



Chapter 15.

Punctuation

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The MEANING and USE of punctuation

Web activity 1

Two versions of a letter (illustrating the importance of punctuation) once circulated on the Internet. Compare them and discuss how important punctuation is as to the meaning of texts?

1. *Dear Jack,*

I want a man who knows what love is all about. You are generous, kind, thoughtful. People who are not like you admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me for other men. I yearn for you. I have no feelings whatsoever when we're apart. I can be forever happy – will you let me be yours?

Jill

2. *Dear Jack,*

I want a man who knows what love is. All about you are generous, kind, thoughtful people, who are not like you. Admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me. For other men I yearn. For you I have no feelings whatsoever. When we're apart I can be forever happy. Will you let me be?

Jill

Web activity 2

Examine the following texts regarding the amount of punctuation used. In which types of texts are you likely to find lighter use of punctuation and in which would you find more heavy usage? Why?

2-A Follow this link: <http://iarumac.com/wordpress/?p=135> and you will find the poem "Apostrophe" by Roger McGough.



- 2-B** Examine the first paragraph of the *Spark Notes* on *Ulysses*: <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/ulysses/context.html>
- 2-C** *Ulysses* by James Joyce¹
I think Ill get a bit of fish tomorrow or today is it Friday yes I will with some blancmange with black currant jam like long ago not those 2 lb pots of mixed plum and apple from the London and Newcastle Williams and Woods goes twice as far only for the bones .
- 2-E** Here you will find the poem “*sweet spontaneous earth*” by e.e. cummings: http://www.poetry-archive.com/c/o_sweet_spontaneous.html

The full stop

Web activity 3

Where do you need to insert full stops in the following text, which is an excerpt from *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen?

Mr Bennet was among the earliest of those who waited on Mr Bingley he had always intended to visit him though to the last always assuring his wife that he should not go and till the evening after the visit was paid she had no knowledge of it it was then disclosed in the following manner observing his second daughter employed in trimming a hat he suddenly addressed her with I hope Mr Bingley will like it Lizzy we are not in a way to know that Mr Bingley likes said her mother resentfully since we are not to visit.²

Web activity 4

1. There are many specialised abbreviations and acronyms in the field of education. Search the Internet to find out what the following mean:

RP, GCSE, GCE, A-level, O-level, MA, RE, PE, PTA, EFL, ELF, ESL, TESOL, TEFL and KS1

2. Do you know other important abbreviations and acronyms within education?

The apostrophe

Web activity 5

Follow this link to find a poem by John Foster, “Dad’s Views’ on Apostrophes”:

http://books.google.dk/books?id=6rN4kZlmBI8C&pg=PA45&lpg=PA45&dq=Apostrophe%E2%80%99s+often+appear+in+place%E2%80%99s&source=bl&ots=qHy5bkQ_6a&sig=FbjVFTdSBP6Nfj6EhlZAqrc2JKI&hl=da&sa=X&ei=Z2OqT72zBubN4QTwoZisCQ&ved=0CHMQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=Apostrophe%E2%80%99s%20often%20appear%20in%20place%E2%80%99s&f=false

Find the apostrophes that are wrong or are missing and explain why.

The comma

Web activity 6

Here are some more sentences whose meaning depends on whether the comma is there or not. Discuss the differences. Afterwards invent some more sentences yourselves.



- a. *The agency sent Mary, the new au pair.*
c. *She washed and combed her hair*

- b. *The agency sent Mary the new au pair.*
d. *She washed, and combed her hair.*

Web activity 7

Following this link, explain the use of commas in the introduction to *Little Bee*: http://books.simonandschuster.com/Little-Bee/Chris-Cleave/9781416589631/reading_group_guide

Discuss the poem "Commas" by John Foster by using this link: <http://books.google.dk/books?id=6rN4kZlmBI8C&pg=PA45&lpg=PA45&dq=%22Commas,+like+apostrophes,%22+John+foster&source=bl&ots=qHy5dgMWai&sig=JWqGXXHPdTH6t6GEwx2AKXU5gv8&hl=da&sa=X&ei=Z8OsT7irIc3ltQbLhgybAw&ved=0CDAQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22Commas%2C%20like%20apostrophes%2C%22%20John%20foster&f=false>

After reading this chapter

Web activity 8

Identify, correct and explain problems regarding punctuation:

- a. *She said, that the boy was handsome.*
- b. *Have you finished painting the car Peter asked.*
- c. *He asked me, if I loved him?*
- d. *The car, that had been stolen on Monday, was return'ed to it's owner.*
- e. *Peter was surprised, when he heard about the accident.*
- f. *When he got there two hours later the woman had left.*
- g. *She did not go to his party she had the flu.*
- h. *She had in fact fallen for his money.*
- i. *Its your own fault.*
- j. *Peter who is my cousin is a teacher, he is married to Judith.*
- k. *Peter has two sisters'.*
- l. *His' uncle is rich having earned a lot in South Africa in recent years.*
- m. *Basically she had five brothers Peter Simon Ricky David and Nick.*
- n. *Before I got home in the morning my husband had left.*
- o. *My husband had left, before I got home in the morning.*
- p. *I passed the English exam, but failed Danish.*
- q. *We are about 5.375.000 people in Denmark.*
- r. *He is in the 5. form this year.*
- s. *The book is only £6,50.*
- t. *All the rare books in the library, were stolen.*
- u. *The boys chocolate was stolen.*

