

# **Free Writing Handouts with Anecdotes**

**By David Bruce**

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*Dedicated with love to the Kennedy family*

Feel free to make and give away as many copies as you wish for educational purposes.

Feel free to distribute this little pamphlet as a pdf file.

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## Preface

This little pamphlet contains a numbers of handouts that teachers can use to teach their students how to avoid some common writing errors. Of course, students and other people can use this short pamphlet simply as a way to refresh their memory about some simple rules of writing.

Feel free to make and give away as many copies as you want to for educational purposes.

Feel free to distribute this little pamphlet as a pdf file.

Teachers may want to use some of these handouts while grading. At Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, I require students to hand in their papers in a 2-pocket folder. In the right pocket is the final draft. In the left pocket are the early drafts (and outline, when I require one). As I grade, I find myself marking the same kinds of errors over and over. Therefore, I have created a number of handouts about these common writing errors. When I come across one of these common writing errors in a student paper, I put one or more relevant handouts in the student's 2-pocket folder. That way, the student can read at his or her leisure how to recognize and correct the error and how to improve his or her writing.

Of course, not all of these handouts will be useful in your particular course, but some of them are likely to be helpful to you.

Also, check out this Web site:

<http://stores.lulu.com/bruceb>

Lots of free stuff is here, including composition projects such as writing an autobiographical essay and discussion guides for many works of literature, including Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper*.

These handouts are free. Copy them at will and share them with whomever you wish.

## How Do I Use *Amount* And *Number*?

Use *number* for things you can count.

Ex: I spilled a large number of bags of flour on the floor.

Use *amount* for quantities you can't count.

Ex: I spilled a large amount of flour on the floor.

- Growing up during the Great Depression in Morgantown, West Virginia, comedian Don Knotts was lucky to have the mother he did. She could take very little meat and turn it into a great **amount** of meatloaf. In fact, when young Don went to the grocery store to buy a quarter-pound of hamburger, the grocer would joke, "Are you people having company again?"

- The Southwest Florida International Airport had a problem with an overabundance of birds camping out on the runways. Occasionally, collisions occurred between the birds and the aircraft, and not unsurprisingly, the birds suffered the greatest **amount** of damage. This is not to say that the aircraft did not sustain expensive damage in the collisions. Very definitely, the aircraft did. Fortunately, the airport officials found a way to reduce the **number** of collisions and to avoid killing birds and having aircraft damaged. They simply hired the services of a dog. Before an aircraft lands, they let loose the dog and he very happily clears the landing area. The first dog whose services they hired was named Jet, a name he acquired before being trained to do this particular job. After Jet was retired, they hired the services of a new dog, whose name is Radar.

- Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin often said that he had learned from a beggar how to collect money for charity. A beggar had appeared at his door, and the good Rabbi had given him a generous handout, but the beggar asked for more. Someone present said that he was surprised that the beggar had asked for more money because the beggar had often accepted much smaller sums of money without arguing. The beggar replied that when he was given a small **amount** of money, it wasn't worth arguing about because what he would get if he won the argument? Another small **amount** of money. But a sizable **amount** of money was worth arguing about because if he won that argument he would get another sizable **amount** of money. Rabbi Meir Shapiro said, "Whenever I ask a donation from a wealthy man and he gives me a sizable sum, I tell that story."

- The lectures of Professor Harold Dwight Lasswell were notoriously difficult to understand. Once, Professor Lasswell walked into his classroom at the beginning of a term and was surprised at the large **number** of students waiting for him to start class. He muttered, "We shall reduce the **number** forthwith."

- Some very large donations have been made to AIDS organizations. After choreographer Michael Bennett died of AIDS in 1987, he left 15 percent of his \$25 million estate to be given to organizations "involved in the research of or the cure or treatment of patients afflicted with the disease known as AIDS." In addition, Dionne Warwick's recording of "That's What Friends are For" generated very large **amounts** of money for the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

## How Do I Use *Amount* And *Number*?

Use *number* for things you can count.

Ex: I spilled a large number of bags of flour on the floor.

Use *amount* for quantities you can't count.

Ex: I spilled a large amount of flour on the floor.

Note: Use *amount* for money.

Ex: He has a large amount of money.

- After Jack Benny declined to attend a fund-raising dinner with his friend Eddie Cantor, Mr. Cantor went alone. As the dinner was ending, an envelope was brought to Mr. Cantor. Inside was a signed blank check, with a note from Mr. Benny: "This is for dessert, Eddie. Fill in the **amount**. Love, Jack."

- While living in New York City, comedian Bill Hicks was shocked by the **number** of homeless people he saw, and he always left home with change in his pockets to give to the homeless. He pointed out, "I could have been a bum. All it takes is the right girl, the right bar, and the right friends."

- Baseball manager Larry Gilbert of the Southern Association was known for his many good deeds during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Once, a man who had played baseball for him and who was almost always short of money got in a jam and asked him for a "loan" of \$100—a lot of money back then. Mr. Gilbert gave him the money. Later, a friend of his told him, "You know you'll never get that back, don't you?" Mr. Gilbert replied, "That's all right. He played mighty good ball for me, better than I expected. Maybe I owe him a little something." In addition, a **number** of untalented young ballplayers showed up each spring to try out for his team and spent all their money without making the team. Mr. Gilbert always gave them railroad fare so they could get home.

- A Polish farmer hid cantor Isaac Goodfriend during the Holocaust. After the war, they separated, but he later returned with some Jews who kept kosher to visit the farmer, who was very glad to see him. The farmer prepared the table for a meal with his guests, setting down such items as slices of ham. Mr. Goodfriend's friends were amused by the very non-kosher meal, but Mr. Goodfriend told them that although the farmer knew little about Judaism, he knew an enormous **amount** about human kindness and decency.

## How Do I Use Apostrophes to Show Possession?

### How do I make singular words possessive?

*Answer: Add an apostrophe and an -s.*

Janice Barringer and Edward Stewart were performing in **Prokofiev's** *Romeo and Juliet* when a disaster occurred. Ms. Barringer, as Juliet, and Mr. Stewart, as Romeo, were in bed together. Romeo was supposed to awake, slip his arm out from under **Juliet's** head, kiss her, and then stand up. Unfortunately, some hooks in Mr. **Stewart's** costume got caught in Ms. **Barringer's** hair. Some gentle tugs didn't free the costume, so Mr. Stewart was forced to give a giant yank—and a hunk of **Juliet's** hair was pulled from her scalp. Meanwhile, Ms. Barringer had to stay in character, pretending to be asleep—and looking serene.

*Optional: If the word does end in -s, then you may add only an apostrophe if you choose.*

After reading a book titled *The Son of the Great Eunuch*, Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart wrote a Broadway musical based on it. In the musical, the son has no interest in becoming a eunuch. At one point, he is being carried away so the operation can be performed, and Mr. **Rodgers'** music includes a few bars of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*.

### How do I make plural words possessive?

*Answer, part 1: If the word does not end in -s, add an apostrophe and -s.*

After getting divorced, **children's** book author Lois Lowry dated a few men, including some who wanted to borrow money from her and some who turned out to be still married. But then a man who worked in an insurance office asked her out. On their date, he said to her, "You have good ideas, Cornelius. When I am king, I will give you a green hat." At first, Lois thought she was in the presence of a weirdo, but then the man explained that he was quoting Babar the Elephant, a character in a popular series of **children's** books. Lois thought that was interesting, she paid attention to him, and soon they were living their lives together.

*Answer, part 2: If the word does end in -s, add an apostrophe only.*

How much of a football town is Green Bay, Wisconsin? When Brett Favre became a quarterback for Green Bay, all the games were always sold out, and the waiting list for tickets was 35 years long. Parents used to put their **infants'** names on the waiting list in hopes that the infants could see a game live and in person before they were middle-aged.

Hedda Hopper's real name was Elda Furry. When she married De Wolf Hopper, she was his fifth wife. His previous **wives'** names had been Edna, Ella, Ida, and Nella. Because her first name was so similar to theirs, she decided it was no longer suitable: "I changed it to Hedda, because I was afraid he wouldn't know who I was."



## How Do I Use Apostrophes to Show Possession?

### How do I make singular words possessive?

*Answer: Add an apostrophe and an -s.*

Gracie Allen had an aunt who was fairly well off until the stock market crash of 1929. When George Burns and Gracie Allen were just breaking into vaudeville, Aunt Clara used to send them a check for \$25 each week, a habit she continued even when the comedy team of Burns and Allen was making thousands of dollars a week. In the stock market crash, Aunt Clara lost just about everything she had, but she never knew it, because Ms. Allen used to deposit enough money into Aunt **Clara's** checking account each month to cover all her expenses—including her weekly \$25 check to Burns and Allen.

*Optional: If the word does end in -s, then you may add only an apostrophe if you choose.*

Comedian Danny Thomas made a reputation in Chicago, then he went to New York City to appear at Club Martinique. Several New York comics heard he was coming, so they decided to go to the nightclub and squelch the newcomer by heckling him. Because Mr. **Thomas'** type of humor involved the telling of long stories, heckling would destroy his act. Fortunately, Milton Berle was in the audience. Mr. Berle liked Mr. Thomas, and whenever a heckler started talking, it was Mr. Berle who put the heckler in his place with a comic insult. Very quickly, the hecklers left Mr. Thomas alone, and he went on to become a giant of comedy.

### How do I make plural words possessive?

*Answer, part 1: If the word does not end in -s, add an apostrophe and -s.*

In 1996, Dorothy “Dot” Richardson was a member of the United States **women's** softball team that won the gold medal at the Summer Olympics. Immediately after winning the gold medal, she had to fly to Los Angeles where she was completing her residency at a hospital. (Today, she is an orthopedic surgeon.) Fortunately, the hospital gave her another week off so she could do such things as meet the First Family and appear on *David Letterman*. Of course, she made up the hours of work she missed, and she gave children in the hospital a chance to wear her gold medal.

*Answer, part 2: If the word does end in -s, add an apostrophe only.*

Heavyweight fighter Joe Louis was very generous with his money. Whenever dancer Norma Miller needed money, she knew that she could talk to him and get help. One day, she and her dance troupe were broke. They had a dance date coming up, and they needed to get their costumes out of the cleaners, but Ms. Miller had no money to pay the **cleaners'** bill. She called Mr. Louis, and he came right over with some of his friends. Mr. Louis was wearing a loud tie, which his friends made fun of, so Mr. Louis took off the tie and dropped it in Ms. Miller's lap, leaning over for a moment to whisper, “The money's in the tie.”

## Use Brackets for Editorial Insertions

Occasionally, you may need to add words to a quotation to make the quotation more understandable to the reader or to make a correction. When you do that, enclose your words in brackets to show that the added words are your own and not those of the speaker or original writer.

- When he was a kid, Jason Kidd played sports with a lot of determination. While playing football on the street, he ran with the ball, knocked over a mailbox, thought he had broken his jaw—and kept on running! However, his father, whose name is Steve, stopped him from playing football because he felt that Jason was too aggressive and would hurt himself. Fortunately, Jason kept playing basketball and became an NBA point guard. His father taught him a lot. Jason bowled when he was young, and he made excuses because he didn't play well. His father told him, "Quit that. The reason you're not a good bowler is you don't practice." Jason adds, "And he was right. Now, if I have a defect, I work at **[getting rid of]** it. I don't make any excuses."

- Ohio State University football coach Woody Hayes spent a lot of time visiting ill children in Children's Hospital. One day, he got a telephone call from a woman he didn't know, but who had a daughter—an Ohio State football fan—with cancer in Children's Hospital. Coach Hayes told his secretary that he was leaving for the day, he picked up a lot of Ohio States football memorabilia, and he headed to Children's Hospital, where he spent three or four hours with the girl and some other young Ohio State fans. Player Steve Myers, who was there, says, "When we got there, you could tell it meant everything to the girl, and all the kids there went berserk. ... Woody was just great to those kids." In addition, Mr. Myers says, "He did that stuff all the time, and it was always **[Coach Hayes speaking]**, 'I don't want to read about this in the papers, do you understand?' He was that private about the things he did for people."

