

Writing Protocols for Columbia Evangelical Seminary

Punctuation, Grammar, and Academic Style

Lecture # 1 Sentences, Clauses, and Punctuation

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Two texts required for this class:

1. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th edition,¹
by Kate L. Turabian.

2. *Working With Words: A Handbook for Media Writers and Editors*, 5th edition,²
by Brian S. Brooks, James L. Pinson, Jean Gaddy Wilson.

Intro to *Turabian*:

The style book that CES uses is *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th edition, by Kate L. Turabian. If you do not have a copy of this book, you should *immediately* contact your local bookstore and secure a copy.

Intro to *Working With Words*:

This may be the single best text describing the mechanics of writing. I have been reading this book as my “writing bible” since it was available as the 2nd edition. This is a book that you will use as a reference tool for years to come. I have copies of this book at home and at my office. If you do not have a copy of this book, you should *immediately* contact your local bookstore and secure a copy.

¹Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th edition, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Interestingly, normally when a book title is used often it is abbreviated. However, this particular book is not often referred to by its title but by its author. This book is most often simply called *Turabian*. And, we will follow this convention. *Turabian* can be purchased at, or ordered from, nearly all local and on-line bookstores.

²*Working With Words: A Handbook for Media Writers and Editors*, 5th edition, by Brian S. Brooks, James L. Pinson, Jean Gaddy Wilson. At the time of this writing, the 5th edition of this book is available. However, any edition of this book can be used for this class. This book can be purchased at, or ordered from, nearly all local and on-line bookstores.

Introduction

Sometimes CES Writing Protocols disagrees with Turabian. When that happens, you must follow CES Writing Protocols. For example, at 3.66 in Turabian, she says:

In sentences containing two or more independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, nor, for*), a comma is placed before the conjunction. This is not a hard-and-fast rule, however; where the sentence is short and clarity is not an issue, no comma is needed.

CES Writing Protocols disagrees with Turabian at this point. Our style is that it *is* a hard-and-fast rule. In other words—in CES Writing Protocols—when sentences containing two or more independent clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, nor, for*), a comma is *always* placed before the conjunction, even if the sentence is short and clarity is not an issue.

The example that Turabian gives for her statement is: “John arrived early and Mary came an hour later.” However, according to CES Writing Protocols, this sentence is a run-on, and it is wrong. And, it will be considered wrong and graded accordingly. According to CES Writing Protocols, her sample sentence *must have the comma before the coordinating conjunction*.

Example: “John arrived early, and Mary came an hour later.”

You might consider this a minor point, even nitpicking. However, I assure you that without hard-and-fast rules to govern both students’ writings and professors’ gradings, things can become quite complicated. Not only is this hard-and-fast rule helpful for the purposes of consistency in grading, it is also simply correct.

In other words, placing the comma before the coordinating conjunction when it joins two independent clauses is always correct punctuation. Now, while it may be “acceptable” in *some quarters* to break the rule and forego the comma in this construction, it is always acceptable in all quarters to simply do it right.

Thus, if you don’t do it right, *you* may indeed know that you are breaking the rule for “style,” but your reader (or professor) might just think that you are ignorant at this point. So, in brief, it is good to be right and to do it right; that way, no one questions your writing.

Grammar Talk

Vocabulary Assignment: As in all disciplines, grammar has its own vocabulary. If you do not learn the basic grammatical terms, it will be far more difficult for you to learn the rules of grammar. So, one of *the first things that you should do is build your own vocabulary list*. Each time you come to a new grammar term, put it on your list with its proper definition. That way you will have a single location to turn to for a quick reference tool. *When this class is over, you will be asked to hand in your vocabulary list. It will serve as part of your final grade.*

The Sentence

Every complete sentence has a subject and a predicate. A predicate is the verb and everything following it in the sentence.

Example: *created the heavens and the earth* is the predicate in “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). Or, for example, *gave birth to his brother Abel* is the predicate in “Later she gave birth to his brother Abel” (Gen. 4:2).

Clauses

A clause has a subject and a verb. The fact that a clause has a subject and a verb separates it from a phrase. A *phrase* is two or more words in sequence that form a syntactic unit that is less than a complete sentence.

Two Basic Clauses

1. **Independent Clause:** The **independent clause** is a sentence that has a subject and predicate. It can stand alone. It is a complete thought.

