

one point to the next. Common transitional expressions are as follows:

Illustration: for example, for instance, to illustrate this

Addition: too, also, furthermore, similarly, moreover

Emphasis: indeed, in fact, most important, above all

Restatement: that is, in other words

Summary: in short, to sum up

Logical result: therefore, so, consequently, as a result, thus, hence

Counterpoint: however, but, on the contrary, nevertheless

Concession: it is true, granted that, admittedly, to be sure

Alternatives: on the one hand, on the other hand



Exercise 4.

Insert the appropriate connective in the following paragraph:

___ the study of extraterrestrial life lacks any proven subject, opinions about the form and frequency of nonearthly beings record the hopes and fears of speculating scientists more than the constraints of evidence. Alfred Russell Wallace, ___ ___, Darwin's partner in the discovery of natural selection, held firmly that man must be alone in the entire cosmos, ___ he could not bear the thought that human intelligence had not been the uniquely special gift of God, conferred upon an ideally suited planet.

As an example of transition between paragraphs, notice the following from an essay on the protagonist and narrator of Martin Walser's novel *Halbzeit*:

To return for the moment to more conventional readings of the novel, however, Anselm clearly adopts tailor-made patterns of conduct. He fits easily into a social milieu which...

The next paragraph begins:

Furthermore, examples abound of Anselm's readiness to play roles in order to ingratiate himself, sell a product, or seduce a woman.

Transition within your text can also be achieved through the use of 'megatransitions' (transitional clauses or phrases) to help the reader get from one point to another. Here is an example from Edward Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1896–98):

We have attempted to explain the spirit which moderated, and the strength which supported, the power of Hadrian and the Antonines. We shall now endeavour, with clearness and preciseness, to describe the provinces once unified under their sway...

2.4

Punctuation & Abbreviations

The role of punctuation is to clarify the meaning of a text. To many, the use of punctuation is a chore, but it is a necessary one. Consider why.



Exercise 5.

Look at this passage from the final chapter of *The British Museum is Falling Down* (1965), a novel by David Lodge.

Whoooooo there goes another fog-horn, they sound so close, such a melancholy sound, reminds me of when he came to see me off at Dover, standing at the quayside with his hands in his pockets trying to shout something, but every time he opened his mouth the hooter went, and of course it had to be a great handsome French boy who was at the rail

beside me I never even spoke to him but he couldn't sleep that night for jealousy he said in his letter funny how jealous he was before we were married well that's one foot thawed out let's try the other ah that's nice he always so warm after we so am I but getting out of bed spoils it perhaps that's what started it off that's happened before our honeymoon was the first time three days early instead of late that's why they let the girl name the day funny I never thought of that before I didn't have any choice it was his embarkation leave and I thought it would be a safe period...

1. What is unusual or strange about this passage?
2. Why do you think the author is writing in this way?

Punctuation is superfluous to speaking but extremely important in writing. Too much punctuation or too little can have a damaging effect on what one writes. Even great writers are not exempt from error. The English writer George Orwell (1903–50) made a slip at the very beginning of his essay 'Marrakech' (1939) which shows that even the most eminent of writers make mistakes sometimes. Can you see what is wrong?

As the corpse went past the flies left the restaurant table in a cloud and rushed after it, but they came back a few minutes later.

Because Orwell omitted a comma (,) after 'past', a misreading is inevitable ('As the corpse went past the flies?'). The lack of a comma results in what is known as 'partial misreading'.

At this point it might be useful to learn the derivation of the terms we use in punctuation.

●2.4.a The Colon

The Colon (:) = from the Greek *kôlon* (a limb) usually used to precede a list, an explanation, or a block quotation. The typical function is to express that the words following it in a sentence are an expansion on what has gone before, e.g.

The doctor gave him these instructions: no smoking, no drinking and no excessive exercise.



Exercise 6.

Insert the colons in the following anecdote:

In the freshman English class, a co-ed submitted a paper containing the sentence "The lady was descending the stairs when she tripped, fell, and lay prostitute on the floor." The professor circled the offending word, and added this note

My dear young lady,

You must learn to distinguish between a fallen woman and one who has temporarily lost her balance.

