

Book 9

**Mastering English
Grammar**

**DASHES,
PARENTHESES,
BRACKETS,
ELLIPSES,
ITALICS, AND
HYPHENS**

David Moeller

DASHES, PARENTHESSES, BRACKETS, ELLIPSES, ITALICS, AND HYPHENS

Book 9 of the MASTERING ENGLISH GRAMMAR
Series

David Moeller

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CONTENTS

General Introduction: *Mastering English Grammar*

Introduction to Book 9: *Dashes, Parentheses, Brackets, Ellipses, Italics, and Hyphens*

Lesson 1: Parentheses to Indicate a More Personal Voice

Lesson 2: Parentheses and the Sentence-Within-a-Sentence

Lesson 3: Parentheses and Internal Commas

Lesson 4: Brackets with Explanatory Information

Lesson 5: Brackets with Pronoun and Verb Conversions

Lesson 6: Dashes as Strong Commas

Lesson 7: Dashes with Compound Sentences

Lesson 8: Dashes and Internal Commas

Lesson 9: Ellipses to Indicate Deleted Words

Lesson 10: Lead-In and Trail-Out Ellipses

Lesson 11: Dashes Used as Colons

Lesson 12: Dashes Used as Reverse-Directional Colons

Lesson 13: Dashes to Create Dramatic Pauses

Lesson 14: Italics for Emphasis

Lesson 15: Words Referring to Words

Lesson 16: Foreign Expressions and Irony

Lesson 17: Dashes and the Sentence-Within-a-Sentence

Lesson 18: Dashes Used as Parentheses

Lesson 19: Hyphens with Compound Adjectives

Lesson 20: Canceling Hyphens

Lesson 21: Dashes to Emphasize Repeated Words and Contrasting Statements

Lesson 22: Dashes with Appositives

Lesson 23: Shared Duties

Punctuation Glossary of Terms

Test Questions

Test Part 1

Test Part 2

Test Part 3

Test Part 4

Test Part 5

Test Part 6

Test Part 7

Test Part 8

Test Part 9

Test Part 10

Test Part 11

Titles in the *Mastering English Grammar Series*

GENERAL INTRODUCTION: *MASTERING ENGLISH* GRAMMAR

The nine titles in the *Mastering English Grammar* series can be subdivided into three books on the parts of speech, three on sentence structure, and three on punctuation:

Parts of Speech

- Book 1: *Nouns and Adjectives*
- Book 2: *Verbs and Adverbs*
- Book 3: *Pronouns, Prepositions, and Conjunctions*

Sentence Structure

- Book 4: *Subjects and Verbs*
- Book 5: *Compound Sentences*
- Book 6: *Complex Sentences*

Punctuation

- Book 7: *Commas*
- Book 8: *Semicolons and Colons*
- Book 9: *Parentheses, Brackets, Dashes, Ellipses, Italics, and Hyphens*

What sets this series apart from other grammar books is that instead of trying to include all that can be said on the topic of grammar (the data-dump approach), it focuses on those concepts that promise a higher return on investment (ROI). In other words, as much as possible, the books in this series aim to translate the study of grammar into more competent reading and writing.

The term *generative* refers to a study of grammar or rhetoric that helps us achieve in writing what we wouldn't have been able to achieve otherwise. Generative grammar is grammar at its most practical—it's grammar we can use. Such generative material has been sprinkled throughout the pages of the

books in this series.

The nine books in this series constitute a writer's grammar. The *Mastering* that appears in the series title is not a reference to earning high scores on grammar quizzes; instead, it refers to increasing our ability to understand the texts of others and to formulate words, phrases, and clauses while writing. Ultimately, we will want to use the knowledge we gain to *generate* more complex structures as we write.

All nine books in this series contain exercises (called *Your Turn*), a book-ending *Test Questions* section, and answers to all exercise and test questions.

Ultimately, the aim of each title is to equip you with some knowledge and some practical skills to add to your arsenal of writing strategies.

E-Book Vs. Print

Because the nine titles in the series contain exercises and test questions, a discussion of the difference between an e-book and a print book is really a discussion of writing out answers vs. working out answers in our heads. The e-books in this series are designed to accommodate the limitations of e-readers. For example, to reduce scrolling, answers follow immediately upon the heels of questions. When access to reference material—like word lists, for example—is necessary, that material will reappear in those places where it is needed.

Print versions, on the other hand, leave room for writing out answers or marking up text. And in the print versions, the answers are in the back of the book.

INTRODUCTION TO BOOK 9: *DASHES, PARENTHESES, BRACKETS, ELLIPSES, ITALICS, AND HYPHENS*

Welcome to *Book 9: Dashes, Parentheses, Brackets, Ellipses, and Hyphens*, a book that teaches how to use those punctuation other marks that appear on our keyboards.

To be a *real* writer, you'll need to use all the tools at your disposal. This e-book teaches the need-to-know situations involving the need for some of these lesser-used punctuation marks.

In this e-book you'll learn:

- how parentheses enclose a sentence-within-a-sentence
- how to use brackets while quoting
- about when to use—and not to use—ellipses
- when to hyphenate—and not to hyphenate—compound adjectives

But mostly you'll learn about the star of the show—dashes. This book teaches dashes as strong commas, with compound sentences, with internal and external commas, with appositives, as colons or reverse-directional colons, to create dramatic pauses, as parentheses, and as the mark that allows us to emphasize repeated words.

Yes, dashes do all that.

PARENTHESES () LESSONS 1-3

Lesson 1: Parentheses to Indicate a More Personal Voice

Parentheses contain explanatory information. With parentheses, it is as if writers first create statements in *authorly* voices, then comment on those statements in **more personal voices**.

Example:

- Diomed (for once) swept forward.

In this sentence, after stating that Diomed swept forward, the writer would like to insert the more personal comment that this is not what we would normally expect from Diomed; normally Diomed is one of those who hangs back, more concerned about his safety.

If parenthetical words are removed from a sentence, a perfectly good sentence remains.