- While conducting at the Salzburg Festival, Arturo Toscanini took pains to preserve his privacy. One day, he went to an obscure restaurant where he hoped not to be noticed, but he was recognized instantly. The proprietor of the restaurant gave the Maestro the best seat, then brought him the best wine available at the restaurant. A friend tasted the wine, discovered that it was awful, and advised Mr. Toscanini (in a foreign language the proprietor didn't understand) not to drink it. However, Mr. Toscanini drank the wine anyway, and complimented the proprietor on it. Later, Mr. Toscanini explained, "He **[the proprietor]** was so kind. I could not refuse."

- In his book *Kids Say the Darndest Things!* Art Linkletter writes about a time when he asked viewers of his *House Party* TV program to send in funny things their children had written. One boy had written a letter to the President of the United States: "Dere Mister President. I would like you to send children **[to]** Mars in the next space ship going in that direction. I would appreciate it very much. One of your future voters: Mitchell." Mr. Linkletter writes that there was a note attached to young Mitchell's letter: "Dear Mr. President: As the parents of Mitchell Miller, we would like to give you our permission to send Mitchell anywhere into space."

## Capitalize the Names of Holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas

- *Los Angeles Times* columnist Chris Erskine's young son once seriously prayed, "Dear Jesus, I hope you had a good **Halloween**." Just before the son turned six, he and his father went by the hospital where the son was born. Mr. Erskine told him, "Hey, that's where you were born." The young son thought for a moment, and then said, "I wonder if they miss me."

- Dick Gregory grew up poor, and he was acquainted with well-intended charity that could have been handled better. At **Christmas** one year, a charity worker knocked on his family's door and offered him a free turkey, but he shut the door in her face—the utilities had been turned off because there was no money to pay the bills, and so there was no way to cook the turkey. Another time, he and several other children in the neighborhood received the gift of a warm jacket. However, Dick threw his jacket away because all the jackets were the same color and style, so other people could glance at his jacket and know immediately that he was a recipient of charity. As an adult, Mr. Gregory became a comedian and made people laugh.

- Many parents have difficulty sleeping in on **Christmas**—not because they don't want to, but because their children are so eager to open presents. Olympic gymnast Shannon Miller's mother, Claudia, found a way to sleep in a little longer. She used to hide one present for each child, then write a poem giving a clue to where the presents were hidden. Only after the children had found the hidden gifts were they allowed to awaken their parents. (It's a great idea, but Claudia says it resulted in only six or seven extra minutes of sleep, as her children were wonderful at figuring out the hiding place of the presents.)

- Hyrum Smith is the chair of the Franklin Quest Company, makers of organizational planners. While he was growing up on one of the Hawaiian islands, his parents felt that one **Christmas** would be bleak because of lack of money. However, they told their children that they could ask for one gift. To their surprise, Hyrum asked for a bushel of apples, which were rare on the Hawaiian islands. When **Christmas** came, Hyrum received his bushel of apples, then experienced the joy of giving as he delivered apples to his friends and neighbors.

- Just before **Passover**, a man came to ask Rabbi Chaim of Volozin, "May I substitute four glasses of milk for the four cups of wine which it is customary to drink in the **Passover Eve** ceremony?" The rabbi asked if the man wanted to do this because the man was ill and the wine would not be good for him. Hearing that the man was in good health but impoverished, the rabbi gave him five rubles and told him to buy some wine and celebrate **Passover Eve**. After the man had joyfully gone, the rabbi's wife asked him why he had given the man so much money; after all, two rubles would have been enough to purchase the necessary wine. The rabbi explained that since the man had asked to substitute milk for the wine, the man must have also lacked money for meat because drinking milk and eating meat at the same meal is not kosher. Therefore, the rabbi had given the man enough money to buy both wine and meat.

## When Quoting Part of a Sentence, You May Not Need to Use a Capital Letter

- Jerry Spinelli, the author of *Maniac Magee* and *Stargirl*, wrote at home in a house with six kids. Of course, they made a lot of noise, so he bought a gizmo that made ocean sounds such as surf in an attempt to drown out the noise of the kids. Did it work? Mr. Spinelli says **that “there’s** no surf that’s a match for six kids in the house.”

- While working together on the movie *The Hustler*, about some people who bet on games of pool, Paul Newman challenged Jackie Gleason to play pool and make a friendly wager of a dollar a ball, not knowing that Mr. Gleason was quite the pool player due to a job in his youth that allowed him to play as much pool as he wanted for free. Mr. Gleason ran 50 balls straight, and Mr. Newman didn’t even get to chalk his cue. Mr. Gleason jokes **that Mr. Newman “got** even with me, though. Next day, he paid me off with a jar filled with five thousand pennies.”

- In 2001, Canadians Jamie Sale and David Pelletier were preparing for the Figure Skating World Championships in pairs skating. Competitively, their season had been superb, but some personal issues threatened to distract them from their sport. First, one wall of their home burned, forcing them to move in with friends for a while. Next, Mr. Pelletier’s car was stolen on the very day that they left to compete at the World Championships. Fortunately, something good happened to them. On the morning of the day of the free-skate competition, Barbara Underhill—she and fellow Canadian Paul Martini were World Champions in pairs skating in 1984—took a wrong turn while jogging and ran into Ms. Sale and Mr. Pelletier as they were eating breakfast at an outdoor cafe. Ms. Underhill felt **that “this** moment means something,” so she talked to Ms. Sale and Mr. Pelletier and gave them advice about dealing with the pressure of competition. That night, Ms. Sale and Mr. Pelletier skated brilliantly and became World Champions.

- On August 1, 2007, the Interstate 35 West bridge in Minneapolis collapsed, killing at least 11 people. A woman named Leslie Eliel emailed a friend, Jim, in Minneapolis, who had arrived at the bridge soon after it had collapsed. He was on the shore opposite to where a school bus was next to a burning truck. He was worried about the children on the school bus, but he witnessed a remarkable and courageous good deed. In his email to Leslie, he wrote **that “a** couple of teenagers on the bus just kicked whatever was in their way out of the way, stood between the fire and the children, unloaded the little ones and handed them down to safety. Kids like that make me think the world is gonna be OK.”

- Rabbi Simlai points out in the Babylonian Sotah 14a **that “the** Torah begins with an act of kindness, and it concludes with an act of kindness.” After all, at the beginning of the Torah, in Genesis 3:21, we read that God clothed Adam and Eve. And at the end of the Torah, in Deuteronomy 34:6, we read that God buried Moses.

- According to the Rabbi of Sadagora, we can learn about God from the inventions of Humankind. From a train, we can learn **that “because** of one second we can miss everything.” From a telegraph, we can learn **that “every** word is counted and charged.” And from a telephone, we can learn **that “what** we say here is heard there.”

## Use a Colon Between Two Independent Clauses When the Second Clause Summarizes or Explains the First

Note: This use of the colon may be followed by a capital letter or by a lower-case letter.

- Lionel Hale was once at a hotel in Sussex, talking with a friend about disillusionment. To illustrate a point, he said, “It is wrong to know too much. For instance, a woman is talking at the table behind me. Her speaking voice is **enchanting**: one could listen to it forever. I don’t wish to see this lady, for I’m sure her looks would spoil it!” His friend looked at the woman, recognized her as a talented and attractive opera/lieder singer, and replied, “You are wrong about the looks, but right about the voice. It’s Kathleen Ferrier.” It’s interesting to note that although Ms. Ferrier did grow up to become an attractive woman, when she was young her mother was worried about her looks, saying, “She’s going to be so plain.”

- After Mary Lou Retton won the all-around gold medal in women’s gymnastics in the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, she became a celebrity and needed an agent. Her coach, Bela Karolyi, investigated some agents and recommended one who was acceptable to Ms. Retton and her parents. The percentages worked out this **way**: **Ms.** Retton would get 75%, the agent would get 15%, and Mr. Karolyi would get 10%. However, as soon as the contract was signed, Mr. Karolyi told Ms. Retton, “I have one final gift for you,” then he signed over his 10% to her.

- When Ernestine Schumann-Heink was a young, struggling opera singer, she was faced with an upcoming hungry, bleak Christmas. Fortunately, another opera singer, Matilda Brandt, knew her situation, and since Ms. Brandt was separated from her husband that Christmas because they were working in different cities, she came up with a win-win proposal for Ms. **Schumann-Heink**: **Ms.** Brandt would buy the food for Christmas dinner, and Ms. Schumann-Heink would cook it. Together, they had a wonderful Christmas dinner, and Ms. Schumann-Heink kept and enjoyed the leftovers.

- An act of great sensitivity occurred when George Burns and Gracie Allen played the Palace for the first time, in **1928**: **The** audience applauded, and the comedy team was a hit. The Palace Theater on Broadway was important because if a small, not-famous act did well there, it could get better and more important bookings. According to Mr. Burns, the Palace was a “pushover” for acts such as Burns and Allen. Because the audience realized how important their applause was to small acts, they were rooting for the acts to be good. (I like that a lot. It’s similar to the audience on *The Tonight Show* rooting for a comedian during his or her first TV appearance.)

- The great golf pro Walter Hagen ran into a problem on a Forth Worth, Texas, golf course when he was playing for a **championship**: **The** sun was getting in his eyes. Seeing a young caddy wearing a cap with a sun visor—exactly what he needed just then—Mr. Hagen asked the caddy for the loan of the cap. The caddy, Bryon Nelson, gladly performed a good deed by lending it to him for the afternoon, and Mr. Hagen won the championship with it. The young caddy then devoted himself to playing golf and emulating Mr. Hagen, and he did amazingly well in pro golf tournaments—even finishing in the money 113 consecutive times.

## Use a Colon to Direct Attention to an Appositive

An appositive renames something. For example, in the first anecdote below, “one of her favorite authors for children” and “Carolyn Haywood” are names for the same thing.

- Johanna Hurwitz, author of *Busybody Nora*, worked as a school librarian. While going through the shelves looking for books too old and battered to be read any more, she came across a worn-out copy of a novel by **one of her favorite authors for children: Carolyn Haywood**. Because she wanted Ms. Haywood to see how loved her book was—it had been read to pieces—she wrapped it and sent it as a gift to her.

- Tenor and movie star Mario Lanza was capable of great kindness. Josephine Fasano once called Mr. Lanza’s house while he was out and asked if the tenor would speak to Raphaela, her 10-year-old daughter, who was a great fan and who was dying of leukemia. The man who answered the telephone said that he would give Mr. Lanza the message. Of course, Ms. Fasano hung up the telephone, thinking that nothing would happen, but Mr. Lanza called the following afternoon and gave Raphaela a 10-minute concert over the telephone. For Raphaela’s 11<sup>th</sup> birthday, he flew Raphaela, her mother, and a private nurse to his home, where she spent five days. He also gave her a party at his movie studio. After Raphaela died, she was buried with **one of Mr. Lanza’s gifts around her neck: a sterling silver religious medal**.

- When TV’s Mister Rogers was a young child, he sometimes visited a neighbor, Mama Bell Frampton, who gave him **his favorite food: toast sticks**. This treat consisted of slices of toast cut into pieces and smeared with butter and jam. One day, Mama Bell asked young Fred if he wanted to learn to make toast sticks. This was a big event for him. They made the toast in the toaster, and she let him smear butter and jam on the toast, then cut it into four “sticks.” Decades later, whenever Mister Rogers heard “Love your neighbor as yourself,” he thought of Mama Bell.

