

Boost Free Lessons - Year 9 English

Lesson 6: Commas and Sentence Punctuation

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Worked Example 1

Punctuate the list below.

We packed sandwiches fruit a thermos and two towels.

1. Commas separate items in a list.
2. Identify each item: sandwiches, fruit, a thermos, two towels.
3. Place a comma after every item except the last two, which are joined by *and*.
4. Do not put a comma after the final item, and never separate the last item from *and* unnecessarily.

We packed sandwiches, fruit, a thermos and two towels.

Worked Example 2

Why does the comma matter in the sentences below?

Let's eat, Grandma.

Let's eat Grandma.

1. A comma before a name shows you are speaking **to** that person, which is called direct address.
2. The first sentence invites Grandma to eat.
3. Without the comma, Grandma becomes the object of the verb.
4. A single comma can change the meaning of a sentence completely, so read your work aloud to hear where the pauses fall.

The comma marks direct address. Without it, the sentence says something entirely different.

Remember: Commas separate **list items**, follow **introductory phrases**, surround **extra information**, and mark **direct address**. They cannot join two complete sentences on their own.



Question 1: Punctuate each sentence correctly.

1. She bought apples pears grapes and figs.

2. Before we leave check the windows.

3. My cousin who lives in Perth is visiting.

4. Are you coming or are you staying

5. However the decision had already been made.

6. The film which won three awards is showing tonight.

7. Thanks for the help Marcus.

8. After the storm passed we walked outside.



Question 2: Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

After the meeting ended we walked to the car park in silence. However the minutes were circulated the next morning. Had anyone actually read them

1. Find one missing comma in the passage and show where it belongs.

2. Find a second missing comma.

3. Find one sentence that needs a question mark.

4. Explain why a comma is needed after *However*.

5. Rewrite the corrected passage in full.



Question 3: Answer the following questions.

1. Write a sentence containing a list of four items.

2. Write a sentence beginning with an introductory phrase, punctuated correctly.

3. Explain when a comma is used for direct address.

4. Why should a comma not be used to join two complete sentences?





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Answers and Model Responses: Commas and Sentence Punctuation**Question 1**

1. She bought apples, pears, grapes and figs.
2. Before we leave, check the windows.
3. My cousin, who lives in Perth, is visiting.
4. Are you coming, or are you staying?
5. However, the decision had already been made.
6. The film, which won three awards, is showing tonight.
7. Thanks for the help, Marcus.
8. After the storm passed, we walked outside.

Question 2

1. *After the meeting ended we walked* needs a comma after *ended*.
2. *However the minutes* needs a comma after *However*.
3. *Had anyone actually read them* needs a question mark.
4. *However* is an introductory word, so a comma separates it from the sentence that follows.
5. After the meeting ended, we walked to the car park in silence. However, the minutes were circulated the next morning. Had anyone actually read them?

Question 3

1. Model response: The kit contained bandages, scissors, tape and gloves.
2. Model response: Once the rain stopped, we started the engine.
3. A comma is used before or after a name when you are speaking directly to that person.
4. Two complete sentences joined by only a comma is called a comma splice. They need a full stop, a semicolon, or a conjunction such as *and* or *but*.