- **with the parenthetical words:** Diomed (for once) swept forward.
- **without the parenthetical words:** Diomed swept forward.

When testing for whether a word group qualifies as parenthetical material, check the removability of those words.

In the following example, an entire sentence is enclosed within its own parentheses.

- A squirrel chases itself so fast around the trunk of a palm tree that it appears to be standing still, like propeller blades in midflight. (I used to know the cause of this illusion.)

Here, though the parenthetical material is a complete sentence, it is still secondary and more personal in relationship to the sentence before. Hence, the parentheses work well.

Another example:

- The tower (a ruin) sat at the highest point.

In this sentence the main point is where the tower sits—at the highest point. Then there is this secondary, less-important fact (the tower is now a ruin) that the writer wants to pass along to the reader as well.

With parenthetical material, we can picture writers dropping their voices as they speak, as if what is contained within the parentheses is a secret.

Note on terminology: We can refer to the beginning and ending parentheses as **opening** and **closing** parentheses.

Also, the word *parentheses* is plural. When we refer to just one, we call that mark a *parenthesis*.

YOUR TURN 1

For each of the following three sentences, do two things. First, determine where parentheses can be placed by determining which words are secondary to the main idea. These secondary words are likely to be spoken in a more hushed tone.

Second, test the words you believe are the parenthetical words by checking the removability of those words. Read the non-parenthetical words only. They should make a valid and sensible sentence.

The number of parenthetical words is given to you in the parentheses that follow each sentence.

1. The best view is from the slaughterhouse quay which now is a market for pets on the right bank. (7)
2. Outriggers double boats ride the waves back in as the native warriors did. (2)
3. And if you give me your address I'll send you autographed, of course one of my little books of verse. (3)

ANSWERS 1

1. The best view is from the slaughterhouse quay (which now is a market for pets) on the right bank.

removability check: The best view is from the slaughterhouse quay on the right bank.

2. Outriggers (double boats) ride the waves back in as the native warriors did.

removability check: Outriggers ride the waves back in as the native warriors did.

3. And if you give me your address I'll send you (autographed, of course) one of my little books of verse.

removability check: And if you give me your address I'll send you one of my little books of verse.

Lesson 2: Parentheses and the Sentence- Within-a-Sentence

In most cases, parentheses are optional. Study these examples:

- Diomed, for once, swept forward.
- Diomed (for once) swept forward.
- The tower, a ruin, sat at the highest point.
- The tower (a ruin) sat at the highest point.

From these examples we can see that some parenthetical material can be handled by commas. Choosing one over the other simply depends on the desired effect. The commas present the parenthetical material as an integral part of the primary statement; the parentheses present the parenthetical material as more of a whispered and personal afterthought.

Parenthetical material can take its own punctuation—especially if that punctuation is a question mark or an exclamation mark. Note the internal exclamation mark in the following:

- We made her face the knitting women sitting on steps in the May Court (where a fresh tree was placed each spring by the lawyers' clerks!) on her way to the guillotine.

However, there are some situations in which parentheses are more mandatory. One of these is the **sentence-within-a-sentence**.

Examples:

- My junior year American history teacher and newspaper moderator (I was the editor) taught me not just the facts but also how to think about them.
- This desperate, dignified man, transformed by his art and by poverty (he kept his case open for money), could not play the mandolin.

Commas are simply not strong enough to allow us to drop a complete sentence within another complete sentence. Parentheses, however, are strong enough to do the job.

YOUR TURN 2

Each of the following contains a sentence-within-a-sentence. Identify where the sentence-within-a-sentence begins and ends. These are the spots where parentheses would be placed.

In addition, perform a removability check for the word groups you identify as sentences-within-sentences.

1. Even if I don't go away tomorrow I think I certainly shall go and we meet again, don't say a word more on these subjects.
2. I try to outline the book, not page by page, or point by point I've already done that at the back, but as an integrated structure. [*In this sentence the closing parenthesis is tucked inside the comma.*]
3. I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice its name had been changed since the time of the kings past the shadow of Saint Chapelle.

ANSWERS 2

1. Even if I don't go away tomorrow (I think I certainly shall go) and we meet again, don't say a word more on these subjects.

removability check: Even if I don't go away tomorrow and we meet again, don't say a word more on these subjects.

2. I try to outline the book, not page by page, or point by point (I've already done that at the back), but as an integrated structure.

removability check: I try to outline the book, not page by page, or point by point, but as an integrated structure.

3. I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice (its name had been changed since the time of the kings) past the shadow of Saint Chapelle.

removability check: I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice past the shadow of Saint Chapelle.

Lesson 3: Parentheses and Internal Commas

In the previous lesson we learned that while commas are not up to the task of punctuating a sentence-within-a-sentence, parentheses are. Here in this lesson we'll learn of a second situation (**internal commas**) in which parentheses are more mandatory.

Let's begin with a sentence:

- To do this, they use specific techniques we call “the language of persuasion.”

Now let's add some parenthetical material. Between *techniques* and *we* we'll drop in a list of what those techniques are:

- To do this they use specific techniques (,) flattery (,) repetition (,) fear (,) and humor (,) we call “the language of persuasion.”

The problem is that we now have two commas (the first and fifth) performing the *external* job of showing where the parenthetical statement begins and ends, and three commas (the second, third, and fourth) performing the *internal* job of separating the items in the series. Here is the same sentence with “e” standing in for the external commas and “i” standing in for the internal commas:

- To do this they use specific techniques (e) flattery (i) repetition (i) fear (i) and humor (e) we call “the language of persuasion.”

For the sake of the reader, we try to avoid situations in which commas perform more than one task. So let's solve our problem by converting the external commas to parentheses:

- To do this they use specific techniques (flattery (,) repetition (,) fear (,) and humor) we call “the language of persuasion.”

Here is another example:

- **confusing:** The margins, the top, the bottom, the two sides, are all available.

Here the problem is that readers will read this as if all these items belong

together in the same list. But a correct reading informs us that *margins* is the general category and *top*, *bottom*, and *sides* are the members of that category.