- Rabbi Nochumke of Horodno had great compassion for other human beings. One day, a small boy, a member of his *yeshiva* (school), knocked on his door just as the good Rabbi and his family were sitting down to eat the Sabbath meal. With tears streaming down his face, the boy explained **his problem: a large dog was in front of the door of the house where he was to eat, and he was afraid to go in**. Rabbi Nochumke took the small boy by the hand, led him to the house, waited outside until the boy was done eating, then escorted the boy back to the *yeshiva*. Only then did he return to his house to eat.

- In 1917, while World War I was raging, Amelia Earhart spent Christmas in Canada, where she learned that war results in very badly wounded soldiers. She wrote, “There for the first time I realized what world war meant. Instead of new uniforms and brass bands, I saw only **the results of four years’ desperate struggle: men without arms and legs, men who were paralyzed, and men who were blind**. One day I saw four one-legged men at once, walking as best they could down the street together.” The experience helped her decide to take nurses’ training and become a nurse’s aide in Toronto’s Spadina Military Hospital.

## Use a Colon to Direct Attention to a List

- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart once wrote an opera about the legendary lover Don Juan. His opera *Don Giovanni* includes an aria in which the lover's conquests are **enumerated: 91 in Turkey, 100 in France, 231 in Germany, 640 in Italy, 1,003 in Spain—in total, 2,065**. However, since Don Giovanni's number of successful seductions in his own opera is zero, this enumeration may be an exaggeration.

- Dame Muriel Spark wrote such famous novels as *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, but she occasionally suffered from poverty. During one lean period, she was supported financially by fellow novelist Graham Greene, but he made **two conditions for his support: 1) She must never thank him, and 2) She must never pray for him**.

- Monty Hall grew up in an impoverished family. Although he was very intelligent, attending college did not seem to be an option for him until a man who was thought to be a playboy met him, was impressed by his intelligence, and wondered why he was delivering packages for a living. The playboy offered to pay his way through college on **five conditions: “Number one, I want you to keep an A average. Number two, I want you to pay back every penny. Number three, I want you to report to me every month. Number four, I want you to do this for someone else some day. Number five, never tell anyone where you got the dough [money].”** Mr. Hall graduated in 1945 from the University of Manitoba.

- Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho makes a lot of money from his writing. Because he makes so much money, he has established a foundation to do **these things: to help Brazilian abandoned children, to help Brazilian impoverished aged, to translate into other languages classic works of Brazilian literature, and to study the prehistory of Brazil**. He donated \$300,000 a year to his foundation, but that figure became \$400,000 a year through an accident. He made a mistake and gave the wrong figure in an interview, the published interview had the wrong, higher figure of \$400,000, and Mr. Coelho immediately donated an extra \$100,000 to build a new house for street children. In addition, he has donated an extra \$100,000 to his foundation every year since the interview was published.

- Famed portrait photographer Yousuf Karsh was a child in Armenia during the Armenian massacres of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. At one point, his family had only one loaf of black bread—this was all the food they had. The bread had to last the family a week, so each day Yousuf's mother cut **four slices of bread from the loaf: one slice for herself, one slice for her husband, and one slice each for their two children**. However, Yousuf's mother ate only half of her slice of bread—the other half she gave to Mary, a blind girl in the neighborhood. Yousuf also gave when he became an adult. The famed photographer volunteered his services many times to take a photograph of the Muscular Dystrophy Association of America's poster child.

## After an Independent Clause, Use a Colon to Direct Attention to a Quotation

- Jacques d'Amboise studied ballet as a child after school. Unfortunately, he sometimes got into trouble at school and for punishment had to stay after school—until his mother requested of the nuns at his Catholic school that they not detain him because of his ballet lessons. This, however, led to a problem. Instead of serving detention, young Jacques would be excused with this public announcement that embarrassed him but amused the other **truants**: **“Mr. d’Amboise is excused now to take his ballet lesson.”** The first time he danced in public was equally embarrassing. He danced at his school, and he says, “I tried to do as many *pirouettes* and *entrechats* as I could.” Unfortunately, he was concentrating so hard on these acrobatic dance feats that he was totally unaware until the dance was over that he had split his pants.

- On October 18, 1981, Wake Forest was playing Maryland in football. A rainstorm knocked out the telephone lines, so Assistant Maryland Coach Jerry Eisman, who was in the press box, started communicating with his bench by walkie-talkie. Suddenly, a voice came over the **walkie-talkie**: **“Get off! This is a police emergency frequency.”** Mr. Eisman replied, **“This is an emergency—it’s third down!”**

- Richard Tucker negotiated his own New York Met contracts with Sir Rudolf Bing, who was also a tough negotiator. At one point, the two disagreed over how much Mr. Tucker would be paid per performance, with Sir Rudolf offering \$700 and Mr. Tucker holding out for \$750. Finally, Mr. Tucker offered to let a coin flip decide how much he would be paid for **singing**: **“Let’s say if it’s heads, you win and I get \$700. If it’s tails, you pay me \$750.”** Before Sir Rudolf could agree, the coin was flipped. The two watched it land on the carpet, then Mr. Tucker said, “Heads! Damn! As the saying goes, Mr. Bing, ‘Win some, lose some.’ Today I had the luck of the Irish. The hell of it is, I’m Jewish. So \$700 it is!” Later, Sir Rudolf called this “the most unorthodox negotiation I can recall.”

- While playing football at the University of Tennessee, Peyton Manning watched so much film that he acquired a new nickname: Caveman. He was also such a good passing quarterback that a street in Knoxville acquired a new name and sign: Peyton Manning Pass. Mr. Manning was loved in Tennessee. For one thing, he did not pass up his senior year to turn pro, although he would have made millions. In fact, the Tennessee Legislature passed this **resolution**: **“In this time of unbridled greed and diminished loyalty, it is indeed refreshing to see a young man honor his commitments to his school and his teammates. He represents everything that is admirable about our young people today.”**

- After getting his college education, Dave Herman became an offensive linesman for the New York Jets. This is how he made the decision to go **pro**: **“At Michigan State, I majored in Agriculture and Economics, and from Economics, I learned there’s no money in Agriculture.”**



## Use a Comma or Commas to Set Off Direct Address

Use a comma or commas to set off direct address. Direct address occurs when someone is addressed directly by name or a name. For example:

“Hi, David.”

“Hello, Dad.”

“What’s happening, man?”

“Hello, Mr. Chelini.”

“This concerns you, Mr. Chelini, because of the cost of shutting down the plant.”

- American dance pioneer Ted Shawn worked with costumes and so became very familiar with colors. During World War I he joined the U.S. Army and was tested for color blindness. Asked to identify the various colors, Mr. Shawn called out, “Taupe. Lime. London smoke.” The sergeant told him, “Look, **soldier**, just answer red, yellow, blue, brown, gray.” Mr. Shawn then managed to pass the test.

- On an opening night, Ralph Richardson stepped out of character on stage and asked the audience, “Is there a doctor in the house?” A man stood up and identified himself as a doctor, then Sir Ralph asked him, “**Doctor**, isn’t this play awful?”

- During the 1946 game between Notre Dame and Army, Notre Dame quarterback Johnny Lujack was intercepted three times by Army safety man Arnold Tucker. After the game, Notre Dame coach Frank Leahy asked his quarterback, “Tell me, **Johnny**, why did you throw so many passes to Tucker?” Mr. Lujack replied, “**Coach**, he was the only man open.”

- While John F. Kennedy was running for a seat in the Senate, he stopped in Fall River, Massachusetts, and ate some cupcakes baked by “Babe” Piourde. Enjoying the taste of the cupcakes, Mr. Kennedy told Ms. Piourde, “**Babe**, if I ever get married, you’re going to bake the wedding cake.” On September 12, 1953, Mr. Kennedy married Jacqueline Bouvier. “Babe” Piourde baked the wedding cake.

- In 1915, Jim Thorpe played his first professional football game. His team, the Canton Bulldogs, played the Massillon Tigers, one of whose stars was Knute Rockne. Mr. Rockne tackled Mr. Thorpe twice in a row, and then Mr. Thorpe ran right over Mr. Rockne, knocking him out. When Mr. Rockne regained consciousness, Mr. Thorpe told him, “That’s better, **Knute**. These people want to see Big Jim run!”

- Is love of good food hereditary? Perhaps. Famous chef Jacques Pépin rewarded his small daughter the first time she stood up in her crib by giving her butter and caviar on bread. She ate it and requested, “Encore, **Papa**.”

## After an Introductory Element, Use a Comma

After an introductory element, use a comma.

Note: For short introductory elements, commas may be optional.

- Jim Thorpe played for the Carlisle Indians, a team that upset the powerful Army team in football. **At one point**, Mr. Thorpe ran for what seemed to be a touchdown, but a referee caught Little Vederneck holding, declared the touchdown void, and penalized Carlisle 15 yards. Mr. Thorpe walked over to Little Vederneck and told him, “I’m going to carry the ball again. **This time**, put your hands in your pockets.” **On the next play**, Little Vederneck put his hands in his pockets, Mr. Thorpe carried the ball, and Mr. Thorpe ran 90 yards for a touchdown.

- **While touring the Philippines**, dancer Anna Pavlova and assistant ballet master Pianowski had an argument about Poland, which resulted in Mr. Pianowski becoming so angry that he broke his gold-headed walking stick across his knee and threw away the pieces. **Later**, the two made up, but the broken walking stick bothered Ms. Pavlova, so she asked her music director, Theodore Stier, to find a walking stick exactly like the one Mr. Pianowski had broken. **Nine months later**, in Nice, France, Mr. Stier found one. Ms. Pavlova purchased it and presented it to Mr. Pianowski, who at first thought the walking stick was a miracle.

- **When 10-year-old Alicia Marks was dancing on Dec. 27, 1920**, in South London, a young student was so overwhelmed by her performance that he spent the last of his allowance on some white chrysanthemums to give to her. The young student was Patrick Dolin, who later partnered Ms. Marks when they were using the names of Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin.

- Martial arts master Bruce Lee used visualization to get rid of negative thoughts. He would imagine himself writing down the negative thought on a piece of paper. Then he would imagine himself wadding up the piece of paper and setting fire to it. **After the piece of paper had burned**, the negative thought would no longer enter his mind.

- **According to comedian Tim Conway**, his father was bothered by the noise of a cuckoo clock, so to solve the problem, he taped shut the door through which the cuckoo would come. **At the top of each hour**, he would listen to the sound of the cuckoo trying to get through the door, and then he would smile.

- Heavyweight fighter Joe Louis was very generous with his money. **Whenever dancer Norma Miller needed money**, she knew that she could talk to him and get help. **One day**, she and her dance troupe were broke. They had a dance date coming up, and they needed to get their costumes out of the cleaners, but Ms. Miller had no money to pay the cleaners’ bill. She called Mr. Louis, and he came right over with some of his friends. Mr. Louis was wearing a loud tie, which his friends made fun of, so Mr. Louis took off the tie and dropped it in Ms. Miller’s lap, leaning over for a moment to whisper, “The money’s in the tie.”

## Use Commas to Separate the Items in a Series of Three or More

Use commas to separate the items in a series of three or more.

Ex: I like Sarah Silverman, Lenny Bruce, and Richard Pryor.

Do not use a comma to separate the items in a series of two.

Ex: I like Laurel and Hardy.

Here are examples of series of items:

- Elizabeth Alexander’s mother once said, “It’s not hard to lose weight. You just eat **no sugar, no carbohydrates, and half of everything else.**” Elizabeth’s little brother replied, “But there is nothing else.”

- When Randy, Judy Blume’s daughter, was a toddler, she used to mix together **soap, shampoo, and baby powder** while taking a bath and then pat her face with the goo, which she called “freckle juice.” Judy knew a good title when she heard it, and in 1971 she published *Freckle Juice*.