2. **Dependent clause:** Typically the **dependent clause** cannot stand alone. It is not a complete thought.

Two Types of Dependent Clauses

a. **Subordinate clause:** A subordinate clause begins with a *subordinating conjunction*.

Examples of subordinating conjunctions: although, because, after, as, while, if, since, when, whether, until. Here is an example of “if” (a subordinating conjunction) used in a sentence: *If* you accept Jesus Christ as your savior, you will go to heaven when you die.

Note: a subordinate clause, like the independent clause, has a subject and predicate, but it has something that the independent clause does not have: it has a *subordinating conjunction*. This keeps it from being able to stand alone.

b. **Relative clause:** A relative clause begins with a relative pronoun.

Examples of relative pronouns: *who, what, that, which*. Here is an example of a relative clause in a sentence: The one *who died for my sins* is Jesus Christ. Thus, “*who died for my sins*” is a relative clause.

Three Kinds (or categories) of Sentences

1. **Simple:** One subject and one predicate. **Example:** *God loves His children.*

2. **Complex:** One or more dependent clauses and one independent clause.

Example: Before Adam sinned, he lived in the garden of Eden.

3. **Compound:** Two or more complete sentences joined by a *coordinating conjunction and a comma*. Examples of coordinating conjunctions: and, but, for, nor, or, yet, so.

Example of a **compound sentence:** Adam lived in the garden of Eden, **and** God walked with him.

Coordinating (as in coordinating conjunction) means of equal rank. When a coordinating conjunction is connecting two complete sentences, you *always* need a comma before the coordinating conjunction. However, there is no comma before a compound subject or verb.

Example: Bob and Mike went to woods and shot their game.

“Bob and Mike” is the compound subject. “Went and shot” is the compound verb.

However, a semicolon can take the place of both the *comma* and *coordinating conjunction* in the connecting of two or more complete sentences.

Example: Adam lived in the garden of Eden; God walked with him.

Example with a conjunction: Adam lived in the garden of Eden, **and** God walked with him.

The Four Functions of Sentences

1. **Declaratory Sentences *State*:** Declaratory Sentences make a statement and take a period.

Examples:

“God is good.”

“The Bible is the Word of God.”

“Jesus is Lord.”

2. **Imperative Sentences *Command*:** Imperative Sentences give a command, and they sometimes take a period or an exclamation mark.

Examples:

“Then Peter said, ‘Look at us!’” (Acts 3:4b).

“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk” (Acts 3:6b).

“Look, the Lamb of God!” (John 1:36b).

“Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!” (John 2:16b).

3. Exclamatory Sentences *Exclaim:* Exclamatory Sentences exclaim (or excitedly proclaim) something and take an exclamation mark.

Examples:

“He has risen!” (Mark 16:6c).

“Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’” (John 20:28).

4. Interrogative Sentences *Ask:* Interrogative Sentences ask questions and end with a question mark.

Note: it is not uncommon for people to put question marks after normal, declaratory sentences. Recently, I got an email from a pastor who was asking about the possibility of receiving credit for his years in ministry, and he wrote:

“I am just wondering if you give credit for ministry experience? I’ve been in ministry for 15 years?”

Now, obviously in his mind, he was asking about the possibility of getting credits, but neither sentence was an interrogative. Each of them was declaratory, and each required a period at the end, not a question mark.

The way that he wrote the first line, you’d think that he was asking me if he had been wondering about it or not. In the second sentence, he was asking me if he’d been in ministry for 15 years. So, be very careful not to put a question mark at the end of a declaratory sentence. Also, be sure to use a period at the end of an indirect question.

Examples:

The teacher asked why Robert had left the room before the class was over.

My teacher used to wonder why no one was on time to class.

The reverse often happens as well. People will often write an interrogative sentence and end it with a period.

Examples of interrogative sentences:

“Can anything good come from Nazareth?” (John 1:46).

“How do you know me?” Nathanael asked (John 1:48).

“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked (John 3:9).

Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Clauses

When to use the commas with Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Clauses (It's all about commas—make yourself some flash cards)

A Restrictive Clause is a clause that is necessary to properly understand the sentence.

A Nonrestrictive Clause is a clause that is not necessary to properly understand the sentence.

