

# **COMMA NOTES**

## **Commas with Expressions That Interrupt**

- ✓ Use a comma after words such as *yes, no, well,* and *why* at the beginning of a sentence.

*Example:*

No, I did not hear what you said.

- ✓ Use a comma to set apart **appositives**, or a series of nouns identifying a noun or pronoun.

*Example:*

Mrs. Pratt, my favorite English teacher, loves to ski.

## **Commas in Compound Sentences**

- ✓ Use a comma *before* the conjunction (*and, but, or, for, yet*) that joins the parts of a compound sentence in order to avoid run-on sentences.

*Example:*

Henry shot the basketball into the hoop, **and** then pumped his fists with excitement.

## **Commas in a Series**

- ✓ Use commas to separate items in a series.
- ✓ Items may be single words or groups of words.

*Example:*

Many teachers, parents, and students attended the game.

CHAPTER **20** *Punctuation***Commas with Expressions That Interrupt**

Expressions that interrupt a sentence include appositives and appositive phrases. An appositive or an appositive phrase is usually set off by commas.

**EXERCISE** In each of the following sentences, find the appositive or appositive phrase or phrases that interrupt the sentence. Then place a comma or commas where needed.

**EXAMPLE:** Ms. Emmett, our science teacher, owns a snowmobile.

1. Plankton the wanderers of the sea drift along under the influence of ocean currents.
2. Muffy our Siamese cat usually sleeps on top of the refrigerator.
3. We saw a collection of photographs by Margaret Bourke-White a famous photographer.
4. Diamond Head a volcanic crater in Honolulu is a popular tourist attraction.
5. The mayfly a fragile insect has a very short life.
6. That dog a beautiful setter belongs to our neighbors.
7. My mother a born organizer is usually in demand as a committee chairperson.
8. The keynote speaker a former governor received a standing ovation.
9. The pitcher a rookie pitched six perfect innings.
10. Have you read *The Call of the Wild* a book about the gold rush?
11. Geronimo a famous Apache chief became a farmer in Oklahoma.
12. My cousin won a scholarship to William and Mary the oldest college in the United States.
13. Albany the capital of New York is on the Hudson River.
14. First prize a trip to Boston was won by Mrs. Finch the new English teacher.
15. Mother hired a new file clerk a recent graduate of Bayside High School.
16. Margaret Mitchell a native of the South wrote *Gone with the Wind*.
17. Fred Dolder a balloonist made several flights across the Alps.
18. Hydrogen a colorless gas is the lightest element.
19. The Atacama the driest desert in the world is located along the coasts of Peru and Chile.
20. Lima the largest city in Peru contains one third of the country's population.

CHAPTER **20** — *Punctuation***Commas in Compound Sentences**

Use a comma before *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, or *yet* when one of these conjunctions joins the parts of a compound sentence. A very short compound sentence is sometimes written without a comma before the conjunction.

**EXERCISE** Find and underline the conjunction that joins the parts of each of the following compound sentences. Then place a comma where it is needed.

**EXAMPLE:** Spring is almost here, but the weather is still bitterly cold.

1. The flamingo has a small body but its long legs give it height.
2. We visited my grandmother and then we took her out to dinner.
3. The reviewers liked the play yet it was not nominated for an award.
4. I must return this book to the library or it will be overdue.
5. The players were tired after the game yet they celebrated with pizza and lemonade.
6. Signs warn against feeding the bears but some foolish campers feed them anyway.
7. Puerto Rico once belonged to Spain and its towns are filled with fine examples of Spanish architecture.
8. The wind whistled through the trees and the air suddenly became cold.
9. Most bread is made of wheat flour but other grains can also be used.
10. Our friends left the meeting early but we stayed until the end.
11. The line for the movie was long but we reached the box office in time for the first show.
12. My grandfather has retired but he goes to the office once a week.
13. The soil must be carefully fertilized or the plants will not grow.
14. That player has a bad knee yet he rarely complains about it.
15. Senator Jacob Javits is remembered for his many accomplishments but he is even better remembered for his courage.
16. The country suffered a serious drought and farm production fell far below normal.
17. I couldn't find my wallet and I had to borrow lunch money from my teacher.
18. My brother works at the supermarket yet he never has any money.
19. The car was completely wrecked but fortunately nobody was seriously injured.
20. The fire spread quickly and many buildings were destroyed.

CHAPTER **20** *Punctuation***Commas with Items in a Series**

Use commas to separate items in a series. A series is three or more items written one after the other. The items may be single words or groups of words. When the last two items in a series are joined by *and*, you may omit the comma before the *and* if the comma is not necessary to make the meaning clear. If all items in a series are joined by *and* or *or*, do not use commas to separate them.

**EXERCISE** In the following sentences, find the items in a series. Then place commas where they are needed. If a sentence is correctly punctuated, write **C** before its number.

**EXAMPLE:** Bees, wasps, and ants are all members of the insect family.

1. Tracy made her bed hung up her clothes and took out the trash.
2. *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* *Superfudge* and *Freckle Juice* are three books by Judy Blume.
3. I can read eat and watch television at the same time.
4. The flower show featured herb gardens terrariums and hanging baskets.
5. I found two pennies a key and a ballpoint pen in the pocket of my jacket.
6. Oregano adds flavor to sauces tomato juice and vegetable soup.
7. In Montana, cattle sheep and horses graze where buffalo once roamed.
8. On Saturday I will shop with my mother or go to the basketball game or baby-sit for Mrs. Festerman.
9. We had hot dogs hamburgers and potato salad at the Fourth-of-July picnic.
10. The plane stops in Atlanta St. Louis and Denver.
11. The cherry the dogwood and the peach are flowering trees.
12. A combination of oxygen water and iron can produce rust.
13. My aunt owns a terrier a spaniel and a golden retriever.
14. What would a county fair be without hand-pieced quilts and prize-winning jellies?
15. Mistletoe is poisonous to cats cows and other animals.
16. So far I have built a locomotive a flatcar and a caboose for my model railroad.
17. We hiked swam and played volleyball.
18. Every night we sang or danced or told stories around the campfire.
19. We've planted corn string beans and tomatoes in our vegetable garden.
20. Leonardo da Vinci was a painter a sculptor and a scientist.