Here are examples of series of verbs:

- Ernest O. Flatt, choreographer of *Lorelei* and *It’s a Bird, It’s a Plane, It’s Superman* on Broadway, found an interesting way to think in the midst of the bedlam that creating a musical can be. He **went** into a corner, **looked** at the two walls, **and discovered** that he was able to think very clearly.

- Good deeds take various forms, ranging from saving someone from dying to saving someone from embarrassment. At the 2002 Winter Olympic Games, figure skater Sasha Cohen went through security checkpoint after security checkpoint, and at each checkpoint, her bag containing her skating dress and tights was **emptied, examined, and then refilled**. Unfortunately, when it was time for Sasha to get dressed for the competition shortly before going on the ice, she discovered that her tights were missing. Somehow, they had been left behind at a security checkpoint. Not enough time remained for her mother to go to their hotel to get a pair of tights, so Sasha thought that she would not be able to compete at the Olympics—no tights, no competition. Fortunately, another figure skater, Fumie Suguri, walked into the dressing room. She had finished competing and was ready to get into her street clothing. Sasha said, “Fumie! Can I *please* borrow your tights?” Fumie said, “Sure,” and stripped them off. Sasha had only a few minutes left to get ready, and she was shaking at the thought of almost not being able to compete. (In 2002, she finished fourth, and four years later, she won the silver medal.)

## Use a Comma or Commas to Set Off Parenthetical Elements

Set off parenthetical elements with commas.

She, however, is not afraid of them.

She, on the other hand, is not afraid of them.

We see, though, that she is small.

- Famous pianist Anton Rubinstein’s musical sense was, **of course**, well developed. Whenever he didn’t want to get out of bed, his wife knew that all she had to do was to go upstairs to the piano and play an unresolved chord. Mr. Rubinstein would jump out of bed, run upstairs to the piano, and play the finishing notes.

- Phyllis Diller found it easy to acquire experience as a comedian. She simply called the Red Cross and said, “I’m available for shows. Where do you want me?” There wasn’t any pay, **of course**, but the experience was valuable.

- When Oprah Winfrey was 14 years old, she wandered the streets of Chicago, homeless, and she needed help. Aretha Franklin, **on the other hand**, was a highly successful singer. One day, a limousine pulled up to a hotel and Ms. Franklin got out. Young Oprah saw her, ran up to her, and began pouring out her story. Before they reached the door of the hotel, Ms. Franklin had placed \$100 into Oprah’s hands.

- Comedian Will Rogers was attending church one day when the minister spoke about the church debt and urged everyone to contribute generously so the debt could be paid off. As the collection plate was being passed around, the minister joked, “If you can’t give anything, give a pleasant smile.” When the collection plate reached Mr. Rogers, he didn’t give any money, but instead grinned widely. The next morning, **however**, he sent a check to the minister. The check was big enough to pay off the entire debt owed by the church.

- As a very young financial writer—and the only woman financial writer—for the *New York Post*, Sylvia Porter went to a huge bankers’ convention, where she took many notes. Then she and the male reporters ran for the telephones so they could call in their articles to a rewrite man. However, when Ms. Porter was transferred to the rewrite man, she froze and was completely unable to speak—a common occurrence for young reporters. Fortunately, a male reporter for a rival publication saw what was happening, so he took her phone and called in her story for her. Ms. Porter says, “He was just wonderful. At that moment, I couldn’t have talked if my life depended on it.” Afterward, **of course**, Ms. Porter became an internationally famous financial writer.

## Use Commas or Other Punctuation to Set Off Speaker Tags

Set off speaker tags with a comma or other punctuation.

Speaker tags are short phrases such as “he said” or “she replied” or “David yelled” or “Sally asked.”

Bill asked, “How are you?”  
Sally replied, “I am well.”

Note: These sentences are also correct.

“How are you?” Bill asked.  
“What time is it?” the stranger asked.  
“Help!” he shouted.

- When World War II hero John F. Kennedy first entered politics, he became a United States Representative, and then he started campaigning for a seat in the Senate. While running for Senator, he campaigned in Fall River, Massachusetts, where many people were of French descent. Unfortunately, his Fall River manager, Ed Berube, made a notable mistake when he introduced Mr. Kennedy at the very first Fall River political meeting. Mr. Berube stood up and **said**, “Ladies and gentlemen, I’d like you to meet Congressman Joe Martin.” Not only did Mr. Berube get Mr. Kennedy’s name wrong, but Joe Martin was a Republican! Mr. Berube thought he would be fired, but Mr. Kennedy thought the mistake was funny and went ahead with his campaign speech, **saying**, “Maybe Ed would rather be working with Joe Martin, but I’d rather have him working for me.”

- Theatrical director Tyrone Guthrie once made a mistake in directing an actress in *Henry VIII*. Diana Wynyard was playing Queen Katherine, and Mr. Guthrie told her that she was saying a line wrong and to look it up. Later, they were rehearsing the scene again, and Ms. Wynyard said the line the same way she had said it previously. Once again, Mr. Guthrie told her that she was saying the line wrong and to look it up. Ms. Wynyard said, “I have looked it up. I am right, and you are wrong.” **Mr. Guthrie replied**, “In that case, I apologize and I have a very red face.”

- A teacher thought about having each of her students make up a list of the 10 greatest Americans, but then she decided that 10 was too obvious a number, so she instead asked her class to make up a list of the 11 greatest Americans. One boy spent longer than the others in making up his list, and she asked why he needed so much time. **The boy replied**, “I can’t decide on the fullback.”

- Ludwig van Beethoven comforted Baroness von Ertmann after the death of one of her children **by saying to her**, “We will now talk to each other in tones,” then playing the piano for over an hour for her. **The Baroness said later**, “He told me everything with his music, and at last brought me comfort.”

## Use a Comma and a Conjunction to Separate Two Independent Clauses

An independent clause is a clause that can be correctly punctuated as a complete sentence.

Ex: I like this, and she likes that.

Note: The comma goes before the conjunction (the connecting word).

- Judy Blume's series of *Fudge* books have been amazingly popular. Elliott, her grandson, inspired one of the *Fudge* books. They were eating in a restaurant at Key West, **and** Elliott asked his grandmother to buy him some wearable art from a street vendor. She told him that she didn't have any money, **so** he requested that she pay a visit to the nearest ATM machine. This inspired the book *Double Fudge*, in which Fudge becomes obsessed with money and with what money can buy.

- Johnny Logan was batting for the Braves when umpire Al Barlick called a strike on him. Mr. Logan disagreed with the call, **so** he took his bat and used it to draw a line in the dirt a few inches inside, which was where he thought the ball had been. Umpire Barlick did not say a word, **but** he took the bat from him and used it to write in the dirt, "\$50 fine." Then he went back to umpiring.

- While directing Joan Crawford for an episode of *Night Gallery*, Steven Spielberg worried that such a famous star wouldn't take direction, **but** absolutely no problem occurred. Nevertheless, to ensure that he stayed on Ms. Crawford's good side, he gave her a rose every day.

- Olga Preobrajenska was a very strong ballerina and teacher of ballet. As an old lady, she lived in a nursing home, **but** whenever she was fed up with the nurses, she stacked all the bedroom furniture against the door so that they couldn't come in and bother her.

- The Spanish pianist and conductor José Iturbi did not know English when he first arrived in England. At a cafe he wanted tea, **but** he was not able to make himself understood. He solved the problem by sitting at a piano and playing "Tea for Two."

- Joel Perry knows a very effective way of getting rid of bores. Whenever a conversation becomes uninteresting to him, he simply turns the conversation to sucker-footed bats, **and** the person who has been talking to him quickly goes away.

- During a church lesson on friendship, a woman said, "This is a good lesson. Friends. I'm glad I've got so many." Jerry Clower asked her how many friends she had, **and** she replied, "I reckon I've got a thousand." Mr. Clower then asked her how many of her friends she would wake up at 2 a.m. if she needed help, **and** she said, "Oh, I don't know anybody I'd do that to." Hearing this, Mr. Clower said, "Lady, you ain't got a friend in the world. Not a single friend to your name."

## Use a Dash or Dashes for an Abrupt Break in the Flow of a Sentence or Dialogue

Dashes are also used for emphasis.

Dashes are longer than hyphens:

Dash: —                      Hyphen: -

• Donna Delfino Dugay of Harper Woods, Michigan, grew up in California, where her family had a picnic at the beach when she was 11 years old. Her mother fixed each of the children a plate of fried chicken and potato salad, and then, Donna says, “When I looked up from my plate, my mother was fixing one more plate .... She turned away from us and walked over maybe 20 or 30 feet to where there was a man by himself. And he was picking his way through the trashcan. And my **mother—I** don’t know whether she just put the plate there or whether she touched him gently or whether she said a few **words—but** I remember him turning to her in a gesture of thankfulness.” Years later, when Donna asked her mother about this good deed, her mother claimed not to remember it; however, Donna says, “But for me, I remember it very well because for me, it was the touchstone for what good deeds became in my life.”

• Talk show host Oprah Winfrey is a member of a Big Sisters group, where she gives good advice to economically disadvantaged girls. For example, she tells them, “If you want affection, you don’t need a **baby—get** a kitten!”

• Maria Tallchief believes that her long years of intense physical activity as a ballerina resulted in her suffering from arthritis after she retired. Her pharmacist once asked her, “You’re now paying for all those **years—it** was worth it, wasn’t it?” Ms. Tallchief replied, “It certainly was.”

• Jazz violinist Joe Venuti had a wicked sense of humor. At a time of high unemployment, he telephoned 37 bass fiddle players and told them all that he had a job for them and to meet him at 8 p.m. Saturday at the corner of 52<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway. All the bass fiddlers arrived, carrying their musical instruments and clogging up pedestrian traffic. Mr. Venuti circled the block several times in a car, laughing at all the confusion he had created. Maybe his sense of humor wasn’t so wicked, after **all—he** paid every one of the bass fiddlers a night’s wages.

• Faron Young recorded Willie Nelson’s “Hello Walls” and had a huge hit. Because Mr. Nelson needed money, he offered to sell the song to Mr. Young for \$500. Mr. Young declined to buy the song, saying to Mr. Nelson, “You’re crazy! That song has already sold more than that. Here’s the five hundred. Pay me back when you have it.” Later, Mr. Nelson received his first royalty check for the **song—the** check was for \$20,000. Mr. Nelson immediately went in search of Mr. Young, and when he found him, he gave him a big kiss right on the mouth.

## Use Adjective-Forming Hyphens When Combining Two or More Words to Form an Adjective That Appears Before the Word It Modifies

When you combine two or more words to form an adjective that appears before the noun it modifies, use hyphens to connect the **adjective-forming words** together.

- In 1973, **African-American tennis star** Arthur Ashe played in a tournament in South Africa, which then practiced a form of segregation known as apartheid. Before he would play in the tournament, Mr. Ashe demanded that the audiences watching it be integrated.

- As an **11-year-old gymnast**, Shannon Miller finished second (behind Wendy Bruce) in the **all-around competition** in the Alamo Classic. Afterward, the **pre-teen Shannon** signed autographs for her adoring fans. In fact, when her father, Ron, went up to talk to her, other parents grew angry at him because they thought he was cutting in line.

- Greg Maddux played for the Chicago Cubs and the Atlanta Braves. As a **12-year-old Little Leaguer**, he was so gifted a pitcher that his coach would not allow him to pitch in a championship game, saying that allowing him to pitch would not be fair to the other team! (Greg played, but did not pitch, and his team won the championship.)

- Shannon Martin was six years old when she won an **age-12-and-under roping contest**, for which she was written up in the *Roping Sports News*. Because she hadn't learned to read yet, she kept saying to her father, "Come on, Dad. Read it again."

- When Canadian gymnast Elfi Schlegel was seven years old, she won her first competition. As a reward, she was given a trophy, while the **second-** and **third-place competitors** were given medals hanging from ribbons. Ms. Schlegel was so young that she was disappointed that she didn't win a medal necklace like her friends had.

