

Writing: Part I

Punctuation

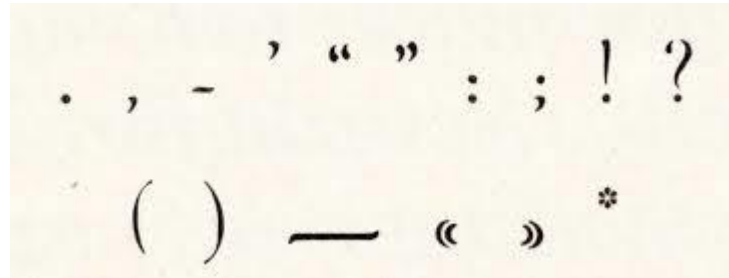


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(0,0)
/)_)
“”

Punctuation,

the simpler, the better

- ▶ **The sentence**
- ▶ **Capitals**
- ▶ **The comma**
- ▶ **The semi colon**
- ▶ **The colon**



The sentence

A sentence is

A stretch of meaningful language that has at least one verb and one subject

(A verb usually expresses something to do with *doing, saying, thinking, feeling and being*)

Note: It usually starts with a capital and ends with a full-stop.

I killed the cat.

Jennifer Aniston is beautiful.

I think about her every day.



Are these sentences?

Talking about the presidential election.

I feel really cold today.

Feeling cold today.

The Health and Safety course in the GTI.



Let's see

Talking about the presidential election. (No: there is no subject)

I feel really cold today. (Yes!!!)

Feeling cold today. (No: there is no subject)

The Healthy and Safety course in the GTI. (No: there is no verb)

Correction:

Talking about the presidential election,

Feeling really cold today, I put on my woolly jumper

The Health and Safety course in the GTI is starting soon.

On line practice

- ▶ Spot the Sentence BBC

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/game/en30stru-game-spot-the-sentence>

Capitals

- ▶ **Capital letters and full stops go together, they open and close a sentence:**

The dog is cold.

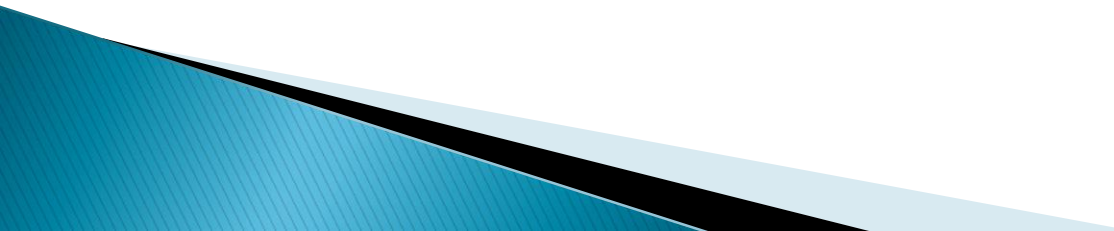
- ▶ **Capitals are also used for:**

The names of people, towns, countries, special places, buildings, courses, days of the week, months, religions, abbreviations, and of course, for “I” when it means me

Exceptions: a.m, p.m, e.g. mph, kph, etc.



Common capitalization mistake in essay writing

1. Capitals for a whole word or phrase within a sentence to draw attention to it – this should be done by
 - ▶ Italics
 - ▶ Inverted commas
 - ▶ Brackets
 - ▶ Dashes
- 

Capitalization mistakes continued

2. *doctor*, *president*, etc when they do not accompany someone's name or are not used directly (vocatively) to address someone should not have a capital.

Incorrect forms: *I told the Doctor to go/ The President is going to address us*

Correct forms: *I told the doctor to go/The president is going to address us*

3. *country*, *nation*, *state*, *county*, *river*, *city*, *university*, etc., should be written with a small letter

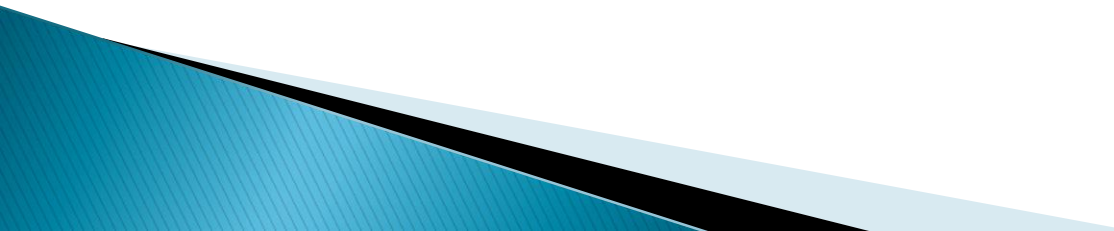
4. The first word after a colon: *should not have a capital letter*

5. Small words in a title should not have a capital letter: *A Tale of Two Cities*

Capitalization exercises

<http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/grammar/capitalization.htm>

Sheet 1 and 2



Commas

- ▶ **Words in a list are separated by commas:**

Liverpool, Manchester United, Real Madrid and Arsenal are all football teams

- ▶ **Commas are used to mark off a part of a sentence that is not essential for the meaning of the sentence as a whole:**

Mr Mourinho, a man with long hair, is the manager of Chelsea.

- ▶ **Commas are used before *although*, *whereas*, *but***

We enjoyed the match, although Manchester Utd lost.