Note: in British English it is not usual for the clause following the colon (:) to begin with a CAPITAL letter, but this is common in U.S. English. Generally, an independent clause following a colon should start with a capital letter, and a subordinate clause (not a full sentence) with a lower case letter.

●2.4.b The Semicolon

The Semicolon (;) = *semi* (Latin for 'half').

With educated people, I suppose, punctuation is a matter of rule; with me it is a matter of feeling. But I must say I have a great respect for the semicolon; it's a useful little chap.

Abraham Lincoln (1809–65)

The rules for using this punctuation mark are much less rigid than those for the colon. It marks a pause in a sentence in value between a comma and a full stop, and is used to connect closely related independent clauses, e.g.

He was very tired; he had worked late the night before.

Semicolons are not always necessary but are desirable. Unlike a colon, a semicolon does not introduce; unlike a comma, it does not enclose; and, unlike a full stop (period), it does not terminate. The semicolon can be used instead of co-ordinating conjunctions like 'and', 'but', 'or', 'neither', 'nor', 'for' and 'yet', and is often used to separate clauses already joined by conjunctive adverbs like 'thus', 'however', 'consequently', 'therefore', 'moreover', etc.

If the incident had occurred at a later stage of my literary career I think I should have made more fuss; but at the time my dominant emotion was one of relief...

The semicolon should be used sparingly; the ability to use it appropriately will tend to 'impress' your reader, and, as Lincoln observed, it is also very useful. For example, it was effective in the above instance, not only to link two closely related ideas together into one sentence, but also to avoid the use of 'but' at the beginning of a sentence.

It may be comforting to note that in his preface to *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* the famous English soldier, archaeologist and author T. E.

Lawrence² confessed to his inability to use the semicolon along with his debt to the playwright George Bernard Shaw and Mrs Shaw:

The book so written passed in 1921 into proof: where it was fortunate in the friends who criticised it. Particularly it owes its thanks to Mr and Mrs Bernard Shaw for countless suggestions of great value and diversity: and for all the present semicolons.



Exercise 7.

Insert the semicolons as required in the following:

1. Ships were not safe at night an American and a Guernsey boat were attacked the same day by the watermen, who cut their cables and stole the anchors...

(one semicolon)

2. There was nothing formal about the costume required for early cricket no one needed to wear the customary white top-hats with deep black bands those who wished could sport³ [wear] 'billycocks', with striped or checked or spotted shirts...

(two semicolons)

3. Perhaps because he is concerned with medieval history, Shakespeare, in his early plays, has much to say on Fortune although she is still a threat to the inward peace of men, she can more readily be circumvented in his rendering of medieval attitudes than was possible in the Middle Ages themselves.

(one semicolon)

² (known as 'Lawrence of Arabia': 1888–1935)

³ 'wear, exhibit, or produce, esp. ostentatiously' (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary*)

●2.4.c The Comma

The Comma (,) = from the Greek *komma* (=‘to cut’ a piece cut off).

I was working on the proof of one of my poems all the morning, and took out a comma. In the afternoon I put it back again.

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900)

This is the most used – and most frequently abused – punctuation mark. It introduces, separates and encloses. In other words it can be employed in a variety of ways, such as for listing, e.g.

During this term we will be studying Hemingway, Steinbeck and Faulkner.

(Note that a comma after the penultimate item, i.e. ‘Hemingway, Steinbeck, and Faulkner’ is also acceptable and is a matter of personal choice unless it is essential in order to avoid confusion.)

or to add a pause in a long sentence:

We decided we would try to get tickets for the final performance of ‘Swan Lake’ at the Royal Opera House in three weeks’ time, although we knew in our hearts we had little chance of success at such short notice.

It can also be used to mark names in a sentence or a transition word like ‘however’, ‘therefore’ or transitional phrases like ‘On the other hand’:
e.g.

Macpherson stands to Gaelic poetry in somewhat the same relation that Chatterton does to that of Middle English. On the other hand, the extent of Macpherson’s forgeries has been greatly exaggerated.

And before the conjunction in a compound sentence:

Fish, mollusks, and crustaceans were plentiful in the lakes, and turtles frequented the shore.

The boy went home alone, and his sister remained with the crowd.