Parentheses to the rescue:

- **clear:** The margins (the top, the bottom, the two sides) are all available.

YOUR TURN 3

The following sentences contain commas that attempt to perform two separate jobs. Decide where you would place parentheses to create clearer, more readable versions.

1. As we run up against all of the renewable and non-renewable resource depletions, peak oil, peak soil, peak minerals, etc., that will characterize the foreseeable future, we require an entire rethink as to how we do business. (*Convert two commas to parentheses.*)
2. Politicians and advocacy groups, groups that support a particular belief, point of view, policy, or action, try to persuade us to vote for or support them using whatever means possible. (*Convert two commas to parentheses.*)
3. These *persuaders* use a variety of attention-grabbing techniques, to establish credibility and trust, to stimulate desire for the product or policy, and to motivate us to act, to buy, to vote, to give money. (*Convert one comma to a parenthesis; add a second parenthesis. Be sure to tuck the end-parenthesis inside the period.*)

ANSWERS 3

1. As we run up against all of the renewable and non-renewable resource depletions (peak oil, peak soil, peak minerals, etc.) that will characterize the foreseeable future, we require an entire rethink as to how we do business.

The material inside parentheses are specific examples of “resource depletions.”

2. Politicians and advocacy groups (groups that support a particular belief, point of view, policy, or action) try to persuade us to vote for or support them using whatever means possible.

The material inside parentheses clarifies the term “advocacy groups”

3. These *persuaders* use a variety of attention-grabbing techniques (to establish credibility and trust, to stimulate desire for the product or policy, and to motivate us to act, to buy, to vote, to give money).

The material inside parentheses lists specific examples of “attention-grabbing techniques.”

BRACKETS [] LESSONS 4-5

Lesson 4: Brackets with Explanatory Information

Parentheses and brackets are like a pair of twins, each performing the same job—with one exception: *what parentheses do outside of quotation marks, brackets do inside quotation marks.*

Example:

- Diomed (for once) swept forward.
- “Diomed [for once] swept forward.”

Though rare, we may encounter situations in which our bracketed material contains parenthetical material. If so, we revert back to parentheses. The rule is *parentheses inside brackets inside parentheses inside brackets* and so on.

Because brackets appear inside quotation marks, using them becomes a handy (and necessary) skill when we are engaged in writing an essay. While performing source-based writing, three common situations we might encounter requiring brackets are **explanatory information**, **pronoun conversion**, and **verb conversion**.

Here we will study explanatory information; in the next lesson we will study pronoun conversion and verb conversion.

Explanatory Information

Whenever we quote, we must be careful to view our quoted words from a reader’s point of view. For example, suppose we are quoting from the essay “Portrait of a Masked Man” by John Berger. Our essay is about Subcomandante Marcos, and we want to say that Marcos will no longer be making public appearances due to the severe “threats to the Zapatista communities and their way of life.”

Though some readers may know who the Zapatistas are, many will not. For those readers, we decide to provide the explanatory information.

Whenever we use quoted words, it is important that we carefully study those

words, looking for whatever words or phrases might need to be explained to our readers. But consider that the more educated and literate the audience, the less likely the need for explanation.

Our final version looks like this:

- Subcomandante Marcos will no longer be making public appearances due to the severe “threats to the Zapatista [a group based in Chiapas, Mexico, that desires to control its own land and resources] communities and their way of life.”

Or suppose we want to quote from “Faustian Economics” by Wendell Berry. We want to say that our current system offers us “the same bargain as that offered by Mephistopheles.” Some (or many) readers will not know who Mephistopheles is, so we must tell them:

- Our current system offers us “the same bargain as that offered by Mephistopheles [the devil character in Christopher Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*].”

Note: You may see *brackets* referred to as *square brackets*, which helps to distinguish the common brackets we are working with here [] from the less commonly used *angle brackets* < > used with HTML code, for example.

YOUR TURN 4

Each of the following sentences contains a term that should be explained to our readers. Following each sentence, the explanatory material is supplied. For each, you must decide where brackets belong and what words should appear inside those brackets.

Note: In numbers 1 and 3, place the bracketed material inside the comma.

1. With the help of some clever biologists and “the ban on DDT, the peregrine falcon was brought back from the brink of extinction.” (We will want to explain to our readers what DDT is. DDT is a synthetic insecticide, banned in 1972.)
2. The English novel often requires us to wade through many long, dense passages of description in the same way that “Jane and Dorothea endured their parched lives.” (We will want to inform readers that Jane and Dorothea are Jane Eyre from the novel of the same name and Dorothea Brooke from *Middlemarch*.)
3. “*The Sorcerer*, painted fifteen thousand years ago on the cave walls at Les Trois Frères,” provides a perfect image of our admiration for the same animals we hunt down and devour. (Our readers should know that *The Sorcerer* is the figure of a man in a deer skin with antlers mounted on his head.)

ANSWERS 4

1. With the help of some clever biologists and “the ban on DDT [a synthetic insecticide, banned in 1972], the peregrine falcon was brought back from the brink of extinction.” (*note the closing bracket inside the comma*)
2. The English novel often requires us to wade through many long, dense passages of description in the same way that “Jane and Dorothea [Jane Eyre from the novel of the same name and Dorothea Brooke from *Middlemarch*] endured their parched lives.”
3. “*The Sorcerer* [the figure of a man in a deer skin with antlers mounted on his head], painted fifteen thousand years ago on the cave walls at Les Trois Frères,” provides a perfect image of our admiration for the same animals we hunt down and devour. (*note the closing bracket inside the comma*)

Lesson 5: Brackets with Pronoun and Verb Conversions

PRONOUN CONVERSIONS

In the last lesson we learned that, when our quoted material doesn't contain all the information our readers need, we must supply that information.

Another situation that calls for brackets involves pronouns appearing within quotation marks. When our quoted material contains a pronoun—but not the antecedent to that pronoun—we will need to tell our readers who or what the pronoun is referring to.