Comma exercise

- ▶ https://depts.dyc.edu/learningcenter/owl/exercises/comma_placement_ex1.htm

The semi-colon ;

- ▶ **The semi-colon can join two clauses together that could also form separate sentences, usually to make a comparison or contrast:**

Alison drives a Peugeot; Kieran drives an Opel

- ▶ **The semi-colon is also used to connect sentences that are closely related:**

Mike spoke to Ann; he ignored Mary.

The ; continued

- ▶ The ; is commonly used to join two clauses using conjunctions such as “*however*”, “*therefore*”, or “*on the other hand*”.

Alison is English; however, she lives in Ireland

Alison is English. However, she lives in Ireland

~~*Alison is English, however, she lives in Ireland*~~

Abuse of the semi colon;

Sheet 9/10

It is never used to introduce a list

~~Here are the fruits you have to bring; apples, oranges, pears~~

It should never be tagged on to the end of a sentence without there being a second clause. This common anomaly in student writing is perpetuated by the myth that obscurity and extra punctuation make you genius; they don't.

Example:

*For full participation they frequently require the expression of interest;
and negotiating social norms*

(as such this “sentence” is not clear)



The colon

- ▶ **The colon indicates that a list is going to follow, or a stirring statement**

You need to bring the following: proof of address, passport photo, bank account number.

Colon abuse

1. *The conference speaker chosen by the committee was: Noam Chomsky*

The second part of these sentences is the object or indirect object of the verb *choose*. As such there is no need for the colon.

The conference speaker chosen by the committee was Noam Chomsky

3. *President Nixon declared: 'I am not a crook.'*

This is a common mistake in essays and articles. The correct forms are:

President Nixon declared, 'I am not a crook.'

President Nixon declared 'I am not a crook.'

Colon abuse usually occurs as a result of the myth that extra punctuation makes an essay look cleverer. The opposite is true: the less cluttered and simple and straightforward an essay/article is, the better

Writing: Part II



Essay writing

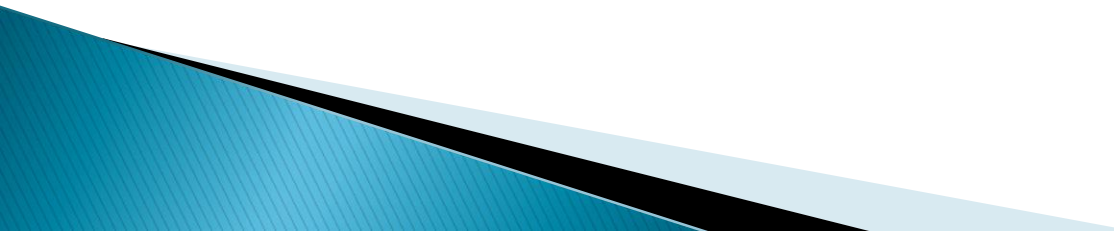
Planning the essay

Types of essay

Essay structure

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Planning the essay

- 1. Never launch straight in (even in an exam), begin by organizing your ideas into a structure**
 - 2. Brainstorm – jot ideas down**
 - 3. If preparing an essay for an assignment, the best place to find ideas is in the lecture/class notes**
 - 4. Keep a record of references (Internet, books, newspapers, etc)**
 - 5. The more drafts you do, the better the end product**
 - 6. Put the ideas you have jotted down into an essay blueprint/table**
- 

Types of essay

- **Discussion**
- **Narrative**

Discussion

Structural Elements	Text
Title	<i>We should have homework because it helps us to learn and revise work, discuss.</i>
Introduction	<i>In this essay I am going to look at the two sides of the homework issue ...</i>
Arguments for	<i>Homework helps people to remember what they have learned. It is really good because it helps with our education</i>
Arguments against	<i>You need time to do other things like going to the movies. Homework really doesn't help you to remember things. I think homework is bad because it takes away from time you need to spend with your family</i>
Conclusion/evaluation	<i>In conclusion ...</i>

Narrative

Structural elements	Text
▪Situation	<i>There once was a king so rich that he paved the streets of his kingdom in gold.</i>
Problem	<i>However, he got a rash.</i>
Solution	<i>He put an ad in the newspaper looking for someone to clear his rash.</i>
Evaluation (conclusion)	<i>The “rashologist” came, fixed the rash, married the daughter and they all lived happily ever after.</i>

The essay blueprint

You can prepare the blueprint on various types of tables, whether handwritten or on the computer (see example)

The blueprint should contain **three parts**:

Introduction (this explains what the essay is about and how you are going to write it)

Development (This contain various paragraphs, each paragraph has a head sentence. The other sentences in the paragraph back up the head sentence. No new idea should be introduced in the paragraph)

Conclusion (this reiterates briefly what you have said, and if you have reached a conclusion you say so)

Structure	Notes
Introduction	
Issue/development	
Main text in paragraphs Paragraph 1 Paragraph 2 Paragraph 3 Paragraph 4	Head sentences
Conclusion	

Paragraphs

Paragraphs are used to divide longer texts into meaningful sections. The first sentence of a paragraph is called the “head sentence”, and the rest of the sentences in that paragraph relates to the first one and backs it up.

The “head sentence” serves as the signpost, it tells us what the rest of the paragraph is about. An essay is easy to skim through if it is divided into meaningful paragraphs with head sentences

So...

In essays or other organized documents

- 1) Divide your ideas into paragraphs
- 2) Start your paragraph with a “head sentence”
- 3) **Don’t introduce a different idea in that paragraph**
- 4) Back up the head sentence with more sentences
- 5) Avoid illogical sentences or non-sentences
- 6) Avoid wordiness

Don’t forget that

A sentence must have a subject, a verb and it must make sense