



WHOLE SCHOOL LITERACY

POSTERS

FULL STOP .

A full stop is used to show that you have come to the end of a sentence.

You can also use them to show that you have shortened or abbreviated words. **Etc.**

ELLIPSIS . . .

An ellipsis indicates that a word or words have been left out.

To show that you have stopped in the middle of what you were writing, leaving the reader to guess or infer what you might have been going on to say, e.g.

There are certain things that I would like to say but...

To show that, having given a few examples of what you mean, you do not need to add any more because the reader could think of many more, e.g.

Just bring the usual supplies, like soft drinks, sandwiches, fruit...

COMMAS ,

To separate short items on a list.

We went shopping and bought food, wine, some gifts, twelve cards and a Christmas tree.

To separate items of extra information from the rest of a sentence.

Andrew, my cousin, came to visit us last summer.

To separate subordinate clauses from the main clause in a sentence.

The main clause here is shown in bold:

Having begun to watch the match, we decided not to go out for dinner.

With her head held high, her face still beaming, Angela accepted her gold medal.

OTHER USES FOR COMMAS

To separate direct speech from the rest of a sentence.

When the direct speech comes first, put the comma within the speech marks.

'I'll see you tomorrow,' he shouted.

When the direct speech comes after other parts of the sentence, you put the comma before the speech marks.

He shouted, 'I'll see you tomorrow.'

To separate connective adverbs from the rest of a sentence.

Nevertheless, it is important that you continue to exercise.

However, I have decided to accept your offer of compensation.

APOSTROPHE- POSSESSION

The apostrophe has two uses:

- to show the idea of ownership or belonging (possession).
- to show that a word has been shortened or abbreviated.

When something belongs to someone.

Jenny's books.

- o Apostrophes are only used when there is an 's' that shows something belongs to someone. **Do not** use it to show **plurals**.

Jenny's book's.

APOSTROPHE- OMISSION

To show that a word has been shortened, simply insert the apostrophe where the letters are missing:

Can't for cannot.

Could've for could have.

It's for it is.

QUESTION MARK ?

A question mark is used to request information or answers. Sentences that end with question marks are sometimes called interrogative sentences.

Where are the biscuits?

What shall we do now?

How does it work?

EXCLAMATION MARK !

An exclamation mark is used at the end of an exclamatory sentence, i.e. a sentence that expresses strong emotion.

How dare you!

COLONS :

- o It's easiest to think about a colon as a punctuation mark that introduces something.

To introduce a quotation.

It can be used to introduce a quotation when you are writing about literature.

Norman MacCaig suggests that the November mist is foul smelling, sneaky and threatening in the lines:

The brown air fumes at the shop windows,
tries the doors, and sidles past.

To introduce a list.

It can be used to introduce a list which contains lengthy items.

The School Board made the following decisions: to extend the school day to 6 pm; to introduce water fountains to each classroom; and to encourage pupils to eat healthier options in the school canteen.

COLONS AGAIN

To introduce an explanation.

It can be used to introduce an explanation of what has been said.

We went out for dinner last night: my parents had come up from London for my birthday.

o NOTE: Do you see that what comes after the colon explains why they went out? It's not just more information but an explanation.

To introduce an antithesis.

It can be used to introduce an antithesis, which is a statement which shows a balanced contrast.

Colons are fairly easy to grasp: semi-colons are a bit trickier.

SEMI COLON ;

There are **three** common uses of a semi-colon.

To separate lengthy items in a list.

The Governors made the following decisions: to extend the school-day to 6 pm; to introduce water fountains to each classroom; and to encourage pupils to eat healthier options in the school canteen.

SEMI COLONS AGAIN

To separate parts of a sentence.

To introduce additional information.

They can be used for additional information or for further detail about what has been said where there is a close connection between the two parts.

Here the semi-colon introduces a close, but opposing idea:

I enjoy learning about grammar; most people feel very uncomfortable about it.

SPEECH MARKS “”

Speech marks – which are also known as inverted commas – simply separate the words someone in a sentence actually says from the rest of the sentence. These words are called direct speech.

**"I'll be back home soon," Jim
shouted to his mum.**

There are some simple rules to follow:

- Put every word that was said inside speech marks.
- Always use a capital letter for the first word of each sentence inside the speech marks.

"I'm going out now. Is that OK?" he asked.

Mum said quietly, "Please sit down."

Separate the direct speech from the rest of the sentence, usually using a comma.

Mum said quietly, "Please sit down."
"Please sit down," Mum said quietly.

- Sometimes we can break the direct speech up by inserting information about who is speaking. This is the only time when you do not use a capital letter for the first word inside the speech marks. This is because the part that starts 'you had better' is still part of the same sentence that started before the interruption of 'she said'.

"If you think you can speak to me like that," she said, "you had better think again!"

- In the following example, what she says is in two separate sentences and so we need a comma and a full stop as well as a capital letter when she starts to speak again.

"Don't speak to me like that," she said. "Go up to your room."



YEAR TWO

HYPHENS

Hyphens are used to make new words out of two existing words or parts of words.

There are three main uses of a hyphen.

It is used to make adjectives and groups of words that act as adjectives:

A well-known footballer

A five-year-old pupil

It is used to make nouns by adding small words to the end of an existing word:

Kick-off

Break-in

Hanger-on

It is used to make various kinds of words by adding small words to the start of an existing word:

Ex-pupil

Non-attender

BRACKETS

Brackets are used to separate phrases that have been inserted into a sentence to explain, comment on or give some more information about something.

He pulled out the gold cigarette case
(his only real treasure) and opened it
carefully.

DASHES

Dashes are used singly and in pairs for several purposes.

To replace a colon

- o A single dash can be used to replace a colon when it introduces an explanation of what has been said. Be careful though. A full stop would also be acceptable but a comma would not.
- o I find grammar difficult – there are just too many rules.

To introduce a key idea or to sum up

- o A single dash can be used to introduce a key idea which may sum up what you want to say, or leave the reader with a key idea to think about. Here again a full stop would be acceptable but a comma would not.
- o Grammar is just too complicated and there are too many rules – let's just forget it!

In the same way as brackets

- o Double dashes can be used for parenthesis in exactly the same way brackets are. That means they are used to mark words you have inserted into a sentence but which you want to keep separate for some reason.

For extra information, rather like a comma:

- o My cousin – who had just arrived from Canada – entered the room, with two suitcases, an umbrella and a big smile on his face.