

## *Interior Punctuation Review*

### *I. The Semi-colon ;*

Use this mark in the middle of a two-part sentence. Each side of the semi-colon must be a full, complete sentence. (Note: the semi-colon is used without any conjunction like and, but, or or.) In the following sentences, “S” stands for subject, “V” stands for verb, and “C.T.” stands for a complete thought.

Mary’s new table cost more than \$600; it was her most expensive item of furniture.

S.    V.            C.T.        S.    V.            C.T.

Today our society has many problems; one of the biggest is controlling crime.

S.    V.            C.T.        S.                    V.            C.T.

### *II. The Colon (:)*

The colon has three major uses.

A. Use a colon after the greeting in a business letter.

Dear Mr. Brown:      Dear Sir or Madam:

B. Use a colon to introduce a listing of items that follow immediately.

We need the following office supplies: staplers, clips, paper, and rubber bands.

Only three people were at the meeting: Mr. Jones, Miss Townsend, and Mr. Barnes.

C. Use a colon to emphasize one or more words at the end of a sentence.

Only one thing stood in the way of a perfect picnic: the weather.

### *III. Quotation Marks (“ ”)*

Quotation marks are used in two ways.

A. To indicate the exact words that came out of someone’s mouth.

The judge said, “I’m ordering you to do thirty days of community service.”

B. To show that a word is being used in a special sense other than its normal one.

Sometimes poor people can be very “rich” in things other than money.

Use quotation marks to indicate the exact words that came out of someone’s mouth.

In other words, you are trying to play human tape recorder and write down exactly what a person said.

There are four ways or styles of doing this.

A. The quote by itself: “Txx xxxxx xx xxxxx xxxx xxxx.”

“Ask not what your country can do for you.”

B. The “said” part comes before the quoted words.

T\_\_\_\_\_ said, “Xxx xxxx xxxx xxx xxxxx xxxx.”

JFK said, “Ask not what your country can do for you.”

C. The “said” part comes after the quoted words:

“Xxx xxxx xxxx x xxxx xxxxx,” said \_\_\_\_\_.

“Ask not what your country can do for you,” said JFK.

D. The “said” part comes in the middle of the quoted words.

“Xxxx xx xxx,” said \_\_\_\_\_, “xxx xxx xxx xxxxx.”

“Ask not,” said JFK, “what your country can do for you.”

#### **IV. Parentheses ( )**

Use parentheses to indicate that the material inside the parentheses is not quite as important as the information outside the parentheses.

The company bowling tournament will be held next weekend. (Last year, the janitorial staff won this annual event.) Please arrive at the bowling alley at least one hour earlier in order to get the best selection of lane.

When reading aloud or silently, always read the words inside the parentheses. Never skip them as if they don't matter. They do matter.

## V. *The Comma (,)*

Here are the main ways to use a comma.

- A. Use a comma to separate three or more items in a series.

Trains, buses, and planes are three modes of transportation.



The results of the Presidential election came in late from Utah, Montana, Idaho, and Wisconsin.



- B. Use a comma in the middle of a compound sentence, which is one sentence made up of two smaller sentences joined by and, but, or or.

John played the drums, and Mary accompanied him on the piano.



Everyone enjoyed the victory party, but it went on for much too long.



Every Friday we either go to the movies, or we eat out at a fine restaurant.



- C. Use a comma after a brief introductory word or phrase which begins a sentence.

In the first place, ....

On the other hand, ....

However, ....

First of all, ....

In spite of this, ....

Nevertheless, ....

Secondly, ....

In addition, ....

In 1994, ....

Finally, ....

Consequently, ....

- D. If you begin a sentence with an If...., When...., Since...., Although...., or Unless.... clause, put a comma at the end of this part of the sentence and then go on and finish the thought of the sentence.

Since we had arrived early for the game, we were able to find good seats.

Although the meeting was called on short notice, many people attended.