Suppose we are quoting from “Our Vanishing Night” by Verlyn Klinkenborg, and we want to say that our eyes have evolved to see in sunlight, so “we’ve engineered it to receive us by filling it with light.” Because we have the full original text before us, we know that the *it* we have engineered is *the night*. Our readers will need to know this. So we **convert** the pronoun to a noun:

- Our eyes have evolved to see in sunlight, so “we’ve engineered [the night] to receive us by filling it with light.”

Note that, here, rather than placing our explanatory information next to the appropriate word or phrase, we are *replacing* the pronoun with the noun.

The larger, more comprehensive rule is this:

- When working within quotation marks, any changes made to the original text—both additions and alterations—need to be indicated with brackets.

So we see that a quoted passage containing one or more pronouns may not be quotation ready.

YOUR TURN 5

Each of the following sentences contains a pronoun that will not be clear to our readers. For each, determine where brackets should be placed; also determine what words should appear inside the brackets.

1. The sadness we feel when looking at the night sky is because “it has a stony face, while the earth’s face is slaphappy burlesque.” (*It is the moon.*)
2. The mansion is so inconceivably large that “it seems as if he had set out to show just how much space a rich man could waste.” (*He is the architect.*)

ANSWERS 5

1. The sadness we feel when looking at the night sky is because “[the moon] has a stony face, while the earth’s face is slaphappy burlesque.”
2. The mansion is so inconceivably large that “[the architect] seems as if he had set out to show just how much space a rich man could waste.”

VERB CONVERSIONS

Verbs, like pronouns, may also force us into altering a quotation. If we are writing in the present tense but the passage we are quoting is in the past tense, we must convert the tense—and vice versa. Verbs that are not in the same tense as the tense we are writing in must be converted.

For example, we are writing an essay about fainting (in the present tense), and we find a past-tense passage to quote. Before converting the verb, we have this:

- The blood pressure drops suddenly, and “the nervous system shot acetylcholine into the bloodstream.”

The problem here is that the past tense verb *shot* fails to match the present tense verb *drops*. So we convert the verb:

- The blood pressure drops suddenly, and “the nervous system [shoots] acetylcholine into the bloodstream.”

Note: Though brackets are available to indicate whatever changes might be made to the original words, writers can reduce the need for brackets by considering alternative phrasings that might avoid the need for brackets.

YOUR TURN (continued)

Each of the following sentences contain a verb that is not in the tense we are writing in. Convert the tense of each of these verbs according to the instructions.

3. Writers know they are meant to write when “the motive to write sent its roots down to the deepest places in their hearts.” (Make all verbs consistently present tense.)
4. After this, Dora’s parents decide to send their daughter to Sigmund Freud, “who found meaning in her symptoms, her dreams, and her hesitations.” (Make all verbs consistently present tense.)

ANSWERS

3. Writers know they are meant to write when “the motive to write **sends** its roots down to the deepest places in their hearts.” (*present tense “sends” matches present tense “know”*)
4. After this, Dora’s parents decide to send their daughter to Sigmund Freud, “who **finds** meaning in her symptoms, her dreams, and her hesitations.” (*present tense “finds” matches present tense “decide”*)

DASHES — LESSONS 6-8

Lesson 6: Dashes as Strong Commas

The dash is perhaps the most versatile of all punctuation marks, and before we conclude this series of lessons, we will learn of its many roles. The first function of dashes we will look at is the dash as a comma replacement—when we want something **stronger than a comma**.

Note: We get little benefit from learning how to use dashes if we do not also learn how to make them while word processing. When using Microsoft Word, we type a word. Now, with our cursor touching the right side of the word we typed, we type *HYPHEN HYPHEN WORD SPACE*. A correctly made dash is a wide mark (—), unlike the much narrower hyphen (-).

Examples:

- Time marches on, even for children—although the pace seems to crawl when they're young.

This sentence might have been punctuated with two commas. But the writer senses that the second pause is stronger than the first and so uses a dash instead of a comma.

- Some nosing zealot in the Ministry might start wondering why he had been writing during the lunch interval, why he had used an old-fashioned pen, what he had been writing—and then drop a hint in the appropriate quarter.

In this sentence the *why-*, *why-*, and *what-* clauses are parallel and naturally cluster together. Though a comma would have been grammatically correct, the dash more clearly shows that the final word group varies from those that came before.

The examples above are examples of single dashes, but dashes can also be used in pairs. Study the following:

- **with commas:** None of us, whether of barnyard or human society, thrives without a sense of belonging.
- **with parentheses:** None of us (whether of barnyard or human society)

thrives without a sense of belonging.

- **with dashes:** None of us—whether of barnyard or human society—thrives without a sense of belonging.

From these examples we can see that there are three ways to punctuate parenthetical material: with commas, with parentheses, and with dashes. Dashes used in pairs are parentheses-like: the first dash indicates where the parenthetical material begins (an *opening* dash), and the second dash shows where the parenthetical material ends (a *closing* dash).

YOUR TURN 6

In numbers 1 and 2, replace a comma with a dash. Number 1 has only one comma. But in number 2 you'll need to decide which of the four commas is the best candidate for being replaced by a dash. As you read your revised sentences, let the pauses you've created linger.

1. Their electronic experiences have led them to expect to see these things happening, all at once and with no effort on their part.
2. She was in the kitchen, not even aware Eric had come in, moving slowly, weighted down, not paying us any attention. [*You will want the similar or parallel word groups to be grouped together.*]

For numbers 3 and 4, replace *two* commas with *two* dashes. Number 4 will require you to determine which of the two commas would best be replaced by dashes.

3. At the very bottom of the final page, running out of space, he scrawled his name.
4. To date, none of them, from film to television, has lived up to the hype. [*Here, one comma will remain.*]

For the last two sentences of this Your Turn, instead of replacing commas, you'll replace parentheses with dashes.