Note: Do not use commas indiscriminately! Think before you punctuate. Commas can also be used like **ellipses** (see below), to alter the meaning of a sentence completely, although sometimes to good effect. After a performance of Sheridan’s *The Rivals*, leading actress Minnie Maddern Fiske found the following note on her dressing table:

Margaret Anglin says Mrs Fiske is the best actress in America.

Mrs Fiske sent it back as follows:

‘Margaret Anglin, says Mrs Fiske, is the best actress in America.’

●2.4.d The Full Stop

The Full Stop (U.S. = period) (.) = from the Greek *periodos* (‘a whole sentence’). It normally comes at the end of a sentence. One of the most common questions asked by students is how many spaces should follow a concluding mark of punctuation. Most publishers ask that manuscripts be prepared as they are to appear in print; therefore a single space is usually used. The *MLA Style Manual*, however, states that ‘there is nothing wrong with using two spaces after concluding punctuation marks unless an instructor or editor requests you to do otherwise.’ Note a tendency to avoid the use of full stops (periods) after abbreviations such as ‘Mr’, ‘Ltd’, etc. when the abbreviation ends with the final letter of the word.

●2.4.e The Hyphen

The Hyphen (-) = from Latin: 'the combining of two words'; from the Greek = 'to join'. This is used to separate parts of a word (most dictionaries use dots to show a syllable break, e.g. 'dis.con.tin.ue'), in compound words such as 'name-calling,' or to link words in a phrase. (Note: also numbers, like 'twenty-one.')

We are studying the nineteenth-century poets.

He had a devil-may-care attitude.

Words that do not fit into a line can be divided, and writing software programmes usually do this automatically. If not, however, you must sever the word at the point indicated. When in doubt consult the dictionary or carry the whole word to the next line (see also **3.13**).

Correct: Mr Roberts said that the practice had been discontinued.

Incorrect: Mr Roberts said that the practice had been discontinued.

●2.4.f Underlining and *Italics*

Underlining '____' and *Italics*: as we have seen italicization is used for titles of books, plays, films, newspapers and magazines, novels, paintings and sculptures, and book-length poems, as a substitute for italics. It is also used for foreign (non-English, including Latin) words: e.g.

He attributes this to a certain *idée fixe* in the Nordic character.

At this point enters the *deus ex machina*.

Arbeit is the German word for 'work'.

London armourers produced some of the breast work, and in 1396 the will of Symon Wynchcomb shows that he possessed six *bacinettes* of London make.

In the above example 'bacinette' is a 'flattish helmet', a word derived from French; as it is not incorporated into English it should be italicised.

Note: we do not use italics for sacred texts like the Bible or the Koran.

If you are going to have constant recourse to a certain word or term, it is probably better not to italicise it. Some authors cease italicisation after a foreign term or word has been introduced, hence:

At first, Canaletto asked for thirty *zecchini* for each picture but Marchesini, who was also an artist, swiftly beat the price down by a third. Even though all four paintings are very large, twenty *zecchini* was still a considerable sum...

Take care with words such as 'façade', however, which although of foreign origin have been absorbed into the English language and are not generally italicised.



Exercise 8.

Italicise (i.e. underline) the relevant word(s) in the following passages:

1. Young Latin American men are very sensitive these days about machismo, best translated as 'an emphasis on masculinity.'
2. For those who will not repent before death there will be eternal perdition among Hell's cethern 'legion of devils' (a word borrowed, like Shakespeare's 'kern', from Irish ceithern 'band of fighting men' – which had the associations for the Welsh then that Gestapo or Tonton Macoute have for us now).

3. I must have been suffering from a bad attack of Weltschmerz, and indeed I had just finished a play on Chatterton of quite unequalled gloom.
4. Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653–1724), one of the earliest of the Tokugawa dramatists, was arguably the greatest, and his legacy still forms the backbone of the bunraku and kabuki repertory. Of all the plays he wrote, *The Love Suicide at Amijima* (Shinju ten no amijima) is certainly... his masterpiece.



Exercise 9.