Note: In the anecdote above, the word "second" has a suspended hyphen.

- While **husband-and-wife dancers** Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis were touring together with the Ziegfeld Follies, they occasionally found themselves short of money. Once they needed \$6 to make a short bus ride but Mr. Shawn had only \$5 on him. Ms. St. Denis came up with 95 cents in silver and two pennies. Mr. Shawn then searched his pockets and found three more cents. They then bought their tickets and boarded the bus, without even a cent on them. And yet they were making \$3,500 a week.

- Jane Schmidt awoke one Saturday morning to discover that her husband was making breakfast. To show that she appreciated his thoughtfulness, she sat on his lap and gave him a hug. Later, in the afternoon she and her husband were having a "heated discussion" when their **four-year-old son** walked in and said, "Mommy, try to remember how you felt when you were on Daddy's lap."



## How Do I Use *It's* And *Its*?

*its* = the possessive form of *it*

**Ex:** The dog played with its rawhide bone.

**Ex:** The fox left its burrow.

*it's* = the contraction of *it is*

**Ex:** It's raining.

**Ex:** It's the day before my paper is due.

*its'* = ?

*Its'* is not a word. An apostrophe should never follow *its*.

- When Clyde, Maya Angelou's son, grew up, he decided that he wanted to be called "Guy." Ms. Angelou told him about a river in Scotland that was named the Clyde River, but her son replied, "**It's** an O.K. name for a river, but my name is Guy." Ms. Angelou started calling him "Guy."

- Figure skater Christopher Bowman once performed in a costume consisting of a black velvet suit whose major features consisted of a white collar and plunging neckline. Reporters tried to find words sufficient to describe the features of the outfit, and *National* reporter Julie Vader said, "**It's** a shawl collar." When someone asked how she knew that, she explained, "I have a dress exactly like it."

- Every Navajo blanket has an opening in **its** border. Sometimes, the border will be dark, with one piece of white-colored yarn reaching to the edge of the blanket. This is done so that the weaver will keep her mind open and be able to learn more. When one's mind is closed, one is unable to learn.

- As a boy, André Eglevsky suffered from a cough that caused his family to travel to a healthier locale for him. However, young André learned that a cough does have **its** advantages. While traveling in a crowded train compartment, young André had a bad fit of coughing. As he coughed and coughed, the other passengers left the train compartment, finally leaving André alone with his mother, his nurse, and his sister.

- The former Soviet Union respected **its** ballerinas. During World War II, some Soviet soldiers freed a village from the invading Nazis. In a cottage, they found a photograph—damaged by bullet holes—of famed ballerina Galina Ulanova dancing *Swan Lake*. A Soviet soldier wrote her to say that they were taking good care of the photograph, and an orderly had been given the duty—during lulls in the fighting—of placing flowers in front of it each day.

## Use Italics for Emphasis

If you wish to emphasize a word or to show that a person emphasized a word in dialogue, italicize that word.

- The Nebraska Cornhuskers were losing a game, so coach Bernie Masterson sent in a sub with the orders, “Get in there and play as you’ve never played before.” Unfortunately, the sub promptly fumbled twice. Mr. Masterson pulled him out of the game and told him, “Perhaps you misunderstood me. I didn’t say play as *though* you’ve never played before.”

- Margot Fonteyn and the Sadler’s Wells Ballet once gave a disastrous performance on the slippery floor of Constitution Hall in front of President Harry Truman. Dancers came out on the stage, slipped and fell, and then, after the dance, with tears streaming from their eyes, returned to their dressing rooms, saying, “It’s impossible. I just couldn’t stand up.” Ms. Fonteyn was filled with confidence and thought, “That won’t happen to *me*,” but she too ended up falling on her face.

- Before World War II, Lucy Carrington Wertheimer ran an art gallery that concentrated on the work of then-modern artists. Often, she heard only criticism of these artists’ works, although many of them became well-known and well-respected artists later. One late afternoon, after she had heard nothing but criticism all day, a couple of tourists dropped into her gallery and made very admiring remarks about the works of art, although unfortunately they had no money with which to buy them. Ms. Wertheim was so happy to hear their positive comments—especially about a picture by Koller that they admired—that she gave it to them: “*Please* have it. *Please* take it away with you. *Do* go on enjoying it.”

- Danny Newman did PR for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, where he greatly appreciated subscribers—much more than he appreciated single-ticket buyers. One day, his office got a telephone call from a woman who thought that she had lost a diamond ring in the auditorium—although she might have lost it on the way either to or from the performance. Mr. Newman knew that soon the clean-up crew would arrive with powerful vacuums that would suck up the diamond ring—if it were in the auditorium. Therefore, he went to the dark auditorium with a flashlight. He didn’t see the diamond ring around the woman’s seat, but thinking that it might have been kicked by audience members down the raked floor, he kept looking. Fortunately, the diamond gleamed in the light cast by his flashlight, and he was able to return the diamond ring to the woman, telling her, “Here at Lyric we’ll do *anything* for our subscribers!” The woman and her husband made a large donation to the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

- Some audience members talk way too much during viewings at movie theaters. During the showing of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* movie tilted *First Contact*, a man kept talking, so a 10-year-old *Star Trek* fan turned around in her seat and asked him, “Jerk, can you *spell* ‘Prime Directive’?”

Note: Use italics for the titles of TV series and movies.

## Use Italics for Foreign Words

Put foreign words in italics.

- The paparazzi could be annoying to Audrey Hepburn. Once, a photograph of Audrey with her newly bearded son appeared in a magazine. Because of the new beard, the paparazzi had not recognized her son, so this caption appeared with the photograph: “*Audrey com il nuovo amore della sua vita.*” Translation: “Audrey with the new love of her life.” She said, “Well, apart from the ‘new,’ for once they got something right.” That was one media photograph she cut out and framed.

- After World War II, in which she worked for the Resistance and was awarded the *croix de guerre* and the Legion of Honor with the Rosette of the Resistance, Josephine Baker adopted 12 orphans of several nationalities (including Finland, Ivory Coast, Korea, and Algeria) and several religions (including Buddhist, Shinto, Catholic, Jewish, and Moslem) and brought them to live with her in France. She called the adopted orphans the Rainbow Tribe and hoped that they would be a model for world brotherhood.

- Arthur Mitchell of the Dance Theatre of Harlem used to go to schools for lecture demonstrations and say, “I don’t go much to discothèques anymore, so you’ve got to tell me what the latest dances are. Anybody want to come up and show me?” Once the students were up on stage demonstrating the newest dances, Mr. Mitchell would point out when appropriate, “Now you may call this step the ‘hustle’ or the ‘monkey’ or whatever, but what you were really doing was step, *plié*, step, *plié*,” and show the student what he meant. Occasionally, one of the students demonstrating the newest dance steps would have real talent, and Mr. Mitchell would give the student a dance scholarship.

- Dance teacher Carmelita Maracci was gifted. She was technically perfect and would demonstrate a dance move such as an *arabesque* to her astonished students, then invite them to try it. They were unable to reach her level of perfection, but they did the move better than they ever had before. One day, dancer Anton Dolan visited her classroom, so she stood up and unleashed a series of dance moves—*entrechats six* and *entrechats huit*—that he had not been able to do since he was 30 years old, then she sat down. After Mr. Dolan left, Ms. Maracci said, “It nearly sprung me, but I figured I had to do it. He’d heard I was a technician.”

- Even an elderly ballerina can remain in control of parts of her art. In 1959, while she was in her 70s, Tamara Karsavina demonstrated some steps of *batterie* at the barre to Antoinette Sibley, saying, “To get the full benefit from *battements frappés*, we must train our muscles to give a quick reaction. That means that the *dégagé* must be sharp and in the nature of a ‘hit out.’” The marveling Ms. Sibley embraced Ms. Karsavina and said, “Oh, Madame, I can never do it like that!”

## How Do I Use *Lie* And *Lay*?

Lay: *Lay* is a verb that means to put something or to place something. *Lay* needs a direct object.

Ex: **Lay** the book on the table.

Lie: *Lie* is a verb that means to rest on a surface or to recline on a surface. *Lie* does not need a direct object.

Ex: You have a fever, so **lie** down and rest.

Lay: *Lay* is also the past tense of *lie*.

Ex: Last night, she **lay** in bed.

- Theatrical maven George Abbott both wrote and directed plays. Therefore, he was very particular about language. When he was in his late 90s, he fell while on a golf course. His wife pleaded, “George! George! Get up, please. Don’t just lay there!” Mr. Abbott looked up at his wife and corrected her: “**Lie** there.”

- To illustrate his Caldecott Medal-winning picture-book, *Make Way for Ducklings*, Robert McCloskey needed to know what the underside of a duck’s bill looked like in flight. Therefore, Mr. McCloskey brought a live duck home, wrapped it in a towel, and put it on a couch in such a way that its head stuck out. Mr. McCloskey then **lay** underneath the duck’s head and sketched what he saw.

- Al Capp, creator of the comic strip *Li'l Abner*, had a wooden leg, which occasionally created embarrassing situations for him. One morning, at the Savoy Hotel in London, he **lay** in bed as a waiter took his breakfast order. Because Mr. Capp was well covered with bedding, the waiter could not tell that he had only one leg, but the waiter did notice the foot of Mr. Capp’s wooden leg, clothed in a shoe and a stocking, sticking out from under the bed. In fact, the waiter stared at it. Becoming aware that Mr. Capp was watching him stare at the leg, the waiter recovered his composure, finished taking Mr. Capp’s order, then said, “Very good, sir. And what will the other gentleman have?”

- Being critically and popularly successful as a novelist does not guarantee financial success. African-American writer Zora Neale Hurston, whose novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is studied in universities throughout the world today, worked as a maid in her old age to earn money. When she died in 1960, she had little money, and when she was buried, her grave was unmarked. Fortunately, another acclaimed African-American novelist, Alice Walker, and the literary scholar Charlotte Hunt refused to let Ms. Hurston **lie** in an unmarked grave. In 1973, they located what they hope is her grave and put a headstone on it.

## Where do Periods Go When I Use Parentheses?

*If a complete sentence is INside the parentheses, then put the period INside the parentheses.*

- *Guardian* journalist Oliver Burkeman once asked his 85-year-old grandmother whether her old age had brought her happiness in any way. She replied that her old age had made it easier to get rid of telemarketers. For example, if a telemarketer started telling her about “broadband internet,” she simply told the telemarketer, “I’m in my 80s!” The telemarketer would assume that she was too old to understand or care about the definition of broadband internet and so the telemarketer would hang up the telephone. **(Actually, she understands perfectly well what broadband internet is.)**

- As coach of the Minnesota Vikings, Bud Grant lay down rules about what his players could eat and where they could smoke. Once, he even spent 30 minutes drilling his players in how to stand at attention while the National Anthem was being played. Some of his players regarded such rules as being “Mickey Mouse” rules, so they would whistle “Mickey Mouse” when Mr. Grant’s back was turned. **(But once the team started winning—the once-losing Vikings won the league title only three years after he started coaching them—Mr. Grant earned the respect of his players.)**

- After graduating from Ohio State University, R.L. Stine, the author of the *Fear Street* and *Goosebumps* series of children’s books, taught at a high school in his native Columbus, Ohio. Whenever his students did good work throughout the week, he allowed them to read in class all day Friday. **(Mr. Stine frequently spent his Fridays in class reading comic books.)**

*If a complete sentence is NOT inside the parentheses, then put the period OUTside the parentheses.*

- A dog named Max stopped by stable manager Liz Cochane’s home one day and stayed. Liz says, “He’s good at communicating what he wants. **He will stare intently at a door, willing it to open (often it does), or at a potato chip, willing it to fall into his mouth (often it does).**” Of course, he rewards Liz with love. A woman whom Liz knows says, “I only wish my husband would look at me the way Max looks at Liz.”