5. Advocates are hoping that the handling of animals in their last hours (even those that exist to die) does matter to us.
5. There was a time after this in which Sir Ector kept telling him to put the sword back into the stone (which he did) and in which Sir Ector and Kay then vainly tried to take it out.

ANSWERS 6

1. Their electronic experiences have led them to expect to see these things happening—all at once and with no effort on their part.
2. She was in the kitchen, not even aware Eric had come in—moving slowly, weighted down, not paying us any attention. [*here the dash separates the three short participial phrases from the rest of the sentence, in effect grouping them together*]
3. At the very bottom of the final page—running out of space—he scrawled his name.
4. To date, none of them—from film to television—has lived up to the hype.
5. Advocates are hoping that the handling of animals in their last hours—even those that exist to die—does matter to us.
5. There was a time after this in which Sir Ector kept telling him to put the sword back into the stone—which he did—and in which Sir Ector and Kay then vainly tried to take it out.

Lesson 7: Dashes with Compound Sentences

The conventional method for forming the basic **compound sentence** is sentence-comma-conjunction sentence. Like this:

- I look forward to the unsurpassable joys of staying close to home (,) AND that joy is the key here.

In a compound sentence, the spot just before the conjunction is significant. In most cases the comma before the conjunction gets the job done just fine. But in some cases (don't overdo it) we will want a greater and more dramatic pause—so we bring the dash into play.

- I look forward to the unsurpassable joys of staying close to home—AND that joy is the key here.

Dashes create strong pauses, and they do so in a variety of situations. As we develop our ear to hear the cadence of pauses, we should note also how dashes provide a sense of drama, creating a sense of heightened expectation within readers, who wait expectantly for the material that follows a dash.

Compare, as well, these two examples.

- **satisfactory:** Some of them had come from the banners in the church, some from the waters and the fields about (,) BUT all had come to help on account of love.
- **with extra punch:** Some of them had come from the banners in the church, some from the waters and the fields about— BUT all had come to help on account of love.

Note once again how the dash's lengthy pause helps to accentuate the final clause.

YOUR TURN 7

Mentally revise each of the following sentences. Add contrast and drama to the pause just before the conjunction by converting the comma to a dash. Read your revisions and savor the stronger pauses.

1. A person can sometimes pull such a stunt that afterward he himself won't be able to make heads or tails of his actions, and somebody else, of course, will understand them even less.
2. In the annals of true friendship there are no more honored names than those of Damon and Pythias, for no person can do more than be willing to lay down his life for the sake of his friend.

ANSWERS 7

1. A person can sometimes pull such a stunt that afterward he himself won't be able to make heads or tails of his actions—AND somebody else, of course, will understand them even less.
2. In the annals of true friendship there are no more honored names than those of Damon and Pythias—FOR no person can do more than be willing to lay down his life for the sake of his friend.

Lesson 8: Dashes and Internal Commas

We learned earlier that not all pauses are equal, and that—if at all possible—we should try to arrange our sentences so that each punctuation mark performs one job only.

Often, it is the poor comma that is asked to do more than it should. In such situations where we find overworked commas, the dash proves quite handy.

Here is an example:

- **with commas:** Sporting accessories (,) hockey sticks (,) boxing gloves (,) a burst football (,) a pair of sweaty shorts turned inside out (,) lay all over the floor.
- **with numbers representing the commas:** Sporting accessories (1) hockey sticks (2) boxing gloves (3) a burst football (4) a pair of sweaty shorts turned inside out (5) lay all over the floor.

This sentence contains a list of items just after the subject *accessories*. The list tells the reader what some of those accessories are. As a result, the five commas are performing two different jobs. The first and fifth commas show us where the list begins and ends; the second, third, and fourth commas separate the items in that list. The end result is confusion for the reader.

So let's take the job of beginning and ending the list of items away from the two commas that currently serve that function and hand that job over to a pair of dashes. By doing so, we get this much improved version:

- Sporting accessories—hockey sticks (,) boxing gloves (,) a burst football (,) a pair of sweaty shorts turned inside out—lay all over the floor.

Now, with our improved version, the dashes are **external** to the list, while the three remaining commas are **internal** to the list.

This same principle of external vs. internal is at work in the following example, even though only one dash appears:

- Schools are meant to tag the unfit—with poor grades (,) remedial placement (,) and other punishments.

Here, the commas are internal to the list, while the single dash is external to

the list.

YOUR TURN 8

Revise each of the following sentences. In each, you must decide which comma or commas to replace with dashes. The key is to identify which items constitute a list of items. Once you've done that, you can determine which commas are internal to the list and which are external.

1. The message of the medium, abstraction, manipulation, control, and power, inevitably influences those who use it. [*needs two dashes*]
2. We could encourage the best qualities of youthfulness, curiosity, adventure, resilience, the capacity for surprising insight, simply by giving students the autonomy they need in order to take a risk every now and then. [*needs two dashes*]
3. The telescreen, perhaps to celebrate the victory, perhaps to drown out the memory of the lost chocolate, crashed into "Oceania, 'tis for thee." [*needs two dashes*]
4. He kicked on the vacuum and I held tight as the scoop sank into the pillow and moved down its length, once, twice, three times. [*needs one dash*]

ANSWERS 8

In the answers below, the items in the lists (along with the internal commas) are underlined.

In these four sentences, the capacity of dashes to group like terms with like terms is clearly seen. This capacity is described in the comments that follow each sentence.

1. The message of the medium—abstraction (,) manipulation (,) control (,) and power—inevitably influences those who use it. [*Here, four abstract nouns are grouped together.*]
2. We could encourage the best qualities of youthfulness—curiosity (,) adventure (,) resilience (,) the capacity for surprising insight—simply by giving students the autonomy they need in order to take a risk every now and then. [*Once again, four abstract nouns—one of them a noun phrase—are grouped together.*]
3. The telescreen—perhaps to celebrate the victory (,) perhaps to drown out the memory of the lost chocolate—crashed into “Oceania, ’tis for thee.” [*Here, two parallel phrases—both beginning with “perhaps to”—are grouped together.*]
4. He kicked on the vacuum and I held tight as the scoop sank into the pillow and moved down its length—once (,) twice (,) three times. [*Here, three numerical terms are grouped together.*]

ELLIPSES . . . LESSONS 9-10

Lesson 9: Ellipses to Indicate Deleted Words

We are likely to use ellipses while incorporating quoted words into our essays. Ellipses (*ellipsis* is the singular form) show the reader that we have **deleted** one or more words from the original quotation.