Underline (italicise) and/or insert inverted commas for the titles below:

1. The Muffin-Mix Scare, *Time*, 123 (Feb. 13, 1984), p. 20.
2. The seikness incurabill in Henryson's Testament of Cresseid, *English Language Notes*, 1 (1964), 175–77.
3. C. Wright Mills, *White Collar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 188.
4. Fries, Maureen. *Malory's Tristram as Counter-Hero to the Morte Darthur*. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 76 (1975), 605–13.

Note that italics are also used to emphasise certain words, particularly in dialogue:

“I love you,” said Roland. “It isn't convenient... But that's how it is. In the worst way. All the things we – we grew up not believing in. Total obsession, night and day. When I see you, you look *alive* and everything else – fades...”

Or in a normal sentence, as in

Saints' lives narrate the *potentiality* of pain that might result from the breakdown of the Christian will.

●2.4.g Parenthesis

Parentheses '()' = from Greek 'something placed in or besides' are used to separate information in a sentence, or to explain something. They should not be confused with **Square Brackets []** which are often used to supply missing material to make quotations clearer, to enclose explanatory information in quoted material, or material that was not part of the original: e.g.

'In wit [he was]... a man: [in]... simplicity [he was]... a child.'

(Alexander Pope's epitaph for Gray)

The newspaper stated that she [Elizabeth Falmer] was born in Boston.

Note: If you translate any passages or quotations yourself, or emphasise any words or sentences, you should always explain where you have translated or emphasised, etc. in notes or parenthesis(es), e.g. 'my emphasis', or 'emphasis mine'. Other set phrases include: 'my translation' and 'underline mine' (also refer to **1.5.h**).

When complete sentences are enclosed by parentheses the full stop goes inside the parentheses:

(Jealousy has ruined more than one romance.)

**Exercise 10.**

Place the required extra information in the sentences below using parentheses:

- Richard Condon's work on Trollope _____ **a.** _____ has contributed greatly to scholarship on the author.
 - first published in 1950
- Mark Twain _____ **a.** _____ the novelist and humorist, is perhaps best known for his classics *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* _____ **b.** _____ and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* _____ **c.** _____.
 - pen name of Samuel Longthorne Clemens, 1835–1910
 - The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* was published in 1876
 - The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was published in 1885

**Exercise 11.**

- In the following sentence, 'they' refers to 'the Indians'. Use square brackets [] to add this information:

As Dr Marshall has observed, 'Again and again, they saw themselves deprived of lands of whose possession they had been assured with solemn oaths.'

- In the next example, the date '2 June' is incorrect and should be '12 June':

Yurgenson recalled that he finally travelled to Cambridge on 2 June, 1881.

2.4.h Ellipses

Ellipses '...' (from Greek = 'to leave'). The use of three dots (...) indicates something is missing or has been omitted from the text. This can be used to shorten a block quotation (see **2.5.b** below):

The influence of chivalry upon Western culture has been profound. Tied in with visions of crusading... it became the driving force behind the great period of exploration and discovery of the 'New World' of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe. Without King Arthur there would have been no Columbus.

Omissions at the end of a sentence use a full stop (period) followed by three dots. A full line of points of ellipsis indicates the omission of one or more paragraphs from a quoted passage, or of one or more lines of poetry. The number of points is determined by layout, so you can choose.

I saw eternity the other night,
Not like a Ring, but in your face
And in your eyes, which there have pride of place

.....

You are the centre of my gravity,
Which is to say you are the World to me.

You may find, however, that some authors ignore this convention and use ordinary ellipses instead.

Be aware that using ellipses in the wrong way can distort meaning:

Original: Faulkner's novels have the quality of being lived, absorbed, remembered rather than merely observed. (Malcom Cowley)

Actual Quotation: Malcom Cowley further suggests that 'Faulkner's novels have the quality of being... merely observed.'

This is a technique sometimes used by theatrical agents to turn a disastrous review of a play into a positive one as in:

'Finally, *Laughter in Paradise* is a brilliant example of how NOT to write a play.' John Soames, *The Times*.

which becomes:

John Soames in *The Times*: '... *Laughter in Paradise* is... a brilliant... play!'