- **Kip Keino won gold medals in the Olympics in both 1968 (1500-meter race) and 1972 (3000-meter steeplechase).** He never made much money from his running—approximately \$20,000—but he used it wisely. He returned to his native Kenya, where he bought land and a house and started an orphanage. Another Olympic medal-winner, Native American Billy Mills, met him in the 1980s. At that time, Kip and his orphanage were taking care of 68 children, and 100 orphans had already grown up and gone into the world to lead their adult lives. As of 2007, Mr. Keino was still taking care of orphans.

## How Do I Use *Principal* And *Principle*?

**Principal:** the head of a high school or an elementary school (noun); chief or foremost in importance (adjective)

Ex: The **principal** is a **pal**.

Ex: He is our **principal** scorer in the basketball team.

**Principle:** a basic truth, a rule, a standard, a moral standard

Ex: The **principles** of economics are difficult to understand.

- As a young man, Thomas Beecham became estranged from his father, and he did not see him or other members of his family for many years. While he and some members of his orchestra were touring the buildings of a women's college, a young lady came up to him and gave him a hug. This shocked Mr. Beecham, who told the **principal** of the college, "What delightful customs you have in your college, Madam, but may I ask who this charming young lady is?" The **principal** replied, "She is your youngest sister." Mr. Beecham had not seen her for 10 years.

- When Muhammad Ali was still known as Cassius Clay, he almost did not graduate from high school because of his poor grades. However, Atwood Wilson, the **principal** of his high school, wanted him to graduate, in part because of Mr. Clay's growing fame as a boxer. Mr. Wilson stated, "One day our greatest claim to fame is going to be that we knew Cassius Clay or taught him. Do you think that I'm going to be the **principal** of a school that Cassius Clay didn't finish?"

- As a radical who broke new ground in art, Mary Cassatt rejected some things that many artists accept. After she was informed that she had won a \$300 Walter Lippincott Prize for work shown in the 1904 exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, she turned down the prize, writing, "Of course it is very gratifying to know that a picture of mine was selected for a special honor. I, however, who belong to the founders of the Independent Exhibition, must stick to my **principles**, our **principles**, which were, no jury, no medals, no awards."

- Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese Consul-General in Bordeaux, rescued thousands of Jews from the Holocaust by directly disobeying his country's orders and giving visas to Jews so that they could escape to freedom. A devout Roman Catholic, Mr. Mendes knew that he was risking his career, his reputation, and his own money by rescuing Jews. However, he said, "I cannot allow these people to die. Our constitution says that the religion or the politics of a foreigner shall not be used to deny refuge in Portugal. I have decided to follow this **principle**. Even if I am discharged, I can only act as a Christian, as my conscience tells me. If I am disobeying orders, I would rather be with God against men than with men against God." The Jews used the Portuguese visas to escape to neutral Spain.

## Use Quotation Marks for Dialogue

When you quote word for word what a person says, enclose that person's words in quotation marks.

- Movie critic Gene Siskel once took his young daughters, Kate and Callie, to an animated film for children. Unfortunately, the movie was not very good. After the movie, he asked them their opinion of it. One of his daughters said, **"I didn't like it, daddy."** Mr. Siskel replied, **"Honey, you've just made me the proudest pop in the world."**

- Ali Liebegott is not a fan of poverty. She says, **"I don't really believe in the myth of being poor but happy. At the poorest times in my life I wasn't happy. I was just hungry. And the poorest times in my life can't even compare to the poorest times of most people in the world."** Still, people romanticize poverty, sometimes with good reason. She remembers when her parents were arguing over cooking utensils, with her father wanting a special bowl. Her mother told her, **"Your father doesn't remember the days we were so poor we were making dinner in the coffeepot because we didn't have a pan to cook in."** Ali says, **"I love to imagine my parents as newlyweds, all jacked up on new love cooking dinner in the coffeepot."**

- In 1952, the Oklahoma Sooners had a wonderful football team, but way too many fumbles, especially in the first half, led to a loss against Notre Dame, although the Sooners were favored to win. At halftime, an Oklahoma drum major threw a baton high in the air, but missed catching it when it came down, and it tumbled crazily on the ground. A fan told Oklahoma coach Bud Wilkinson, **"I see you coach the band, too."**

- Violinist Josef Gingold had a good sense of humor. Once he played with the NBC Concert Orchestra so successfully that one of his more competitive colleagues was somewhat depressed. Mr. Gingold told the colleague, **"Cheer up—it wasn't that good."**

- Django is a dog that dog trainer Liz Teal rescued from an ASPCA adoption van, and then taught to work with developmentally disabled and/or mentally challenged children. Ms. Teal has learned to trust Django. While they were visiting some developmentally challenged children, Ms. Teal announced that she would allow every child to brush Django. When she thought that every child had brushed Django, she said, **"Django, let's go!"** But Django didn't go to her. Instead, he went to one remaining child who hadn't yet had a chance to brush him. Now, Ms. Teal asks Django if they are done instead of saying, **"Let's go."**

- In chapter 1 of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom gets out of being whipped by his Aunt Polly by exclaiming, **"My! Look behind you, aunt!"** She does look behind her, and Tom escapes over the backyard fence. When Mark Twain's 13-year-old daughter Suzy wrote a biography of her famous father, she wrote about herself and her sister Clara, **"Clara and I are sure papa played the trick on Grandma about the whipping, that is related in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*."** In his *Autobiography*, Mr. Twain wrote, **"Suzy and Clara were quite right about that."**

## The American Style is Put Commas and Periods Inside Quotation Marks

The British style is to put commas and periods outside quotation marks, while the American style is put commas and periods inside quotation marks.

### *The American Style*

- Geri Jewell has cerebral palsy, but she didn't let it stop her from becoming a professional comedian. The first time she appeared at the Comedy Store she wore a T-shirt she had made that said, "I'm Not Drunk. I Have Cerebral **Palsy**." She then told the audience, "Each one of these letters cost thirty cents, you guys. This is one time I wish I had polio **instead**." The crowd loved her.

- Hal Lebovits used to be a Cleveland sports columnist, and before that he was a football referee. In one game, he threw a player out of the game, and after the game, the boy's father—a big bruiser—looked him up and asked, "Why'd you throw my boy out of the game?" Mr. Lebovits explained that the boy had become frustrated and had thrown a punch. The boy's father thought a moment, then said, "Takes after his **mother**," and left.

- Kids are kids, even when they are the kids of celebrities. Actor Eric McCormack and his wife, nee Janet Holden, have a son named Finnegan. When he was six years old and in kindergarten, he went to the set of his dad's TNT sitcom, *Trust Me*, where he was able to watch him film a scene. His dad warned him that in the scene he would kiss a woman, and Finnegan said, "That's **gross**."

- Groucho Marx once asked Melinda, his little daughter, what she did at nursery school. She replied, "Oh, Daddy, all we do is paint and go to the **toilet**." Groucho called this "the most accurate description of a nursery school that's ever been **uttered**."

- On Christmas Eve of 1989, the Detroit Lions played the Atlanta Falcons. In this game, played on the final day of the regular season, Detroit's Barry Sanders, playing his first season as a pro, needed 169 yards to become the National Football League's leading rusher. With one minute left in the game, and Detroit leading 31-24, Mr. Sanders needed only 11 more yards to become the leading rusher of the year. However, when coach Wayne Fontes asked Mr. Sanders if he wanted to go back into the game and become the leading rusher, he replied, "Coach, let's just win it and go **home**." Throughout his career, Mr. Sanders has always been more concerned about winning games than breaking records.

- Some preachers at a restaurant were served the wrong dessert—watermelon spiked with alcohol. Learning of the mistake, the maitre d'hotel asked a waiter to get the dessert back if the preachers hadn't already started eating it. However, the waiter reported that the preachers had already started eating the dessert. "In that **case**," said the maitre d'hotel, "do they like it?" "They didn't **say**," replied the waiter. "They were too busy putting the seeds in their **pockets**."



## Use Quotation Marks for Words That are Used Ironically

When words are used literally, they mean what they say.

When words are used ironically, they do not mean what they say.

To indicate that a word is used ironically, put it in quotation marks.

- Henry Thornton was an actor at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was once in a play where he was supposed to hand over a letter which held the key to the plot, then die. Unfortunately, he forgot about the letter one day and **“died”** before handing it over. Another actor on stage whispered, “Mr. Thornton, the letter! The letter!” Hearing him, Mr. Thornton came to life again and said, “One thing I had forgot through a multiplicity of business. Give this letter to my father. It will explain all,” then he died again.

Note: The word “died” is used ironically because the actor did not really die, but only pretended to die.

Note: When referring to words as words (the word “died”) put the word in quotation marks or italicize the word (the word *died*).

- Late in his life, Wilson Mizner, who had been a scoundrel for much of his life, gave away a lot of money. Each day, Mr. Mizner went to the Brown Derby, in which he was a silent partner, with a roll of bills. Each day, down-on-their-luck friends and acquaintances came by to ask for **“temporary assistance.”** Each night, Mr. Mizner went home with empty pockets. According to his friend Stanley Rose, Mr. Mizner felt that a scorekeeper in Heaven had been keeping track of his misdeeds from earlier in his life, when he had misappropriated other people’s money. By giving **“temporary assistance”** to friends and acquaintances, Mr. Mizner hoped to pay back his earlier misappropriations.

Note: The phrase “temporary assistance” is used ironically because most likely the people getting handouts from Mr. Mizner will continue to need handouts.

- At Cornell, an architecture professor worried that a crack in the ceiling of his lecture room would someday develop into a fallen ceiling. One day, he walked into the lecture room and saw that his fear had been realized—a big hole was in the ceiling, and chunks of plaster were lying on the floor. The professor rushed out to get some maintenance workers. When he returned with them, they saw only the regular crack in the ceiling—no gaping hole and no chunks of plaster on the floor. Here’s what had happened. Hugh Troy, an architecture student at Cornell, knew of the professor’s worries, so he had created a painting of a hole and even made it three-dimensional by gluing bits of plaster to the edges of the **“hole.”** Mr. Troy fastened the painting to the ceiling at night, and put chunks of plaster on the floor, then after the professor had discovered that the ceiling had **“fallen”** and left to get help, Mr. Troy cleaned up the mess and removed the painting.

## Keep Related Words Together

Words that go together should be kept together.

Often, the word “only” modifies a number. When that happens, keep the word “only” and the number together.

- Diamond Jim Brady loved good food. He once ate a fish sauce in a restaurant in Paris and loved it. Unfortunately, the recipe was the property of **only one** restaurant in the world, and that restaurant’s chef guarded the recipe and kept it secret. But Diamond Jim wanted the recipe, and Charles Rector, the owner of Diamond Jim’s favorite restaurant in New York City, wanted to keep his biggest-eating—and biggest-spending—customer happy. Therefore, he took his son out of law school and sent him to Paris to work at the restaurant that had the secret fish sauce. After several months, he was entrusted with the recipe, memorized it, and then returned home. Diamond Jim met him at the pier and yelled at him while he was still on the boat, “Have you got the sauce?” That evening, Diamond Jim ate nine plates of fish with the special sauce, then told Mr. Rector, “If you poured some of that sauce over a Turkish towel, I believe I could eat all of it.” (Don’t believe that a restaurant owner would go to so much trouble to keep a customer happy? Believe it—according to Mr. Rector, Diamond Jim was his “best 25 customers”!)

- As a very young ballet student in the Soviet Union, Natalia Makarova flirted with a handsome boy by saying that she could eat six quarts of ice cream. However, when she tried to do it, she disgraced herself—she was able to eat **only four** quarts.

