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Punctuation worksheets

with worked answers

The mark changes the meaning.

Spot the clue, choose the punctuation, then explain why it works. Twelve original questions move from apostrophes and commas to direct speech, brackets, colons and semicolons.

Learn the rule Try the sentence Check the explanation

9 A4 pages • no email gate • not an official exam paper

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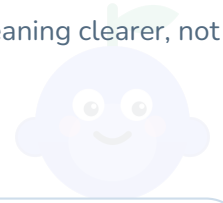
BEFORE YOU CHOOSE

Four checks that save marks

Read the whole sentence first. A punctuation mark should make the grammar and the meaning clearer, not merely look familiar.



01

Apostrophe

Ask whether a word means 'it is' or whether something belongs to someone. One sister: sister's. Several dogs: dogs'.

02

Comma

Look for an opening phrase, a list, or a person being addressed. The comma separates those parts so the reader can follow.

03

Speech marks

Put only the spoken words inside quotation marks. The question mark or full stop for the speech normally belongs inside them.

04

Colon or semicolon

A colon can introduce a list or explanation after a complete clause. A semicolon links two closely related complete clauses.

A good answer needs a reason.

If two options look tempting, read them aloud and explain which rule rules one out. Use the answer pages only after making your choice.

PRACTICE SET 1

Choose the best punctuation

Questions 1 to 3. Circle one answer for each, then use the line to explain the rule you used.

QUESTION 1 PLURAL POSSESSION

The coats belong to several children. Which sentence is correctly punctuated?

A The childrens' coats were wet.

B The children's coats were wet.

C The childrens coats were wet.

D The children's' coats were wet.

Why? _____

QUESTION 2 CONTRACTION

Which sentence uses the apostrophe for it is correctly?

A Its a long walk to the station.

B It's tail wagged as it ran.

C It's a long walk to the station.

D Its' a long walk to the station.

Why? _____

QUESTION 3 INTRODUCTORY PHRASE

Which sentence puts the comma after an introductory phrase?

A After the match, we went home.

B After, the match we went home.

C After the match we, went home.

D After the match we went, home.

Why? _____

PRACTICE SET 2

Choose the best punctuation

Questions 4 to 6. Circle one answer for each, then use the line to explain the rule you used.

QUESTION 4 — DIRECT SPEECH

Which sentence punctuates the spoken words correctly?

A Mum said "Put on your coat."

B Mum said, "Put on your coat".

C Mum said, "put on your coat."

D Mum said, "Put on your coat."

Why? _____

QUESTION 5 — A SPOKEN QUESTION

Which sentence correctly marks a question spoken by Hana?

A Hana asked, "Where is my book?"

B Hana asked, "Where is my book".

C Hana asked "Where is my book?"

D Hana asked, "Where is my book"?

Why? _____

QUESTION 6 — REGULAR PLURAL POSSESSION

Several dogs have bowls. Which sentence shows that the bowls belong to the dogs?

A The dog's bowls were empty.

B The dogs' bowls were empty.

C The dogs's bowls were empty.

D The dogs bowls were empty.

Why? _____

PRACTICE SET 3

Choose the best punctuation

Questions 7 to 9. Circle one answer for each, then use the line to explain the rule you used.

QUESTION 7

COLON BEFORE A LIST

Which sentence correctly introduces a list with a colon?

A I packed: three things: a pencil, a map and water.

B I packed three things, a pencil, a map and water.

C I packed three things: a pencil, a map and water.

D I packed three things; a pencil, a map and water.

Why? _____

QUESTION 8

SEMICOLON BETWEEN CLAUSES

Which sentence joins two complete clauses with a semicolon?

A The path was muddy; and slippery.

B The path; was muddy and slippery.

C The path was muddy; we turned back,

D The path was muddy; we turned back.

Why? _____

QUESTION 9

SINGULAR POSSESSION

The sketchbook belongs to one sister. Which sentence is correct?

A My sister's sketchbook is on the table.

B My sisters sketchbook is on the table.

C My sisters' sketchbook is on the table.

D My sister's' sketchbook is on the table.

Why? _____

PRACTICE SET 4

Choose the best punctuation

Questions 10 to 12. Circle one answer for each, then use the line to explain the rule you used.

QUESTION 10 — COMMA FOR DIRECT ADDRESS

You are speaking to Gran, not proposing to eat her. Which sentence is right?

A Let's eat Gran!

B Let's eat, Gran!

C Lets eat, Gran!

D Let's, eat Gran!

Why? _____

QUESTION 11 — BRACKETS

Which sentence correctly encloses extra information in brackets?

A The trip (which lasted two hours, was tiring.)

B The trip which lasted two hours) was tiring.

C The trip (which lasted two hours) was tiring.

D The trip (which lasted two hours was tiring).

Why? _____

QUESTION 12 — SEMICOLON WITH A LINKING WORD

Which sentence uses a semicolon and comma to punctuate therefore?

A It rained; therefore we stayed inside.

B It rained; therefore; we stayed inside.

C It rained; Therefore, we stayed inside.

D It rained; therefore, we stayed inside.

Why? _____

WORKED ANSWERS

Check questions 1 to 6

The correct letter is only the starting point. Ask your child to explain the rule in their own words before trying another question.

B **01 Plural possession**

Children is already plural but does not end in s, so add apostrophe + s: children's.

C **02 Contraction**

It's means it is. Its (without an apostrophe) shows possession.

A **03 Introductory phrase**

After the match comes before the main clause, so the comma marks its end.

D **04 Direct speech**

A reporting clause takes a comma, the spoken sentence starts with a capital, and its full stop stays inside the quotation marks.

A **05 A spoken question**

The question mark belongs to the words Hana spoke, so it sits inside the quotation marks.

B **06 Regular plural possession**

Dogs is a regular plural ending in s. Put the apostrophe after that s: dogs'.

WORKED ANSWERS

Check questions 7 to 12

The correct letter is only the starting point. Ask your child to explain the rule in their own words before trying another question.

C **07 Colon before a list**

I packed three things is a complete clause. The colon then introduces what those things were.

D **08 Semicolon between clauses**

Both sides of the semicolon can stand as complete sentences: The path was muddy. We turned back.

A **09 Singular possession**

One sister owns the sketchbook, so add apostrophe + s to sister.

B **10 Comma for direct address**

A comma separates the person being addressed from the rest of the sentence.

C **11 Brackets**

The extra clause opens and closes inside a matching pair of brackets; the sentence still works without it.

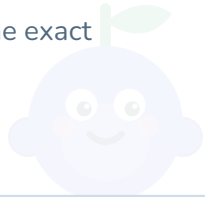
D **12 Semicolon with a linking word**

The semicolon joins two complete clauses, and a comma follows the linking word therefore.

AFTER THE ANSWERS

Turn the missed mark into a skill

Do not repeat the same sheet until the letters are familiar. Use the explanation to name the exact punctuation rule that needs more practice.



1 Mark together

For each miss, read the explanation and say what the punctuation is doing.

2 Write one new example

Make a fresh sentence using the same rule. This tests whether the rule has transferred.

3 Practise again in Pip

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