Restrictive Clauses

necessary information
essential information
no commas around it

Nonrestrictive Clauses

unnecessary information
nonessential information
needs commas around it

Let's use Bob and his kids as our example here. A restrictive clause and a nonrestrictive clause would look like this:

Restrictive Clause: Bob's child Cindy bought a new car. (necessary information)

Nonrestrictive Clause: Bob's youngest child, Cindy, bought a new car. (unnecessary information)

That and Which

If the words "that" and "which" are used with regard to the restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses, you should always introduce the restrictive clause with the word "that" and the nonrestrictive clause with the word "which."

Examples:

Restrictive Clause: The cake that had a cherry frosting was delicious.

Nonrestrictive Clause: The cake, which had a cherry frosting, was delicious.

The restrictive clause in the first sentence is introduced by the word "that" and is not set off by commas. This would indicate that the writer was aware that his reader needs more information to help him determine which cake (notice there is more than one cake) was being spoken of, and that the added information about the frosting was a vital, necessary description. Perhaps in the context of this restrictive clause, there are three cakes, and the writer wants his reader to know which of the three is the best tasting one.

The nonrestrictive clause in the second sentence is introduced by the word "which," and it is set off by commas. This means that the information about the cherry frosting is superfluous and unnecessary information. This would indicate that the writer was aware that his reader already knew which cake was being spoken of and that the added

information about the frosting was just a fuller, but unnecessary, description. In the context of this nonrestrictive clause, there is only one cake, and the writer wants his reader to know a little more about this *particular* cake.

Example of another use of the restrictive and nonrestrictive clause.

My wife Sue is at the mall. (more than one wife—essential information)

My wife, Sue, is at the mall. (only one wife—nonessential information)

Note: *Let me encourage you to make flash cards.*

Sentence Fragments and Run-on Sentences

Fragment: Not a complete thought.

Examples: The ugliest dog in town. The girl with light brown hair. The picture on the wall.

Run-ons: A run-on sentence is two (or more) sentences that simply run together without the correct punctuation. Some run-ons are called simple run-ons when they have no punctuation; a run-on can also be called a comma splice if there is a comma attempting to separate the two independent clauses

Examples:

1. Simple run-on: Simple run-on sentences have no punctuation.

Example of a simple run-on—> “Jack took Sandy to the store Ted took Johnny to the park.”

Conclusion: A run-on sentence is two (or more) sentences that simply run together without the correct punctuation.

2. Comma splice (or comma fault): Some run-on sentences have what is called a comma splice (or comma fault). This happens when a writer uses only a comma to separate the two independent clauses. A comma by itself is *not* strong enough to perform this task.

Example of a comma splice—> “Jack took Sandy to the store, Ted took Johnny to the park.”

Example of how to correct the comma splice—> “Jack took Sandy to the store, **and** Ted took Johnny to the park.”

Thus, to separate two independent clauses, you need something stronger than just a comma. You need both the comma **and** a coordinating conjunction. Or, you can use a

semicolon (with no coordinating conjunction) to separate two independent clauses.

Here are two more examples of how this sentence can be written:

Example of Right—> “Jack took Sandy to the store; Ted took Johnny to the park.”

Example of Right—> “Jack took Sandy to the store. Ted took Johnny to the park.”

General Rules of Punctuation

The Always Section:

Always place a comma . . .

1. Always place a comma after three or more words in a series, and before “and” or “or.”

Example: “Peter, James, and John were there.”

Special Note: The AP (Associated Press) style does not use a comma before the coordinating conjunction in this particular construction.

AP Example: “Peter, James and John were there.” Some students who read this construction in their local newspapers will question the accuracy of our academic rule to always place a comma after three or more words in a series, and before *and* or *or*.

However, AP style *is not* academic style. Academic term papers, theses, and dissertations are not newspapers. Term papers, theses, and dissertations do not follow AP style; they follow academic style.

Once again: When you have a series of three or more words, elements, or phrases they must be separated by commas, and a comma must be placed before the coordinating conjunction.

Examples: “I bought bananas, apples, and pears.” “Peter, James, and John were with Jesus.”

2. Always place a comma after an introductory dependent clause in a complex sentence.

Example: Until Jesus returns in the second advent, the church must continue to evangelize the lost.