- Visualization can aid in healing. Sam Brodsky, a martial arts expert, once performed a demonstration before his students. He attempted to break nine one-inch concrete slabs with his bare hands; unfortunately, he injured his hand while breaking **only seven** of the slabs. His doctor examined the hand, then said that after a year of healing, he would be able to regain **only partial** use of it. Each night, Mr. Brodsky imagined that his hand was a building site and that a horde of little men was working all night long with mortar and cement to rebuild his hand. Each morning, he imagined a whistle going off after the little men had worked all night on his hand. The next time Mr. Brodsky saw his doctor, the doctor said that the healing process was remarkable, but that his knuckles were frozen together, creating a stiff hand. Therefore, Mr. Brodsky changed the visualization process and imagined the little men working with files and oil to sand the rough edges off his knuckles and lubricate them. The visualization worked. Instead of a year, the healing process took **only ten** weeks. Six months after that, Mr. Brodsky again attempted to break nine one-inch concrete slabs with his hand and succeeded.

- Olympic-gold-medal-winning speed skater Bonnie Blair started skating when she was **only two years old**. Often, children that young wear what are known as “double-runners” when they skate—instead of having just one blade per skate, each skate has two, placed about one inch apart, in order to make it easier for the child to balance. However, young Bonnie didn’t get that advantage. Instead, her family got the smallest regular skates they could find and Bonnie learned to skate in them.

## Use a Semicolon to Join Two Closely Related Independent Clauses

Note: An independent clause is a clause that can be correctly punctuated as a sentence.

Two closely related independent clauses may be joined with a semicolon.

**Ex:** The Yankees are in first place; the Mets are in last place.

Two independent clauses may be joined with a semicolon, a connecting word or phrase such as *however*, *moreover*, or *as a result*, and a comma.

**Ex:** The Yankees are in first place; however, the Mets are in last place.

- Landon Ronald was a conductor in England who occasionally worked with Thomas **Beecham**; **however**, eventually Mr. Ronald seemed to disappear from the music scene. Mr. Beecham shared the same doctor as Mr. Ronald, so he took occasion to ask the doctor if anything serious had happened to him. The doctor replied, “Not at all. It is only a case of wine, women, and song, and I have told him that he must make up his mind to drop one of them.” The next time Mr. Beecham saw Mr. Ronald, he asked him which of the three he had decided to drop. Mr. Ronald replied, “Song.”

- Donna Delfino Dugay of Harper Woods, Michigan, grew up in California, where her family had a picnic at the beach when she was 11 years old. Her mother fixed each of the children a plate of fried chicken and potato salad, and then, Donna says, “When I looked up from my plate, my mother was fixing one more plate .... She turned away from us and walked over maybe 20 or 30 feet to where there was a man by himself. And he was picking his way through the trashcan. And my mother—I don’t know whether she just put the plate there or whether she touched him gently or whether she said a few words—but I remember him turning to her in a gesture of thankfulness.” Years later, when Donna asked her mother about this good deed, her mother claimed not to remember **it**; **however**, Donna says, “But for me, I remember it very well because for me, it was the touchstone for what good deeds became in my life.”

- Cassius Clay, who later changed his name to Muhammad Ali, was a poor student and graduated from high school with a D- average near the bottom of his class. (He later claimed, “I only said I was the **greatest**; I never said I was the smartest.”) Some teachers didn’t think he should be allowed to graduate, but the principal, Atwood Wilson, felt differently and argued that Cassius would be a success in life: “Why, in one night, he’ll make more money than the principal and all you teachers make in one year. If every teacher here fails him, he’s still not going to fail.” When Cassius’ name was announced at the commencement ceremony, his fellow students gave him a standing ovation.

## How Do I Use *Their*, *There*, and *They're*?

there = a place

they're = they are

their = possessive of "they"

- Many very young children don't realize that what happens on stage is not real. At Christmas, Ernestine Schumann-Heink played the role of the Witch in the opera "Hansel and Gretel" while her children were very small, and when her character was put in the oven, her young son Ferdinand cried out, "**They're** putting my mother in the oven and burning her up!" Fortunately, Ms. Schumann-Heink came out of the other side of the oven quickly, and little Ferdinand saw that she was all right.

- Young children tend to believe whatever you tell them. Quaker humorist Tom Mullen once showed his children the place where he had been born. The house had long been torn down, and at the location where the house had stood was an intersection with a flashing yellow light, so Mr. Mullen told his children that the flashing yellow light had been placed **there** in his honor. Afterward, whenever his children saw an intersection with a flashing yellow light, they asked, "Who was born **there**?"

- French-cooking expert Julia Child and her husband seldom got **their** Christmas cards done in time to mail, so instead of Christmas cards they would send Valentine's Day cards to **their** friends. One card shows the happy couple taking a bubble bath together.

- Many colleges recruited Wilt Chamberlain to play basketball for them, including some schools that asked if he wished to be the first African-American player on **their** team. Mr. Chamberlain always responded, "I'd rather be the second."

- Opera singers go to extremes to avoid colds. In February of 1992, Luciano Pavarotti announced at a press conference in Scotland that he was going on a diet to lose the excess pounds that he had carried around for much of his adult life. All reporters were required to stand behind a line made of white tape so that they would not get close enough to Mr. Pavarotti to give him **their** germs.

- When NBA star Isiah Thomas was growing up, his father taught Isiah and the rest of his seven sons a lesson: stick together. He used to hold seven sticks in his hand and tell his sons, "It's a lot harder to break seven sticks together than one at a time." Unfortunately, Isiah's parents separated. Fortunately, his mother was very capable of taking care of her children. Some gang members showed up at the Thomas house one day and told Mrs. Thomas, "We want your boys. **They're** old enough to join us." Mrs. Thomas replied, "There ain't but one gang in this family—the Thomas gang." She also showed the gang members a sawed-off shotgun and told them, "If you don't get off my porch, I'll blow you across the expressway." The gang members got off her porch.

## When Do I Use Italics for Titles?

Use italics for the titles of books, long pieces of choreography, newspapers, plays, and movies.

In general, the titles of long works of art should be italicized.

### *Title of a Book*

- When Sook Nyul Choi, author of *Year of Impossible Goodbyes*, arrived in the United States, she found it difficult to communicate in English instead of her native Korean. For the first couple of years she lived in the United States, she says, “My Korean-English/English-Korean dictionary never left my hands.”

### *Title of a Long Piece of Choreography*

- The Soviet Union respects its ballerinas. During World War II, some Soviet soldiers freed a village from the invading Nazis. In a cottage, they found a photograph—damaged by bullet holes—of famed ballerina Galina Ulanova dancing *Swan Lake*. A Soviet soldier wrote her to say that they were taking good care of the photograph, and an orderly had been given the duty—during lulls in the fighting—of placing flowers in front of it each day.

### *Title of a Movie*

- Agnes de Mille’s father was William de Mille, a playwright, scriptwriter, and movie director. (He was also the brother of director Cecil B. De Mille.) As a writer and director, he understood how to reveal character. For example, in the movie *Nice People* a streetwalker eats dinner at a gentleman’s house. Before she begins to eat, she carefully cleans the silverware with her napkin—something that would be a necessity in the greasy spoon restaurants where she would normally eat.

### *Title of a Newspaper*

- In 2008, Darlene, the daughter of *Tucson Weekly* columnist Tom Danehy, was involved in a contest with Jessica, one of her college volleyball teammates. They competed to see who could drink Starbucks coffee in the greatest number of states. One rule is that the person has to actually be in the state. Another rule is that the person has to keep the Starbucks receipt as evidence. Darlene once went to Vermont to buy Starbucks coffee, having been disappointed by missing Vermont on a previous trip to New England. Her father went with her, and while he was eating a roast beef sandwich, a female vegetarian asked him, “How can you eat that?” He replied, “The bread makes it difficult. I wish there were some way I could hold the beef together with two pork chops.” She laughed, then moved to another, further-away seat.

### *Title of a Long Play, and Title of a Newspaper*

- Actor John Barrymore married poetess Michael Strange, then appeared in her play *Clair de Lune*. Many critics wondered why Mr. Barrymore would appear in such a macabre piece, but only Mr. Whittaker of the *Chicago Tribune* headlined his review “For the Love of Mike.”

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### *Title of a Book*

- A visitor to the house owned by the parents of Yoshiko Uchida, author of *Journey to Topaz*, slipped and fell down the front steps outside. Therefore, her mother took action and painted PLEASE WATCH YOUR STEP on the four steps—one word per step. Unfortunately, while painting, she put the words in the wrong order, so that visitors read STEP YOUR WATCH PLEASE while descending the steps.

### *Title of a Movie*

- When she was growing up, ballerina Darci Kistler was asked to appear in a scene in the movie *The Turning Point*, which starred Mikhail Baryshnikov. Unfortunately, as she and her family discovered when they went to see the movie, Darci's scene was cut.

### *Title of a Play*

- While the Old Vic Company was performing *Twelfth Night* in Philadelphia, problems arose because members of the cast frequently got lost between the dressing rooms and the stage in the large, unfamiliar theater, forcing the other cast members to improvise while waiting for an absent actor. While Judi Dench was onstage as Olivia, she said her line, "Get ye all three into the box-tree. Malvolio's coming down the walk." Actor John Neville made her laugh when he whispered, "Wanna bet?"

### *Title of a Long Dance*

- Monica Lera, a former member of the Opera House Ballet, remembers a time when she and other dancers played children in Act II in *La Bohème* and were required to carry food onto the stage. Because the food was real, tasty, and free, and because the dancers were living on low wages, they nibbled on the food before bringing it in, reasoning that no one in the audience could see that a bite or two had been taken out of a slice of ham or a cream cake. Of course, the singers on stage did notice, and in a low voice would joke to the dancers: "The rats have been at this. I shall complain to the management."

## When Do I Use Quotation Marks for Titles?

In general, use quotation marks for the titles of short works of art, such as a short story, a short poem, a song (as opposed to an album), and a single episode of a TV series.

### *Title of a Short Story*

- As a young man, Robert Bloch was a fan of the horror writer H.P. Lovecraft and wrote him letters, to which Mr. Lovecraft responded. They struck up a friendship, and later, Mr. Bloch started writing his own horror stories and novels—he wrote *Psycho*, on which the Alfred Hitchcock film is based. His story “**The Shambler from the Stars**” features a character based on Mr. Lovecraft, who was amused because the character dies in the story. Returning the favor, Mr. Lovecraft created a character based on Mr. Bloch—Robert Blake in “**The Hunter of the Dark**”—and killed him off.

Note: *Psycho* is the title of a long work of art—a novel—so it is in italics.

### *Title of a Song*

- Early in her career, Marian Anderson, an African-American contralto, sang for Finnish composer Jean Sibelius in his villa. After her song, Mr. Sibelius called for champagne rather than coffee, and he complimented her in a toast by saying that the roof of his home was too low for her voice. Later, he wrote the song “**Solitude**” and dedicated it to her.

- During World War II, folksinger Woody Guthrie joined the Merchant Marines. While serving on the *William Floyd*, he visited Arzew, in North Africa, where he saw many starving Algerians begging for food. He gave them much of his food, collected such things as soap (and more food) for them, and played music for their children in the center of town. (Mr. Guthrie regarded music as a weapon to be used against fascism. He wrote a song titled “**Talking Hitler’s Head Off Blues**,” and for a while his guitar displayed these words he had painted on it: “THIS MACHINE KILLS FASCISTS.”)