Here is an original passage, from “Ghost Writers” by Cynthia Ozick:

- In a story called “The Private Life,” a writer burdened by one of those peculiar Jamesian names, one **Clare Vawdrey, rhyming perhaps not accidentally with “tawdry,” is visible everywhere in every conceivable social situation.**

This is the complete passage. Suppose that for an essay we are writing we decide to quote the boldfaced words only. Like this:

- While Blanche Adney nourishes her artistic life through her privacy, “Clare Vawdrey, rhyming perhaps not accidentally with ‘tawdry,’ is visible everywhere in every conceivable social situation.”

We see, however, that the medial phrase appearing between the two commas (underlined above) fails to add anything to the point we are making, so we decide that our quotation is better off without these words. Which leaves us with this:

- While Blanche Adney nourishes her artistic life through her privacy, “Clare Vawdrey . . . is visible everywhere in every conceivable social situation.”

We don’t want to give our readers the impression that we are more concerned with padding our word count than with writing well. When we include overly long quoted passages—especially when those passages contain inessential words—we are announcing to the reader that we are aiming for quantity over quality.

Using ellipses makes the opposite statement. When readers see ellipses, they

credit writers with being more concerned with using essential words than with inflating word-counts.

Typing an Ellipsis

While performing generic writing in Microsoft Word, typing *SPACE DOT DOT DOT SPACE WORD* will give us the ellipsis used in general writing, like this:

- *WORD ... WORD*

But in many more regulated writing scenarios—like academic writing—we space out the dots in our ellipses:

- *WORD SPACE DOT SPACE DOT SPACE DOT SPACE WORD*

In other words, spaces occur to the left and right of each *dot*, giving us this format:

- *WORD . . . WORD*

YOUR TURN 9

For each of the following, identify a word group that could be replaced with an ellipsis. Because the removable word groups are punctuated with commas, the commas will be removed along with the words.

Quotation marks appear as a reminder that we use ellipses when quoting the words of others.

The word count for each removable word group appears as a bracketed note.

1. “Golgotha, the Place of the Skull, is also, according to Jerusalem tradition, the grave of Adam.” [*remove five words*]
2. “In the days immediately after my mother’s death, as its reality slowly overtook my consciousness, I found myself recalling Robinson Crusoe.” [*remove seven words*]
3. “He or she may feel, as the wrinkled scribes of the day continue to take up space and consume the oxygen in the increasingly small room of the print world, that the elderly have the edge, with their established names and already secured honors.” [*remove twenty-five words*]

ANSWERS 9

1. “Golgotha, the Place of the Skull, is also . . . the grave of Adam.”
2. “In the days immediately after my mother’s death . . . I found myself recalling Robinson Crusoe.”
3. “He or she may feel . . . that the elderly have the edge, with their established names and already secured honors.”

Lesson 10: Lead-In and Trail-Out Ellipses

In the previous exercise, all our ellipses occurred in the middle of sentences. But what about *lead-in* and *trail-out* ellipses? To answer this question, let's look at an example:

- In the days immediately after my mother's death, **I found myself recalling Robinson Crusoe**, the title character of Daniel Defoe's 1719 novel.

The decision to quote the boldfaced words presents us with some options. Here are two of them:

- **option A, with lead-in and trail-out ellipses:** Janna Malamud Smith felt compelled to write of her inner turmoil when “. . . [she] found [herself] recalling Robinson Crusoe”
- **option B, without lead-in and trail-out ellipses:** Janna Malamud Smith felt compelled to write of her inner turmoil when “[she] found [herself] recalling Robinson Crusoe.”

But which option should we choose? Here are three reasons why option B is the better choice:

1. It is less clumsy, more readable, more reader-friendly.
2. The quotation marks promise the reader “The words appearing between these two quotation marks are taken verbatim from the original text.” They make no promise at all about other words not taken from the original.
3. Lead-in and trail-out ellipses tell readers nothing they didn't already know: Of course there were other words to the left; of course there were other words to the right.

Ellipses makes it possible to misrepresent our source writers. But we are above that. As long as our use of quotation fairly represents the writers we quote, there is no need to clutter our writing with baggage like lead-in or trail-out ellipses.

Note: The *use ellipses to replace words* rule works in all situations—even with one or more complete sentences. We may want to use ellipses to replace a complete sentence, a sentence-and-a-half, two sentences, and so on. Such

ellipsis usage may require us to use four dots instead of three. In other words, you may be required to use an ellipsis-plus-a-period or a period-plus-an-ellipsis. It is important to be clear about which dots are part of an ellipsis and which dots are periods.

YOUR TURN 10

In this exercise you will once again practice incorporating ellipses. But in addition to that simpler task, you will also practice the more difficult task of gracefully blending quoted words with words of your own.

1. Scientists at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego estimate that there is a 50 percent chance that Lake Mead—the vast reservoir that delivers Colorado River water to tens of millions of people and one million acres of irrigated land—will dry up by 2021.

Create a sentence that incorporates the underlined words from above as quoted words in a sentence of your own making. To do this, you will need to use quotation marks and ellipses. In addition, you will need to create the words that sit outside the quotation marks. Your final produce will be a sentence consisting of some outside-the-quotation-mark words that you create yourself and some inside-the-quotation-marks words—the words that are underlined in the passage above.

2. If educational institutions hope to compete with the media for students' attention—and to attract their share of public dollars—they need to devote at least as much serious thought to how they organize their representations as do the media managers who produce a ninety-second TV commercial.