Note that the beginning word, *Until*, is a subordinating conjunction. When an introductory clause begins with a subordinating conjunction, it is a dependent clause and must—*must*—have a comma at the end of it. That is why there is a comma at the end of the dependent clause in this sentence. The dependent clause is, “Until Jesus returns in the second advent.” (Remember what makes a clause a *dependent clause*?—it’s not a complete

thought.) Note what happens when you reversed these two clauses:

“The church must continue to evangelize the lost until Jesus returns in the second advent.”

No comma. Why? Because at the end of the dependent clause, there is a period. And, contrary to popular misconceptions, you do **not** place a comma before the dependent clause.

Wrong --> “The church must continue to evangelize the lost, until Jesus returns in the second advent.”

3. Always place a comma before the coordinating conjunction connecting two (or more) independent clauses.

Examples:

“The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it” (John 1:5).

“Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already” (John 3:18).

“The man ate the entire bucket of chicken, and then he got sick.” (note the comma)

“The man ate the entire bucket of chicken and then got sick.” (why no comma here?)

4. Always place a comma around nonessential, nonrestrictive words, phrases, and clauses.

—> “Which” always introduces a nonrestrictive clause (needs commas).

—> “That” always introduces a restrictive clause (no commas needed)

Example: “Bob’s dog, which barks constantly, is three years old.” (needs commas)

Example: “Bob’s dog that barks constantly is three years old.” (no commas needed)

Note that the only difference here is the use of the word *which* and *that*. It shows what the *author’s* intent is.

In the first sentence, using a nonrestrictive clause, the author signifies that Bob has only one dog.

In the second sentence, the author signifies that Bob has more than one dog, and it is the one that is constantly barking that is three years old.

Note: “three years old” -- Academic, formal, writing calls for writing out numbers up to 100. (AP writes out only 1 through 10.) Thus, in academic writing, the dog is “three years old,” not “3 years old.”

An Exception—Percentage expressions: Only 8 percent of the students showed up for class. (as opposed to eight percent)

5. Always place a comma after an introductory participial phrase.

Examples:

“Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, ‘Don’t be afraid; just believe’” (Mark 5:36). The word “Ignoring” is a participle, and “Ignoring what they said” is the participial phrase.

“Walking through the park, he found a diamond ring.”

6. Always place a comma after a *second* introductory prepositional phrase.

Example: “*In* the book *of* Acts, Luke records the growth of the early Christian church.”

“In the book” is the first prepositional phrase, and “of Acts” is the second prepositional phrase. These two are joined together to introduce the main clause.

Second Example: *Of* the men who were *at* the game, he was the shortest.

Note: You do not need a comma after an introductory prepositional phrase with only one preposition.

Example: “In the book Luke records that some Christians spoke in tongues.”

“In the book” is the first and only prepositional phrase in this sentence, and a comma is not necessary.

Note: In your nonacademic writing you may prefer to place a comma even after an introductory prepositional phrase with only one preposition. If this is your style, that is fine. However, you must be consistent in your style. Thus, do not have a comma at the end of an introductory prepositional phrase with only one preposition in some cases and not in others.

However, in your academic writing the rule is that no comma is used after an introductory prepositional phrase with only one preposition *unless* (1) the introductory prepositional phrase has *four or more words* in it or (2) the sentence would be confusing without it. Then, it does take a comma.

Example of four or more words (requiring a comma): “In his historical narrative, Luke records the growth of the early Christian church.”

Example of what could be confusing (requiring a comma): “Without Bob Turner and I went fishing.”

This is confusing because Bob and Turner are two different people. Thus, to avoid this confusion, a comma is necessary: “Without Bob, Turner and I went fishing.”

There are about 150 prepositions in English. We use certain prepositions more often than others. In fact, the prepositions **of**, **to** and **in** are among the ten most frequent words in English. Here are just a few of some of the more common prepositions.

about	above	across	among	before	behind
below	beneath	beside	between	by	for
from	in	inside	into	of	off
on	onto	over	through	to	toward
under	up	upon	with	within	without

7. Always place a comma after an introductory interjection, an independent element, a direct address.

Examples:

“Oh, that’s the one.”

“No, I will not go.”

“Dave, hand me the Bible.”

8. Always place a comma between coordinate adjectives. (Adjectives are coordinate if they can be reversed and if you can insert “and” between them.)