- Mark Evanier, a blogger at <newsfromme.com>, ate frequently at the Farmers Market in Los Angeles. One day near Christmas, as a group of four young people were strolling around and singing carols, he noticed Mel Tormé, aka the Velvet Fog, sitting at a table eating an English muffin, drinking coffee, and reading *The New York Times*. Therefore, he motioned the carolers to come to him and told them that Mel Tormé was sitting at the nearby table. Because they were so young, they didn’t know who Mel Tormé was, so he explained that Mr. Tormé was a co-writer of “**The Christmas Song**,” which begins with “Chestnuts roasting on an open fire ....” After hearing this, the carolers approached Mr. Tormé’s table and started to sing “**The Christmas Song**.” With a big smile, Mr. Tormé got up to sing a few lines near the end of the song. The head of the carolers had a worried expression on his face as he wondered whether this short, fat, elderly man could sing, but of course the Velvet Fog sang perfectly. Everyone sang the last line of the song together, and nearby auditors broke into spontaneous applause. The leader of the carolers told Mr. Tormé, “You know, you’re not a bad singer.” Of course, Mr. Tormé realized that the leader of the carolers had little idea who he was, so he said, “Well, I’ve actually made a few records in my day....” “Really,” the leader of the carolers said. “How many?” Mr. Tormé replied, “Ninety.”

## How Do I Use *To*, *Two*, *Too*?

“To” is used in infinitives: to walk, to talk. “To” is also a proposition.

“Two” is a number: one, two, three.

“Too” means “excessively” or “very”: too hot, too hard, too soft. “Too” can also mean “also”—I’m going, too.

- A Notre Dame tradition at the end of spring training was a game between the old-timers and the new varsity. The old-timers were varsity players who were graduating as well as some former players who were now alumni. At age 35, Notre Dame coach Knute Rockne, who had played for the school, decided to put himself in the game for **two** plays. For the first play, all of the players on his side deliberately refrained from blocking, allowing all 11 players on the new varsity **to** tackle him. Knute picked himself up, laughed, and on the next play threw a pass for very good yardage, then took himself out of the game. This is what he did in real games, **too**. He would not take a player out of the game after the player had made a bad play; instead, he would let the player make a good play, and then he would take him out. That way, he boosted the player’s confidence rather than destroyed it.

- As a boy, George W. Bush used profanity—something that his mother, Barbara, did not like. One day, they were playing golf. George hit a bad shot on the first hole, and he swore out loud. His mother told him not **to** use profanity, but George swore out loud on the second hole, **too**. Barbara ordered him to leave, and George sat in the car while Barbara and a friend (actually, George’s friend) played the remaining 16 holes of golf.

- Greg “the Bull” Luzinski was a big man and a major hitter in the major leagues. Umpire Eric Gregg once called a strike on him, and when the next pitch went across the plate at roughly the same spot, he called, “That’s **two**.” The Bull raised the bat above his head and asked, “**Two** what?” Mr. Gregg looked at the baseball bat and the Bull’s massive build and replied, “**Too** high.”

- Charlie Grimm, manager of the Chicago Cubs, once got angry with umpire Charlie Moran—so did several of his players. As his players stormed out **to** argue the call with umpire Moran, Mr. Grimm told them, “The first person **to** lay a finger on this blind old man will be fined 50 bucks.”

- When opera singer Joan Hammond returned **to** Australia for a visit, **two** of her nieces asked for her autograph—in fact, they each gave her a piece of paper and asked that she sign each piece of paper ten times. When she had finished, they said, “Goody! Now we can swap these for twenty tadpoles!”

- Some young children are surprised that older adults have parents, **too**. Librarian Jeanette C. Smith once made friends with a 10-year-old girl who often came into the Minnesota public library where she worked. One day, Ms. Smith’s mother visited her, leaving as the 10-year-old girl arrived. The 10-year-old girl asked who the visitor had been, and when Ms. Smith explained that the visitor had been her mother, the 10-year-old girl exclaimed, “YOU HAVE A MOTHER!”



## How Do I Use *Than* and *Then*?

“Than” is used in comparisons: better than, more than.

“Then” is a time word: If this happens, then that will happen.

- Part of Rudolf Bing’s job as a manager in opera was keeping singers happy. While working at Glyndebourne in England, he knew that occasionally Salvatore Baccaloni, who sang the part of Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, would angrily burst into his office and start shouting. Mr. Bing did not understand Italian, but he would listen until Mr. Baccaloni stopped shouting, **then** he would give him a £5 note. This always made Mr. Baccaloni happy.

- In some ways, mystery writer Agatha Christie was old fashioned. Whenever she filled out a form that asked for her occupation, she wrote “married woman” rather **than** “author,” because she regarded her writing as a sideline, rather than a career.

- Comedian Jerry Lewis once boasted about a one iron he owned that he said was the best ever made. Pro golfer Sam Snead heard the boast, and he invited Mr. Lewis to try his one iron. Mr. Lewis tried it, hit the ball further **than** with his own one iron, **then** attempted to buy the one iron from Mr. Snead. On hearing the first offer—\$100—Mr. Snead said, “No, no.” On hearing the second offer—\$200—Mr. Snead said, “No, losing that club would ruin my whole bag.” On hearing the third offer—\$500—Mr. Snead said, “Run with it before I change my mind,” and so Mr. Lewis handed over the money and took off running across the golf course.

- Comedian Bob Smith’s parents accepted his homosexuality. His father, a retired state trooper, once attended an Annual Policemen’s Ball where some men sitting with him and his wife (Sue) began to talk about “fags.” His father said, “You know, my son’s gay. And it takes a lot more guts for him to deal with being gay **than** it does for jerks like you to sit there talking with your mouths full and your heads empty. And I don’t have to listen to it. C’mon, Sue. Let’s sit somewhere else.”

- Gracie Allen could make a stand when a stand was necessary. A dry cleaner ruined a dress that she had taken to him, but he refused to pay for the dress. That evening, in the middle of the vaudeville act she performed with her husband, George Burns, she told the audience about the dry-cleaning incident and recommended that they not patronize that particular establishment, **then** she went on with the act. The next day, the dry cleaner paid her the money for the dress he had ruined.

- The very dignified Greer Garson guested on Jimmy Durante’s program. She didn’t know anything about comedy and asked Mr. Durante what would happen if the show wasn’t funny. Mr. Durante replied, “**Then**, Miss Garson, we’re all gonna be in the toilet together.”

- Lucia Rijker is a European boxing champion whose nickname is “Lady Ali.” After winning a boxing match against a tough opponent, she ran over to her trainer and tried to jump into his arms, but he was a new trainer, and he was much smaller **than** her old trainer. So, to celebrate her victory, she picked him up and lifted him over her head.

## Use “Who” (Subject) and “Whom” (Object) to Refer to People

Use “who” and “whom” to refer to people. “Who” is a subject. “Whom” is an object.

- People get dogs for various reasons, including to replace a deceased pet. One older man came to the Friends of County Animal Shelters (FOCAS) to look for a puppy that was born after March 20. He asked Peggy, a volunteer there, “Do you believe in reincarnation?” Peggy replied that she was willing to believe in a lot of things if it would persuade the man to adopt a pet. The older man explained that his dog had died on March 20. Of course, he had grieved over the death of his pet, but an angel had appeared to him in a dream and told him that he would have to look for his dog but that his dog would return to him. “So,” said the man, “here I am to start looking.” He looked at several dogs, and one dog that he looked at looked at him. He said, “There she is!” Peggy pointed out that the dog was three or four years old and definitely not a puppy, but the man was satisfied. When the cage door opened, the dog ran to the man, **who** said, “I’ll take this one; this one is mine.” Outside, after the adoption forms had been filled out, the man and the dog walked to his car. The dog waited by the passenger’s side until the man opened it, and then she jumped in the car. The man and the dog then drove away together.

- A dog named Max stopped by stable manager Liz Cochane’s home one day and stayed. Liz says, “He’s good at communicating what he wants. He will stare intently at a door, willing it to open (often it does), or at a potato chip, willing it to fall into his mouth (often it does).” Of course, he rewards Liz with love. A woman **whom** Liz knows says, “I wish my husband would look at me the way Max looks at Liz.”

- Much of Jack Benny’s humor came from his writers, but at least once he got off a funny ad-lib. During a radio show with Fred Allen—**who** was funny with or without writers—Mr. Allen kept peppering Mr. Benny with comic ad-lib insults. Finally, Mr. Benny protested, “You wouldn’t say those things if my writers were here!”

- Goodman Ace was a comedian of the 1950s **who** had his own highly successful radio show and worked as a writer on Milton Berle’s TV show. He knew many of the famous comedians of his day. While walking with Groucho Marx in New York, the two passed a wedding. Groucho, **who** had been divorced twice, tapped the bride on her shoulder and said softly, “I tried it twice—it’s no good.”

- Of course, identical triplets are very similar, but they are not so similar that family pets can’t tell them apart. For example, Edgar, the dog owned by the family of a set of identical triplets—**who** are named Darren, David, and Donny—can tell them apart. Their mother can tell Edgar to fetch David, and Edgar knows immediately **whom** to fetch.

- A new museum was being built right on the rim of the Grand Canyon, one of the most majestic sights in the world. A bus dropped off several tourists—**who** ignored the Grand Canyon and instead watched the cement mixer.

## How Do I Use *Your* And *You're*?

*your* = possessive form of *you*

**Ex:** Your coat is in that closet.

**Ex:** Your car is at the carwash.

*you're* = contraction of *you are*

**Ex:** You're standing in the rain.

**Ex:** You're an incredibly sensitive woman.

- Comedian Lewis Black's mother was a substitute teacher in city classrooms, some of them very tough. Usually, a substitute teacher would have a rough time of it, but not Mrs. Black because she had a very sharp tongue and a mastery of sarcasm. One tough kid asked her why he had to learn the subject she was teaching, and she replied, "Because when you are pumping my gas at the Sears Station, where you have been for 10 years because you didn't get **your** diploma, I don't want to waste any breath saying, 'I told you so.'"

- Some lessons need to be learned at exactly the right time. For example, Ralph Nader's mother used to teach her children about health when they were ill. She told Ralph, "When you were sick, I gave you **your** lessons on health. There was no more receptive time than when you were in the middle of chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, and measles." Of course, the lessons she taught were about such things as eating the right foods and getting enough exercise and sleep.

- Having a Hall-of-Fame baseball player for a father does not mean that you will make the major leagues. Hank Aaron's son played in the minor leagues, and Hank realized that his son would never get out of the minor leagues and that it would be better for him to pursue a different avenue in life. Therefore, as a baseball executive and as a father, he told his son, "You've got two choices. Either I can keep you here in A ball or you can go back to college, get your degree, come back out, and have a family." His son thought about the choice, and he was about to make the wrong decision, so Hank told him, "While **you're** thinking, here are your release papers." Of course, his son was angry at first, but much later and after graduating from college and becoming a schoolteacher, he told Hank, "Thanks for making that decision, because I couldn't have made it."

- Quaker humorist Tom Mullen once complained to his doctor about the fact that he needed to go to the restroom several times a night and that he often suffered from gastritis. His doctor asked how old he was, and after hearing the answer said, "**You're** right on schedule."

- In Czarist Russia, a company of Russians prepared to go into combat. The commandant told his soldiers, "Get **your** bayonets ready and prepare to meet **your** man in hand-to-hand combat." The lone Jew in his company raised his hand and asked, "Could you show me my man? Maybe we can come to an agreement."

## About the Author

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy—me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name—David—ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn’t let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor’s degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a master’s degree in English and a master’s degree in Philosophy. Currently, and for a long time to come, I publish a weekly humorous column titled “Wise Up!” for *The Athens News* and I am an English instructor at Ohio U.

### *Shameless Commerce*

Visit David Bruce’s storefront at

<http://stores.lulu.com/bruceb>

By the way, this storefront offers free downloads of collections of my students’ autobiographical essays. For example, one such collection is titled *Love and Friendship: Stories About Growing Up*.

If all goes well, I will publish one or two books a year for the rest of my life. (On the other hand, a good way to make God laugh is to tell Her your plans.)

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(Oddballs is an excellent source for teaching how to write autobiographical essays/personal narratives.)

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