**Comma Use**

Six Common Uses of the Comma

1. To separate items in a series

ex. Nate had a headache, a stomach ache, and a fever when he was sick.

ex.

ex.

2. To separate adjectives that are similar (belong to the same class)

ex. The American Flag is red, white, and blue.

ex.

ex. There is a big blue flag in the park.

ex.

3. To follow introductory words, phrases, and clauses

ex. Fortunately, the weather turned sunny just as the game began.

ex. On the other hand, some people were hoping for snow.

ex.

ex.

4. To follow an idea that is dependent on the second clause (subordination)

ex. Since you are not able to come for lunch, please come for dinner.

ex. Because

ex. When

ex. If

5. Before and after words or phrases that interrupt a clause

ex. The kids on the playground, excited and hyper, could not quiet down.

ex.

ex. My uncle, who is a state champion, is giving me swimming lessons.

ex.

6. Before a coordinating conjunction joining two independent clauses together

ex. We wanted to travel in Africa for a few months, and now we will have our chance.

ex.

ex.

ex.

Other Uses

7. Commas to set off names and appositives

ex. Africa, the birthplace of mankind, is fascinating.

ex. Can you, Nate, take these to my office?

8. dates

ex. Wednesday, November 14, 2012

9. Items of Addresses

ex. 0150 Miller Ranch Road, Edwards, CO 81632

10. Greetings and salutations of a letter

ex. Dear Santa Clause,

Sincerely,

Edit your paper for comma usage. Write corrections below and which rule you need to remember:

**The Semicolon**

Three (only three) correct uses of a semicolon

1. to separate two independent clauses that are closely related: make sure both clauses have a subject and verb- label them.

ex. I want to join the circus; I love the clothes the performers wear.

ex.

ex.

2. Before a conjunctive adverb when joining to independent clauses

ex. My bike will be ready on Friday; however, the season is over.

ex.

ex.

3. To separate items in a series when the items contain commas

ex. I have three favorite books: The Grapes of Wrath, by Steinbeck; Heart of Darkness, by Joseph Conrad; and As I Lay Dying, by William Faulkner.

ex.

ex.

Edit your paper for semicolon use. If you have used zero semicolons in your paper, add two. Write your examples of semicolon use below:

**The Colon**

Three (only three) correct uses of a colon

1. at the end of a statement followed by a list

ex. I need work done on my car: the brakes, the steering, and the wheels.

ex.

ex.

2. At the end of a statement followed by a quotation

ex. I can think of an idiom to help rationalize paying for these repairs: “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

ex.

ex.

3. At the end of a statement followed by an explanation

ex. I could only do one thing when I saw my empty bank account: laugh.

ex.

ex.

Edit your paper for colon use. If you have not used a colon in your paper, add one. Write your examples of colon use below:

**Punctuating Quotations**

When a student punctuates quotes, there are two parts to be familiar with: the quote and the tag line.

The quote: the material that is being quoted

The tag line: who is saying or receiving credit for the quote

If you are quoting speech or research, the format is the same.

There are three models (only three).

1. The tag line starts the sentence

ex. Inana said, “I’ve always hated my name.”

A comma goes after the tagline, and end punctuation goes inside the q marks.

ex.

2. The tag line ends the sentence

ex. “People have made fun of me since the first day of school,” Inana stated.

A comma goes after the quote INSIDE the quotation marks, and end punctuation follows the tag line.

ex.

3. The tag line goes in the middle of the sentence

ex. “My mother has always told me,” Inana concerted, “that an unusual name sets me apart from all of the people who have common names.”

A comma is placed INSIDE of quotation marks after the first portion of the quote, a comma follows the tag line, and end punctuation is placed inside quotation marks as the quote ends.

ex.

Edit your paper for proper punctuation in quotation. If you have not used quotations in your paper, add one. Write your corrections below:

**Subject/Verb Agreement and Pronoun/Antecedent**

The basic principal behind subject/verb agreement is that singular subjects have singular verbs and plural subjects have plural verbs.

ex. My dog is funny.

ex. My cats are lazy.

ex.

This comes naturally for most of us, but if you have ever seen an **S/V** on your paper, you have made a mistake in subject verb agreement. This usually happens when the subject is less obvious or it appears to be plural when it is not.

ex. One of my tomato plants is blooming.

ex. Two thirds of the class is ready for a break.

ex. Either

Pronoun subjects that are always singular are: either, neither, one, each, none, everyone, somebody

The basic principal behind pronoun/antecedent agreement is if a pronoun is singular, the antecedent should be singular. If a pronoun is plural, the antecedent should be plural.

ex. The student wrote his essay well.

ex. The professor offered his congratulations.

~ Often, students want to use the plural pronoun *their* incorrectly, so when you use *their* make sure the antecedent is plural.

Edit your paper for subject/verb agreement. Write your corrections below:

Edit your paper for pronoun/antecedent agreement. Write your corrections below:

**Comma Splices and Fused Sentences (Run-ons)**

**A comma splice** consists of two separate ideas joined incorrectly by a comma. Commas never ever ever connect two sentences. ex. Winter is here, I love winter clothes.

How do you know this is a comma splice?

There are 4 ways to correct this error:

1. End the first sentence, start the second.

ex.

2. Use a semicolon to separate the statements.

ex.

3. Use a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb to separate the two statements.

ex.

4. Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction to separate the statements.

ex.

**Fused Sentences** are similar to comma splices, but there is no comma: these are two ideas fused together in a way that makes them appear to be one statement.

ex. Some people think sweaters make them look fat I disagree.

How do you know this is a fused sentence?

There are four ways to correct this error:

1. End the first sentence, start the second.

ex.

2. Use a semicolon to separate the statements.

ex.

3. Use a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb to separate the two statements.

ex.

4. Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction to separate the statements.

ex.

Edit your paper for comma splices and fused sentences. Write your corrections below.