Web activity 9

A. Final reflections in relation to didactics

1. Sum up what is most important to know about punctuation for an English teacher.
 - a. Why do we use full stops, question marks and exclamation marks?
 - b. When do we use full stops in connection to
 - a. Independent clauses?
 - b. Numbers?
 - c. Abbreviations?
 - c. Give the main reasons for when we use commas.
 - a. to show that we break the rhythm of a sentence



- To give additional information
 - i. When do we use commas in connection with relative clauses?
 - In connection with Circumstantials
 - i. When do we use commas in connection with Circum. sub-clauses?
- b. to join – but why are they sometimes too weak?
 - c. in dates and numbers
 - d. Why do we use semicolons?
 - e. Why do we use dashes and in which level of style?
 - f. Why do we use hyphens?
 - g. Why do we use colons?
 - h. What are the two main reasons for using apostrophes?
2. Sum up what is difficult for Danes.
 - a. Explain the rules of thumb:
 - Don't put a comma in front of that
 - If in doubt, leave it out.
 3. Discuss how you would handle the progression of punctuation in your English teaching, if possible compare with what it says in Faghæftet for engelsk.
 - When would you start teaching punctuation – why?
 - What is most important for the pupils to learn?
 - What is easiest and what is most difficult – why?
 - What needs automatization already for young learners?
 4. Think back at your own experience as a pupil: did you change your opinion about how to teach punctuation?

B. Reflections in relation to what you have learned

- Which areas relating to punctuation do you master now?
- In which areas do you need to improve?

Web activity 10

Identify, categorize, correct and explain problems regarding punctuation in the learner's text:

1 *My first evening at "Stoke"*

- 2 *After having spendt 11 years in a danish "folkeskole" I wanted a change of senery I was lucky and got a job*
- 3 *as a cliner on a boarding school in England just after christmas.*
- 4 *When I first arrived to Stoke Brunswick School I was quite impressed, the school of Stoke Brunswick which*
- 5 *was enlarged in 1539 is an old manor from the 14. century it has been a school 6 since 1958. It is a*
- 6 *preparatory school for boys and girls from the ages 10-13.*
- 7 *It was dark, when I arrived on a monday and honestly I was a bit frightened their was hardly any light and*
- 8 *the man, who welcomed me, was the gardener, Phillip – a big man, who was missing two tooths in the*
- 9 *lower part of his mouth and who spoke with a very dark woice.*
- 10 *He showed me to my room and then I saw it I almost started crying, because it looked just like I picture a*
- 11 *prison cell the walls where yellow from smoke, it looked like there was bars in front of the window, their was*
- 12 *a small sink, a chest of drawers, a bed and a bulb hanging in a wire from the ceiling.*
- 13 *Phillip looked at me, and said, that he knew, that it didn't look like much but he could paint a picture on one of*
- 14 *the walls', if I wanted it. I didn't know, what to say I just wanted to go home. Phillip left and I sat down*
- 15 *on my bet hoping, that it would soon bee morning.*



16 *The next morning I wanted to go downstairs to get some breakfast and to meet the rest of the staff at the*
 17 *school. I went out of my door, down the stairs and into a linen closet. Standing in the linen closet I meet the*
 18 *Matron Victoria for the first time she was a bit astonished to find me in the linen closet, but who wouldn't*
 19 *bee?*
 20 *She introduced me to the rest of the staff at Stoke and showed me round the school, so I wouldn't walk into*
 21 *any more closets'.*
 22 *Phillip actually painted one of my walls', it was a picture of a lion who was "lost" in straws of grass. After a*
 23 *few months I got a new job their as an assistant matron and to be near the kids I sadly had to leave my new*
 24 *painted room.*
 25 *I was at Stoke Brunswick School for almost a year and I really enjoyed my stay their, in spite of my first*
 26 *evening their!!!!*

Links

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic/punctuation> (full stops, question marks and exclamation mark info and games)
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/game/en29punc-game-beat-the-clock-apostrophes> (apostrophes in contractions)
- http://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/d/dan_baird/i_love_you_period.html (Song by Dan Baird, "I love you period" with many types of punctuation)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1F4qii8S3gw> (Victor Borge talks about punctuation)
- http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks2bitesize/english/spelling_grammar/punctuation/play.shtml (punctuation games)
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/quickfind/search?keywords=games&x=21&y=12&subject%5B0%5D=english&level%5B0%5D=e1-e2&level%5B1%5D=e3&level%5B2%5D=l1&level%5B3%5D=l2&tags%5B0%5D=punctuation> (insert punctuation in different genres)
- http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/magickey/adventures/hms_game.shtml (game on full stops)
- <http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/online/lists1.htm> (commas in lists)
- <http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/english/englishB7.htm> (exercises on punctuation to print)
- http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/vtc/apostrophes_con_poss/eng/Introduction/default.htm (apostrophes)
- <http://www.oswego.org/ocsd-web/match/dragflip.asp?filename=jwildecontraction2> (apostrophes in contractions)
- <http://www.chompchomp.com/exercises.htm> (comma splice and fused (run-on) sentences and commas)
- http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/quiz_list.htm (advanced punctuation exercises)
- <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar-exercises/capital-letters-and-apostrophes> (apostrophes)

Quotes

- 1 Joyce, James, *Ulysses*, The Echo Library, 2009, p. 511
- 2 Austen, Jane, *Pride and Prejudice*, 1813: www.pemberley.com/janeinfo/ppv1n02.html