Examples:

“The bright, intelligent man was wearing a flashy tie.”

“The intelligent and bright man was wearing a flashy tie.” (reversed and inserted “and” between them, and it still makes sense)

“He was a kind, considerate child.”

“He was a considerate and kind child.” (reversed and inserted “and” between them, and it still makes sense)

Note: When the adjectives are not coordinate (i.e., not equal), they are called compound adjectives, and they cannot be reversed with the insertion of the “and” between them.

Example:

“He bought her a diamond-studded ring.” In this case, the adjectives *diamond* and *studded* are not coordinate (i.e., equal). Thus, you cannot reverse them and insert “and” between them.

“He bought her a studded and diamond ring.” (makes no sense).

Since this reversal with “and” cannot be done, then the hyphen is used to connect the compound adjectives, and the line must read like this:

“He bought her a diamond-studded ring.” (More about compound adjectives below.)

The *May* Section:

You *may* place a comma . . .

In this list, you may, but you don't have to, place a comma: However, you must select your personal style, and then be consistent.

1. You **may** place a comma after introductory adverbs.

Example: Suddenly, the band began to play.

2. You **may** place a comma after three short sentences in a series; however, there must be at least three or more complete sentences.

Example: *She danced, she laughed, she cried.* Important Note: This is actually a run-on, but because they are short sentences, the commas are acceptable—you are not forced to use the commas here because periods or semicolons would work as well.

Commas make you pause, semicolons make you pause longer, and periods make you stop. In the three brief sentences "*She danced, she laughed, she cried*" it would seem that semicolons or periods would be too heavy. Therefore, commas *may* be used to separate these short sentences. Although, it is unlikely that you will encounter three short sentences like these in your academic writing.

Probably the most famous of all three-short-sentences is, "*Veni, vidi, vici.*" Which is Latin for, "I came, I saw, I conquered." In 47 BC, Caesar went to the Middle East where he annihilated King Pharnaces of Pontus in the battle of Zela; he commemorated his triumph with the words *Veni, vidi, vici* (I came, I saw, I conquered). My wife had her own triumphal phrase after a day of shopping: "I came, I saw, I bought."

Consistency

The key to the use of the comma in these examples is *consistency*. Choose a style, *and stick with it*. If you are not consistent throughout your paper or article, your reader will notice it. Inconsistency in style is the mark of an amateur.

Use a Semicolon

1. Use a **semicolon** after elements in a series when the elements have commas.

Example: The list of students included the following: Bob Jones, 37, of 1318 NE 6th St.; Susan West, 24, of 1244 Florence Ave.; and Steve Turk, of 114 West Minx Blvd.

2. Use a **semicolon** between independent clauses to show that they are closely related when no coordinating conjunction is present.

Examples:

"He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light" (John 1:8).

"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus

Christ” (John 1:17).

“She danced all night; her legs were tired.”

“He turned off the lights; the room went dark.”

Note: Do not use a semicolon *and* a coordinating conjunction (unless the clauses of the compound sentence are long and have commas in them). The point of the semicolon is that it is used to join two complete thoughts that are so closely related that the second one seems to organically arise from the first one.

Examples:

“He turned off the lights; the room went dark.”

“She danced all night; her legs were tired.”

Use a Colon

1. Use a colon after salutations.

Example: Dear Dr. Thomas:

I have seen letters in which people use a semicolon after the salutation.

Example: Dear Dr. Thomas;

This is incorrect. If it is not a formal letter—if it is a letter to a friend for example—you may use a comma.

Example: “Dear Tom,”

However, *never* use a semicolon after the salutation whether it is a formal or informal letter.

2. Use a colon to introduce more than one item.

Example: The list of students included the following: Bob Jones, 37, of 1318 NE 6th St.; Susan West, 24, of 1244 Florence Ave.; and Steve Turk, of 114 West Minx Blvd.

3. Use a colon after an attribution that introduces a direct quotation of two or more sentences.

Example: Ralph Thomas said: (what follows should be two or more sentences of direct quote from Ralph Thomas).

4. Use a colon between the chapter and verse in a Scriptural reference.

Example: John 3:16

Also, the traditional method of showing several verses *when those verses are consecutive* would look like this, John 3:16-21 and not as John 3:16, 21.