●2.4.i Virgule

Virgule '/': from Latin = *virgula* ('a small rod or twig'). Also known as a 'slash' or '*solidus*', this is used to indicate that terms so joined together may be used in the sentence without altering their meaning. For the purposes of poetical quotation it indicates the correct ending of lines:

A thing of beauty is a joy forever; / Its loveliness increases; it will never
/ Pass into nothingness: but still will weep...

and can be used for short quotations of verse as in

As Juliet says, it is Romeo's name that is her enemy: 'That which we call
a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet.'

Note: never begin a line with a punctuation mark: e.g.

Du Guesclin was not strong enough to hold Fougeryay
, which was retaken in 1352 by Robert Knowles...

Exercise 12.

This is a passage from *Ralph Roister Doister*, a pre-Shakespearean comedy. Ralph asks a scrivener⁴ to write a love letter to his mistress, an attractive widow. The scrivener unfortunately gets the punctuation wrong with a disastrous result! It is written in the English of the Elizabethan period (Early Modern), but can you change any of the punctuation in the underlined section so that it makes a love letter (not 'hate mail'!)?

Sweet mistress where as I love you nothing at all,
Regarding your substance and riches chief of all,
For your personage, beauty, demeanour and wit
I commend me unto you never a whit
Sorry to hear report of your good welfare.
For (as I hear say) such your conditions are
That ye be worthy favour of no living man,
To be abhorred of every honest man.
And now by these presents I do advertise
That I am minded to marry you in no wise,
For your goodes and substances, I could be content
To take you as ye are. If ye mind to be my wife
Ye shall be assured for the time of my life
I will keep you right well from good rayment and fare.
Ye shall not be kept but in sorrow and care.
Ye shall in no wise live at your own liberty.
Do and say what ye please, ye shall never please me.
But when ye are merry, I will be sad.
When ye are sorry, I will be glad.

⁴ 'A copyist or drafter of documents; a notary... etc.' (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary*)

**Exercise 13.**

Add the Punctuation and Capitals (including italicization) in the two passages below:

1. In 1862 thomas hardy moved to london where he worked under the well-known architect reginald blomfield he was still undecided whether to become an architect himself or try his fortunes as a writer however his literary efforts having impressed george meredith he produced an exciting novel entitled desperate remedies which appeared anonymously in 1871 his second novel under the greenwood tree (1872) was well received and two years later he published far from the madding crowd as a serial in cornhill magazine the book brought him popular renown and during the same year hardy married a clergymans niece named emma gifford.
2. It was all there in his obituary his early struggle for recognition his success in middle age the suicide of his wife his growing dependence on alcohol and his final degradation.

●2.4.j Inverted Commas

Inverted Commas (also known as ‘quotation marks’): one of the main differences to be found in usage is that MLA uses “ for quotations, and ‘ for quotations within quotations; MHRA is vice versa – see 2.5.a below. Inverted commas are also used for titles within a work (see 2.2.d above).

●2.4.k The Apostrophe

The Apostrophe (’) from Greek = *apostrophos*: ‘a mark of elision’; from *apostroph* = ‘to turn away’. Be careful of ‘Its’ and ‘It’s’: ‘Its’ = belonging to it. ‘It’s’ is a contraction of ‘it is’ or ‘it has’. Although this is not a common mistake, it is one to be aware of. Remember that although contractions are common in informal speech and writing, they should be avoided in formal reports and research papers.

A Note on Contractions: Never use contractions like ‘Hasn’t’ (= Has not), ‘Isn’t’ (= Is not) in formal (written) English. Thus

Blades maintained that apprentices couldn’t ‘issue’ before they’d reached the age of twenty-four...

should be written as:

Blades maintained that apprentices could not ‘issue’ before they had reached the age of twenty-four...

●2.4.l Abbreviations

Abbreviations should be used sparingly: You will find explanations of common abbreviations used in academic writing in 4.2 below. These tend to change in time, but you should be aware of even archaic forms when reading articles or books published prior to 1990 (although some authors/publishers persist in using them – see ‘op. cit.’ below). For example the abbreviation ‘ibid.’ (from Latin = *ibidem*: ‘the same’) was common until recently, e.g. in the following notes, which refer to two different pages from the same edition of the same periodical:

30 *Westminster Review*, 1 (April 1824): 525.

31 *Ibid.*, 14 (January 1831): 221.