

Being Accurate...

...in your English



Accuracy

It may sound silly to say that your grade does depend a lot on your accuracy, but actually, between 4 and 6 marks maximum per assignment are given for it.

Some exercises for accuracy follow. Read the questions thoroughly before starting, then check them thoroughly at the end.

Full stops and capital letters:

Add in the correct full stops and capital letters where needed.

1. it was a glorious january day when Alicia left the house she saw a cat meandering musingly down the empty street new year's day should have been a glorious success but it wasn't she panicked suddenly, her chest tightening like a balloon out of air she stopped everything went black she fell like a hard glob of cement hitting the road
2. every time it happens every time it's not new every time the same outcome every time ends blue and cold like the last he turned suddenly and saw it, creeping, creeping as a spider nearly upon his prey the day, though, isn't what he wants it to be now and he walks away never to return

Write your own 'wrong' paragraph using the title 'The Lake' below. Give it to a partner to check and correct.

Commas

Never, ever, ever use a comma to replace a full stop or a connective. They should only be used to list, or to separate clauses in a sentence. If the two clauses are about different things entirely (remember the friend's name and her hair colour on the PowerPoint?), don't use a comma.

Insert the commas into these sentences (if needed). 6/7 and 8/9 have two possible answers – give both:

- 1) If property prices continue to drop however he may work until he is 65.
- 2) Anyway he was wrong about her. She was pretty petite kind thoughtful and funny.
- 3) Much of what we really want is not what we think we want.
- 4) Surrey emerged as a pioneer of the sonnet form which later became known as the Shakespearian sonnet.
- 5) The Sheikh offered me two men's jackets three of his father's camels and twenty of his followers' concubines.
- 6) James walked on his head a little higher than usual.
- 7) James walked on his head a little higher than usual.
- 8) After we left Grandma Dad and I went to the cinema
- 9) After we left Grandma Dad and I went to the cinema

Why do we need to use commas?

Semi-Colons and Colons

One of the boxes you have to tick in your English Language coursework and examination is the use of 'varied punctuation'. Using just one or two semi-colons will help you to not only tick this box but also form different sentence structures, thereby killing two birds with one stone.

Decide whether you need a semi-colon, a comma or a colon (or none, or all) in the following:

- 1) This poem's style is really difficult it's impossible to tell what its style really is.
- 2) She had only one purpose in life she wanted to teach them to punctuate correctly.
- 3) This is a difficult exercise I am having fun though.
- 4) He should've asked to borrow her pen the bruise on his nose was rather painful.
- 5) Between the two of them they managed fourteen very sorrowful-looking semi-colons a dreadful excuse for a colon four beautiful black dots which passed as commas and eight apostrophes most of them in the right place.
- 6) Every day became harder she struggled more and more.
- 7) Nevertheless it all became clear she had thought through the problem and succeeded.
- 8) If she hadn't left him he would've shouted anyway probably at her total lack of regard for the rules of punctuation.

Consolidation

Right. Now it's time to test everything you should have learnt since we started these accuracy exercises.

Part One:

Put in the correct punctuation (including speech marks and apostrophes) to the following:

1) when walking into class for the first time punctuation was my greatest fear namely the uncertainty of where to insert commas on the first few papers i would randomly insert commas wherever I felt necessary on the listening paper for example i wrote While listening to Harold I noticed his eye contact, and body movement Furthermore comma placement caused more trouble when I misplaced some commas or even forgot to insert them at all

2) when television news started out back in the 1950s it occupied less than a thirty minute slot why because the first ten or fifteen minutes would be granted to local areas the remaining fifteen or twenty minutes would be taken up with world news often of great importance

3) instead of a definite idea I only have a random vague idea how about that if i were to sit here for the next twenty four hours I would only have a vague idea i hope I wont have to do any more algebra not even easy equations

4) deciding to run was a really bad idea but she had to get four unbruised green apples a tin of marmite and eight eggs

Part Two:

Write out the wrong sentences below each question, using every piece of punctuation you know, including question marks, speech marks and apostrophes (and parantheses if you're feeling really clever!) Then answer the question(s) for each one if there are any.

- 1) Product defects increased by 13 percent during the month which alarmed management, however the managers were not aware of the: high volume of trainees during the period.

Question: Why can't you just leave the comma after 'management' rather than changing it?

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- 2) He as the eagle a symbol of power and his mistress as the dove a symbol of peace and gentleness will come together.
 - 3) fred bowler as he walked home noticed that one his tail was all scruffy his mother would scold him for it that two his ears were smudged with mud the tips of them standing on end like hed had some kind of electric shock and that three he had lost a shoe his brothers best pair too what to do what to do he thought as he reached his burrow
 - 4) Spain it is a beautiful country: the beaches' are warm sandy, and spotlessly clean

Question: Why is the apostrophe wrong?

- 5) Tims gran a formidable woman, always bought him chocolate; cakes, sweets and a nice fresh apple.

- 6) The new material. Which will be available next week; is composed of plastic. And iodine.

Question: How do you know there should be no full stop before 'which'?

- 7) Steve always went to watch football, he loved the atmosphere at the games.

Question: If this was wrong, why is it wrong? If it was right, why is it right?

- 8) Write two wrong sentences of your own below with only TWO mistakes per sentence. Pass to a partner who should explain why they are wrong, then write out the correct version.

1)

2)

Varying your sentences – the difference between putting your examiner to sleep and sending shivers down their spine (i.e. between a D and an A...)

- Sharon's large, expensive house loomed over her.
- The white waves crashed down menacingly.
- They picked up a can and threw it.

The sentences above all start in the same way, and are, therefore, boring if they come one after another in a piece of writing. Label the parts of speech (noun, adjective, etc) and you'll start to see why.

- 1) Rewrite the sentences below, changing round the word order (you may need to add or remove words but you should end up with roughly the same meaning in the end):

- .

- .

- .

You can also use sentence length to jolt your examiner back into the world of the living. Put quite simply:

Short sentences = tension. Usually simple or compound

Long sentences = description. Usually compound or complex

You have to use simple, compound and complex sentences in your work to add interest. The simpler the sentence, the more tense or direct the effect, depending on which effect you wish to achieve.

SIMPLE SENTENCES

A simple sentence, also called an independent clause, contains a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought.

Write three simple sentences here:

1)

2)

3)

COMPOUND SENTENCES

A compound sentence contains two independent clauses joined by a conjunction ('and', 'or', 'so', 'nor', 'for' and 'yet')

Three compound sentences:

1)

2)

3)

COMPLEX SENTENCE

A complex sentence has an independent clause joined by one or more dependent clauses. A complex sentence always has a subordinator such as *because, since, after, although, or when* or a relative pronoun such as *that, who, or which*.

When he handed in his homework, he forgot to give in the last page.

The leaves rolled about the floor, which was grey concrete and dirty as a hovel.

Write three compound sentences here:

1)

2)

3)

Spellings: PROOFREAD!!!

A number of you are still getting simple spellings wrong! Choose the correct version below:

Over there/their/they're.

There/Their/They're are too many students in this class!

There/Their/They're clothes are red.

Many people say there/their/they're silly.

Are the following correct? If not, correct them:

Impossible

Animals

Accurate

Heven

Elleven

accompanny

Gratefull

mudle

Hopless

calous

Abreviate

careless

Acuraccy

errer

Speling

acquire

Dodgy

liase

Brige

brougt

Anything

analise

anybody

commitee

You're done!!! Breathe a sigh of relief.