopped to talk to my friend.”

Run on sentences

- A sentence with two or more independent clauses in which they should be separated by a comma, but instead are combined together.



Examples of why commas matter


Let's eat grandma.
Let's eat, grandma.

COMMAS SAVE LIVES



**We're going to learn
to cut and paste kids!**

Commas matter.

 /grammarly

Why commas matter

Let's look for something to eat kids.

Rachael Ray finds inspiration in
cooking her family and her dog.

Man bacon makes anything
taste good.

Toilet only for disabled
elderly pregnant children.



Rule 1:

- When writing or typing your sentences, be sure to note whether it goes more than three or four lines.
 - Not all components of a point need to be included in the sentence and can be separated between multiple sentences.
 - Try to count how many commas are used and, with the exception of lists, try to limit the amount to two per sentence. Any more would be superfluous.



Rule 2:

- Refrain from using commas to separate an essential part of a sentence.
 - For example: The word *that* is usually essential in a sentence
 - “The book *that I borrowed from you* is excellent.” ~ Purdue

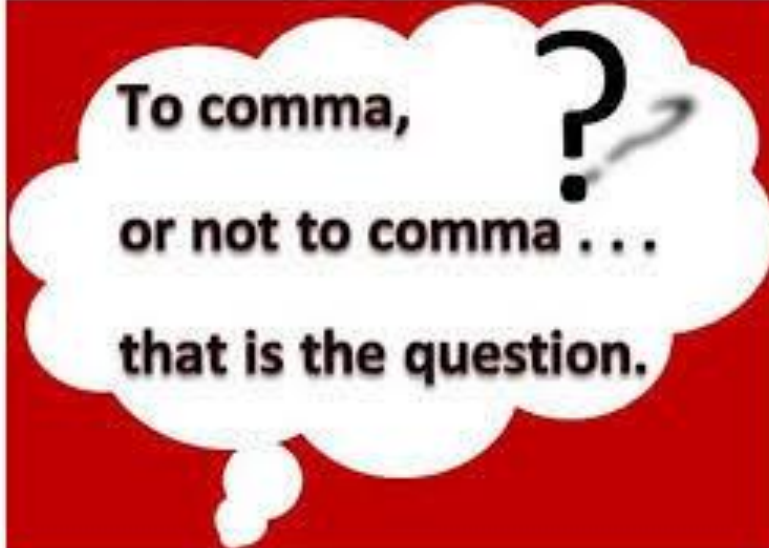


Strategies

- When in doubt, read out loud
- Insert a comma before a conjunction separating two independent clauses
- Place commas when listing items
- Limit the amount of commas in a given sentence



Activity!



**To comma,
or not to comma . . .
that is the question.**



Sentence examples



- I want to play ball and go get ice-cream.
- The cookies, that fell on the floor should not be eaten.
- Can you please go to the pantry and grab me chips, dip, soda and cookies.
- he opened the letter, read it, and made a note of its contents.
- First, you need to mix the dry ingredients.



Citations



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