Create a sentence that incorporates the underlined words from above as quoted words in a sentence of your own making. To do this, you will need to use quotation marks and ellipses. In addition, you will need to create the words that sit outside the quotation marks. Your final produce will be a sentence consisting of some outside-the-quotation-mark words that you create yourself and some inside-the-quotation-marks words—the words that are underlined in the passage above.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS 10

Note the pattern for each of the possible answers below:

- *Words you create yourself “quoted words.”*
- 1. Before you go out and buy yourself a house boat, consider “that there is a 50 percent chance that Lake Mead . . . will dry up by 2021.”
- 2. Too many university presidents fail to take into account that “if educational institutions hope to compete with the media for students’ attention . . . they need to devote at least as much serious thought to how they organize their representations as do the media managers.”

DASHES — LESSONS 11-13

Lesson 11: Dashes Used as Colons

We use **colons** when the material to the right explains the material to the left.

Example:

- Leaves something unexplained (**:**) explains it. [*to call more attention to them, we are boldfacing our colons and placing them inside parentheses*]
- Promoters of instructional technology have reverted to a much more modest claim (**:**) that the computer is just another tool.

In this sentence, the left-hand material claims that there has been “a much more modest claim”; however, we readers are left to wonder what that claim might be. The right-hand material then explains for us what exactly the “much more modest claim” is.

This same function can be performed by the dash:

- Promoters of instructional technology have reverted to a much more modest claim (**—**) that the computer is just another tool.

Seemingly, we have two methods of achieving the same result. There is, however, a slight difference. The colon is a more formal, serious, and thoughtful mark; the dash is more informal, spontaneous, and dramatic. So the two marks do perform the same function—but each with a different feeling or tone.

Another pair of examples:

- He hardly had the strength for all these chores, but he did have a certain manner (**:**) he was always cheerful.
- He hardly had the strength for all these chores, but he did have a certain manner (**—**) he was always cheerful.

YOUR TURN 11

Take the following formal, serious, and thoughtful sentences and convert them to informal, spontaneous, and dramatic sentences. (In other words, convert the colons to dashes.)

1. And that left them sitting ducks for another great invention of the modern era: marketing.
2. Long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands: Big Joe Brady's restaurant.

Take the following informal, spontaneous, and dramatic sentences and convert them to formal, serious, and thoughtful sentences. (In other words, this time the dashes convert to colons.)

3. Then he took his own clothing and laid it out on the ground in plain sight—the pants, then the coat, the boots, and nearby, the hat.
4. Maybe he can see a bit through that pigment, but it can't be much—a flicker of light and shade, perhaps.

ANSWERS 11

1. And that left them sitting ducks for another great invention of the modern era (—) marketing.
2. Long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands (—) Big Joe Brady's restaurant.
3. Then he took his own clothing and laid it out on the ground in plain sight (:) the pants, then the coat, the boots, and nearby, the hat.
4. Maybe he can see a bit through that pigment, but it can't be much (:) a flicker of light and shade, perhaps.

Lesson 12: Dashes Used as Reverse-Directional Colons

Most people we stop on the street can tell us that *colons are used with lists*. What these people on the street are referring to is this sentence pattern:

- sentence (:) list

But what few people know is that this same pattern can be reversed—the list can precede the summary sentence. When we do choose to reverse the conventional pattern, the punctuation mark converts to a dash. (This explains the terminology *dash used as a reverse-directional colon*.)

Example:

The conventional way, with a colon:

- sentence (:) list
- These made up his world (:) the road ahead, the houses and people, the trees and fields that flashed by the windows.

Reversed, with a dash:

- list (—) sentence
- The road ahead, the houses and people, the trees and fields that flashed by the windows (—) these made up his world.

Note that, with the reverse-directional pattern, the word after the dash is often a summary word—a word that includes the items listed to the left of the dash and that calls our attention to those items. In this case, the summary word is *these*.

YOUR TURN 12

Revise each of the following sentences by flip-flopping them. For each, move the list from the right side to the left. In each case, you will need to convert the colon to a dash.

1. All are tied together in this complex web: the consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement.
2. It was all a sort of glorious game to them: the songs, the processions, the banners, the drilling with dummy rifles, the yelling of slogans, the worship of Big Brother.
3. These are the places where meaning is genuinely to be found: in families, in friends, in the passage of seasons, in nature, in simple ceremonies and rituals, in curiosity, in generosity, in compassion, and in service to others.

ANSWERS 12

1. The consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement (—) **all** are tied together in this complex web.
2. The songs, the processions, the banners, the drilling with dummy rifles, the yelling of slogans, the worship of Big Brother (—) it was **all** a sort of glorious game to them.
3. In families, in friends, in the passage of seasons, in nature, in simple ceremonies and rituals, in curiosity, in generosity, in compassion, and in service to others (—) **these** are the places where meaning is genuinely to be found.

Lesson 13: Dashes to Create Dramatic Pauses

Up to this point we have encountered a variety of situations for using dashes: as strong commas, with compound sentences, to provide contrast with internal commas, as colons, and as reverse-directional colons.

As it turns out, each of these uses of the dash—as well as others we will study in upcoming lessons—have one thing in common: they create a **dramatic pause**.

To get a sense of the dramatic pause provided by dashes, compare this sentence:

- **routine:** She will forgive you in the end.

With this:

- **dramatic:** She will forgive you—in the end.

In the second example, you get the sense that the line is delivered by a professional actor. After delivering the word *you*, the actor pauses deeply, stares piercingly into the eyes a second actor, then delivers the final three words in much lower—yet more forceful and meaningful—tones.

Here is another example:

- **routine:** Fifty thousand birds were killed when they followed the beam of a guide light at Warner Robins Air Force Base straight into the ground.
- **dramatic:** Fifty thousand birds were killed when they followed the beam of a guide light at Warner Robins Air Force Base—straight into the ground.

YOUR TURN 13

To each of the following sentences, add a strategically placed dash that lends the sentence's final words some extra drama. In one sentence leave two words to the right of the dash; leave four in another, five in another, and six in another.