John 3:16, 21 means that the reference is to *only two verses*, John chapter three, verse 16 and verse 21.

Use a Dash—*Do not over dash*

There is a difference between the — dash and the - hyphen.

When a keyboard does not have the dash, you can make a dash by typing in two hyphens, which look like this --

One consistent error that people make with the dash is that they often put spaces before and after the dash. There should be no spaces.

Examples:

Wrong: The Bible is the best-selling book of all time — if you can call it just a book.

Right: The Bible is the best-selling book of all time—if you can call it just a book.

Use a dash to show dramatic contrast or emphasis.

Example: The Bible is the best selling book of all time—if you can call it just a book.

I was eating lunch—at precisely one o'clock—when the house caught on fire.

When in Doubt, Dash! (“The dash covers a multitude of grammatical sins.”)

The over use of the dash is a sign of an inexperienced writer. One student told me that his motto was, “When in doubt, dash!” Do not let this be your writing motto. You should use dashes *very rarely*. Rule of thumb: Do not use the dash more than twice per term paper (no matter its length). And, let your motto be, “*When in doubt, look it up.*”

Use a Hyphen

The hyphen - is not to be confused with the longer dash —

1. Use a hyphen between compound adjectives.

Adjectives are compound when both or several adjectives cannot stand independently with the noun.

Examples:

He gave her a diamond-studded ring.

Max is a two-year-old dog.

Related Note: Notice that Max is not a *two* dog. He is not a *year* dog. He is not an *old* dog. Thus, these adjectives must be hyphenated as two-year-old. Thus, Max is a two-year-old dog. However, when it is written like this, “The dog is two years old,” there are no hyphens.

2. Use a hyphen between adverbs and adjectives unless the adverb ends in “ly.”

Examples: It is a *well-constructed* house. It is a *newly constructed* house.

One trick to help you remember this rule is this sentence: “This is an *easily remembered* rule.”

Note that you have *easily* (an adverb which ends in “ly”) and *remembered*, but there is no hyphen between them: *easily remembered* = no hyphen. Why? Because *easily* is an adverb that ends in “ly.”

Also, do not use the hyphen after the word *very*. Example: “This is a *very difficult* class.”

However, you do use a hyphen between compound adjectives that end in “ly.”

Examples: It is a friendly-service gas station.

It is a family-owned business.

All American or All-American?

Recently, I heard an advertisement for a movie in which a cult leader takes control of some kids to do his evil bidding. The announcer said, “*See how this cult leader tricked all American kids into following him.*” How could this man trick all American kids? That would be a lot of kids!

This is where the hyphen is very important. This cult leader did not trick all American kids; rather, he tricked all-American kids.

The hyphen between these two words changes the phrase from a phrase about number to a phrase about essence. Thus, if the announcer’s words had been on the screen, it would have been written like this: “*See how this cult leader tricked all-American kids into following him.*”

How to Use Periods and Commas with Quotation Marks

Periods and Commas Always Go Inside Quotation Marks

Example: Bob said, “Yes.”

Notice that the period is *inside* the quotation marks.

Example: “If I go to the park,” said Bob, “I am not coming back.”

Notice that the comma and the period are *both inside* the quotation marks.

Example: The last thing he said was, “Goodbye.”

Note: Always means *always*. I have told my students time and again that periods

and commas *always* go inside quotation marks. Yet, occasionally, some still put a period or a comma outside the quotation marks. When I ask them if they forgot the rule, they often say, “No, I just didn’t think it applied to this particular construction.” To this I want to say, “What part of *A-L-W-A-Y-S* don’t you understand?”

Most writers in the United Kingdom and Canada (and some other countries) place their periods and commas outside the quotation marks. But in America, we *always, always, always*, put the periods and commas inside quotation marks, *always*.

The One Pseudo Exception

“Always put commas and periods inside the quotation marks except when a parenthetical reference follows the quotation.”

If there is an *exception* to this rule, it is when quoting a Scripture reference when the Scripture citation is given after the verse, and the terminal punctuation then goes after the citation. **Example:** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Actually, this is not an exception; it is really a different issue, but it looks like an exception, so I needed to point it out. It is not an exception because, in this case, the period belongs to the person doing the quoting, not to the person being quoted. How do we know that the period belongs to the person doing the quoting, not to the person being quoted? Because while Moses wrote, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” he did not write, “(Genesis 1:1).” In this case, you simply remove the period from the original material and place your own period at the end of your citation.

