**Punctuation 1: Commas**

On the busy streets that are our sentences, commas are the speed bumps. They cause us to slow down and take note of what is going on in the sentence, whether it be the beginning of the main idea after an introductory element, an interruption in the middle of that main idea, a list of items, or even the beginning of a new independent clause (joined to the first clause, of course, with a conjunction). Imagine trying to read that last sentence without commas! But, if we, use too many commas, when they're not necessary, it can be very, confusing, for readers, so it's just as important to know when to use them as it is to know when not to.

### PART ONE

- Go to the section on commas(under punctuation) in Darling's Guide to Grammar: [http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/commas.htm](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/commas.htm)
- Work through the 11 rules on the page, completing any blanks and creating your own examples.

1) **Use a comma to separate the elements in a _________________________ (three or more things), including the last two.**
   - Add commas to Darling's sample sentence: "He hit the ball dropped the bat and ran to first base."
   - Write your own example:

2) **Use a comma + a little conjunction (and, but, for, nor, yet, or, so) to connect two __________________________.**
   - Add commas to Darling's sample sentence: "He hit the ball well but he ran toward third base."
   - Write your own example:

3) **Use a comma to set off _________________________ elements, as in**
   - Add commas to Darling's sample sentence: "Running toward third base he suddenly realized how stupid he looked."
   - Write your own example:

*Continued...*
4) Use a comma to set off __________________________ elements.
   - Add commas to Darling's sample sentence: "The Founders Bridge which spans the Connecticut River is falling down."
   - Which of the following examples from Darling's Guide needs commas? Circle the letter and add the commas.
     a. I'm telling you Juanita I couldn't be more surprised.
     b. I told Juanita I couldn't be more surprised.
   - Write your own example:

5) Use a comma to separate coordinate __________________________
   - Which of the following examples from Darling's Guide needs commas? Circle the letter and add the commas.
     a. He is a tall distinguished man.
     b. She is a little old lady.
   - Write your own example:

6) Use a comma to set off __________________________ elements.
   - Which of the following examples from Darling's Guide needs commas? Circle the letter and add the commas.
     a. Summing up this argument, Peter Coveney writes "The purpose and strength of the romantic image of the child had been above all to establish a relation between childhood and adult consciousness."
     b. Peter Coveney writes that "[t]he purpose and strength of the romantic image of the child had been above all to establish a relation between childhood and adult consciousness."
   - Write your own example:

7) Use commas to set off phrases that express __________________________.
   - Add commas to Darling's sample sentence: "It was her money not her charm or personality that first attracted him."
   - Write your own example:

Continued...
8) Use a comma to avoid _____________. This is often a matter of consistently applying rule #_________.
   • Add commas to Darling's sample sentence: "Outside the lawn was cluttered with hundreds of broken branches."
   • Write your own example:

9) Never use only _____ comma between a _______ and its verb.
   • Cross out the unnecessary comma in the following sentence: "Walking at least five miles throughout the day, is enough exercise to keep me healthy, which is why I wear a pedometer."

10) Typographical Reasons: Between a city and a ____________ [Hartford, Connecticut], a date and the year [June 15, 1997], a name and a title when the title comes ____________ the name [Bob Downey, Professor of English], in long numbers [5,456,783 and $14,682], etc.
   • Which of the following examples from Darling's Guide needs commas? Circle the letter and add the commas.
     a. July 1776 was one of the most eventful months in our history.
     b. July 4 1776 is regarded as the birth date of American liberty.

11) Use commas with ____________. Remember that a ____________ in reading is not always a reliable reason to use a comma.

PART TWO
• Take the "Quiz on Comma Usage" at the bottom of the page: http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/quizzes/comma_quiz.htm
• Print out or copy the 2 paragraphs and highlight any commas you missed or added unnecessarily.

PART THREE
• Make sure you have your sample sentences and your "Quiz on Comma Usage" printed or written out. Then meet with a WRC instructor or tutor to discuss.
• Attach a confirmation sheet or get a signature below:

   Instructor/Tutor Signature
   Date

SLO: Eng 60 A/B