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The Book of Grammar
Lesson Eleven

Mr. McBride
AP Language and Composition

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In the last grammar lesson we learned about :

- The Relative Pronoun, including use of *that* and *which* with restrictive and non-restrictive clauses



In this lesson we will learn:

- Punctuation Rules Governing Commas and semi-colons

Commas in a Series

- Use commas to separate items in a series:
 - He spoke of the theaters, museums, and skyscrapers of Manhattan. (words)
 - Does our greatest weakness lie in the infield, in the outfield, or in our pitching? (phrases)
 - The critics agreed that the new opera was well written, that the sets were imaginative, and that the performance was superb. (clauses)

Commas and Interrupters

- Use commas to set off expressions that interrupt the sentence, such as...
 - Non-restrictive appositive words or phrases:
 - Our Principal, Mr. Benjamin, addressed the entire student body this morning.
 - The Golden Gate Bridge, the longest suspension bridge in the world, joins San Francisco and Marin Counties.
 - words used in direct address:
 - You have to admit, Dennis, that my work has improved since last year.

Commas and Interrupters

- Use commas to set off expressions that interrupt the sentence, such as...
 - direct quotations:
 - “I’ll be on time,” Mary promised.
 - “Come on in,” Betty called, “the water’s fine!”
 - parenthetical expressions:
 - This is, of course, only my opinion.
 - You are, I am sure, a first-rate player.
 - But not “I am sure you are a first-rate player.

Restrictive versus Non-restrictive

- A non-restrictive clause can be omitted without changing the meaning of a sentence:
 - Tom Leslie, who is one of my classmates, won a National Science Foundation scholarship last year.
 - Tom Leslie won a National Science Foundation scholarship last year. — *same essential meaning*
 - Peter, who was Leslie's date for the prom, was late arriving at her house.
- Non-restrictive clauses are set off with commas

Restrictive versus Non-restrictive

- A restrictive clause cannot be removed without changing the fundamental meaning of the sentence:
 - All the students who defaced the water tower will not graduate.
 - All the students will not graduate. – *much different!*
 - Anyone who has studied calculus could solve the differential equation.
- A restrictive clause restricts or limits a group down to a subset or single entity.
- Restrictive clauses are not set off with commas

Restrictive versus Non-restrictive

- Restrictive or non-restrictive?
 - The band, which had started to play again, filled the room with sound.
 - All drivers who are caught speeding will be severely punished.
 - The members of the legislature [,] who are sincerely looking out for the best interests of the people [,] passed the legislation without hesitation.

Non-restrictive participial phrase

- A non-restrictive participial phrase is set off by commas:
 - The president, knowing the need for drastic action, declared the entire state a disaster area.
- A restrict participial phase is not set off by commas:
 - Anyone knowing the condition of the region will approve of the President's actions.

Commas and Compound Sentences

- Use a comma before *but, or, yet, so, for, and, and nor* when they join independent clauses:
 - Nineteenth-century authors often composed sentences that were long and difficult to follow, and correct punctuation was necessary as a guide to readers.
 - Jack fell down and broke his crown, and Jill came tumbling after.

Introductory Clauses and Phrases

- Use a comma after...
 - an introductory adverb clause:
 - Until its investigation is completed, Congress will take no action.
 - a introductory participial phrase:
 - Rapping her gavel loudly, Shirley called the meeting to order.
 - an introductory infinitive phrase:
 - To get good snapshots, you have to keep the lens of your camera free from dust.
 - a introductory succession of prepositional phrases:
 - In response to the last statement of my opponent, I can only point to the record of this administration.

Semi-colon Usage

- In compound sentences, use a semi-colon between independent clauses not joined by a conjunction:
 - I was willing to compromise; you were not
 - A criminal has been brought to justice; another case has been closed.

Semi-colon Usage

- In compound sentences, use a semi-colon between main clauses joined by words other than *but, or, yet, so, for, and, and nor*:
 - I thought that the dances were confused and that the music was dull; nevertheless, the show did get excellent reviews.
 - Hurricane Esther had moved out to sea; hence the people of the coastal towns could relax.

Semi-colon Usage

- Use a semicolon between subgroups of words that are divided by commas (between series of series):
 - On his fishing trip, Jeff caught rainbow, brook, and lake trout; large-mouth, small mouth, and white bass; and a few northern pike.

What this lesson covered:

- Punctuation Rules Governing Commas and semi-colons

Congratulations!



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The end of Lesson Eleven

Quiz on Tuesday, June 4