How to Use Question Marks, Semicolons, and Colons with Quotation Marks

Place question marks and exclamation marks inside or outside the quotation marks depending on whether they are part of the quoted material or not. If they are part of the quoted material, they go inside. If they are not part of the quoted material, they go outside.

Examples:

Not part of the quoted material:

Did he really say, “I am the best teacher in this school”?

Part of the quoted material:

He asked, “Do you think I am the best teacher in this school?”

Not part of the quoted material:

I can’t believe she said, “You’re fat”!

Part of the quoted material:

She screamed, “You’re fat!”

Place **semicolons and colons** outside the closing quotation marks.

Example:

I had never read Jim Tate’s journal article “The Truth of Time”; in fact, I had never heard of it.

Matt. 5:37 “Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.”

Matt. 9:29-30 Then he touched their eyes and said, “According to your faith will it be done to you”; and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, “See that no one knows about this.”

Lecture 1, Exercise 1

In the spaces provided, put the appropriate symbols. *Also*, put in the necessary punctuation.

SS = Simple sentence
CX = Complex sentence
CO = Compound sentence
FR = Fragment

- ___ 1. One of the kindest people I have ever met.
- ___ 2. A dog who eats all day long.
- ___ 3. Because he saw the need, he helped the people move.
- ___ 4. The team was the best in the league; therefore, they won all their games.
- ___ 5. If you want to know what is true then you need to study the Scriptures.
- ___ 6. Walking around from town to town never stopping to see where he was exactly.
- ___ 7. He is the best friend I have ever known and I don't think I'll ever have a better one.
- ___ 8. When the time came for her to dance.
- ___ 9. At that time he would not play his horn but now the time was right.
- ___ 10. Bob hit the ball over the fence.
- ___ 11. He didn't think it would happen, but it did.
- ___ 12. John bought that car when he was in Texas.
- ___ 13. I have seen God heal the sick, so I know He can do it.
- ___ 14. Since you left, the people have been sad.
- ___ 15. Although he gave up candy he still ate ice cream.
- ___ 16. Albert Einstein was a brilliant man however he didn't know everything.
- ___ 17. Starbucks has the best coffee in the world!
- ___ 18. No big deal.
- ___ 19. The house was cold because Bob had broken the windows.
- ___ 20. He asked for help but got none.
- ___ 21. She never thought she was going to the farm.
- ___ 22. He gulped down a cup of coffee and then got in his car and went to work.
- ___ 23. The forest was loud the rivers were roaring.
- ___ 24. She didn't like her job therefore she quit.
- ___ 25. He was one of the top professors.

Lecture 1, Exercise 2

Punctuate the following sentences correctly.

1. Her husband Bob earned his four year degree.
2. The black car which has chrome hubcaps is Bob's.
3. That loud obnoxious man was in my class.
4. Brad is the best football player I have ever seen he always gives an all out effort.
5. Bob was a good helpful man.
6. They moved into their newly constructed house.
7. The boy who returned the money was rewarded.
8. She would not turn him over to the police because she loved him.
9. The arduous grueling exam will be difficult to pass.
10. Jakes burger barn was a friendly service restaurant.
11. It was a family-owned business.
12. He had to pay the out-of-state tuition costs.
13. The captain said, Push off and we did.
14. I like old fashioned doughnuts.
15. The old run down car was in the barn.
16. If Jesus did not rise from the dead then our faith is in vain.
17. After I went to the park I saw Bill.
18. I saw Bill after I went to the park.
19. I came I saw I conquered.
20. The only key on my keyboard that doesn't print is the letter S.
21. In June of last year the kids bought new bikes.
22. We can be sure it happened just the way he said it did.
23. Then as we enter into the final stage of the process we will see the results.
24. See how this cult leader tricked all American kids into following him.
25. Run for your life the dog is coming!
26. The blue car that has a scratch down the side is his.
27. The blue car which has a scratch down the side is his.
28. In America we put the periods and commas inside quotation marks.
29. The ten year old boy spoke in a low tone in his own defense. He said I am innocent.
30. This is an easily-remembered rule.