1. Suddenly he gave a startled cry and pointed at the wolf hair!
2. What happened to send Emily Dickinson to her room for life?
3. These Apaches liked to stake a man out on an anthill and let the hot sun and ants do him in, or maybe the buzzards if they got there soon enough.
4. Children are to be sorted by role and trained only so far as their destination in the social machine merits and not one step further.

ANSWERS 13

1. Suddenly he gave a startled cry and pointed—at the wolf hair!
2. What happened to send Emily Dickinson to her room—for life?
3. These Apaches liked to stake a man out on an anthill and let the hot sun and ants do him in, or maybe the buzzards—if they got there soon enough.
4. Children are to be sorted by role and trained only so far as their destination in the social machine merits—and not one step further.

ITALICS LESSONS 14-16

Lesson 14: Italics for Emphasis

Italicized letters are slanted letters. They can be created while word processing; while handwriting (with a pen or pencil), we use underlining as an alternative to italics. Italicized letters equal underlined letters, and underlined letters equal italicized letters. It just depends on whether we're using a computer or a sheet of paper.

One quite common use of italics is to indicate titles of book-length texts, as in *The Lord of the Flies*.

All sentences have their own cadences, their own music. We hear these sounds as we compose sentences. We hear our own voice accenting certain syllables, rising and falling in pitch, and pausing strategically.

Unfortunately, our readers may not hear the same sounds that we do. And since written prose is not accompanied by musical notation, it is often difficult to pass our idea of a sentence's musicality onto our readers.

We do, however, have a few tools at our disposal. One such tool is the option of italicizing. Italicized words and phrases are meant to be read with **emphasis**—with added force, vigor, and volume.

Study these examples:

- She will forgive you. (*straightforward*)
- *She* will forgive you. (*not any of those other people over there*)
- She *will* forgive you. (*you can count on it*)
- She will *forgive* you. (*forgiveness! just think of it*)
- She will forgive *you*. (*not any of those other people over there*)

Italics are the correct—and the only correct—way to show that a word or phrase should be emphasized. We often encounter everything else: boldface, all caps, extra exclamation marks, underlining, or a combination of these. But when we want to show emphasis, each of these choices is incorrect. Only italics show emphasis.

YOUR TURN 14

In each of the following sentences, decide which word or words should be italicized for emphasis. Bracketed clues follow each sentence.

1. I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice. [*most people crawl*]
2. Michael Measure estimates that at least 100 million birds are killed annually by human structures. [*the number of birds is shocking*]
3. As we run up against all of the renewable and non-renewable resource depletions, we require an entire rethink as to how we do business. [*a partial rethink just won't do*]
4. Whenever we quote, we must be careful to view our quotation from a reader's point of view. [*not from our own point of view*]
5. Then he took his own clothing and laid it out on the ground in plain sight. [*we had expected him to use someone else's clothing*]

ANSWERS 14

1. I **walk** along the fence of the Place of Justice.
2. Michael Measure estimates that at least **100 million** birds are killed annually by human structures.
3. As we run up against all of the renewable and non-renewable resource depletions, we require an **entire** rethink as to how we do business.
4. Whenever we quote, we must be careful to view our quotation from a **reader's** point of view.
5. Then he took his **own** clothing and laid it out on the ground in plain sight.

Lesson 15: Words Referring to Words

When words are used to **refer to words**, we have two options: italics or quotation marks.

However, once we've made our choice, we must strive for consistency. If we decide to use italics for the job, we use italics throughout; if we decide to use quotation marks, we use quotation marks throughout.

The first question we might ask is *Don't all words refer to words?* The answer is No.

Take the word "cat," for example. The word cat refers to a four-legged feline. Suppose someone asks, *Have you seen my cat?* we wouldn't answer, *No. In fact, I haven't even seen a "c," let alone an "a" or a "t."*

Of course, the cat-owner asking for our assistance isn't asking us if we've seen a "c," an "a," or a "t." The cat-owner is asking if we've seen a four-legged feline.

In other words, words point elsewhere, not to themselves. The word *cat* points to an animal, not to the three letters it is made of.

But when we are referring to the physical word itself—the letters the word is made of—we mark that word with italics or quotation marks. The same is true when we are referring to individual letters rather than an entire word.

Each of the examples below is correct:

- Have you seen my cat?
- Is *cat* spelled with a *k*?
- Is "cat" spelled with a "k"?

YOUR TURN 15

For numbers 1 and 2, determine which words or individual letters should be italicized.

1. Even the word massacre is a bit of an exaggeration.
2. In stanza four, sun and gone provide an example of slant rhyme.

Now let's practice using our other option. For numbers 3 and 4, determine which words or individual letters should be placed inside quotation marks. Remember that periods get tucked inside quotation marks.

3. If there is one word that can describe its voice, it is the word authentic.
4. The e in err should be pronounced like the e in her.

ANSWERS 15

1. Even the word *massacre* is a bit of an exaggeration.
2. In stanza four, *sun* and *gone* provide an example of slant rhyme.
3. If there is one word that can describe its voice, it is the word “authentic.”
4. The “e” in “err” should be pronounced like the “e” in “her.”

Lesson 16: Foreign Expressions and Irony

As we have seen, italics and quotation marks share some of the same duties. In this lesson, the first section is devoted to italics and the second section is devoted to quotation marks.

FOREIGN EXPRESSIONS

Italicize **foreign expressions**.

We italicize foreign words and phrases—even many of those that have found their way into English language dictionaries.

Examples:

- On what is normally my typing table there is a bowl of hot *glügg*.
- Our species—*homo sapiens*—first appeared as a biologically recognizable entity around 195,000 years ago.
- “You have a nice *multiflora cineraria* there,” she remarked as she walked ahead down the hall of closed doors.

YOUR TURN 16

For each of the following, determine which words should be italicized.

1. They construct a long, water-permeable barrier known as a makhloba.
2. This little lodge, these rocks, the water, the fire—these are sacred, these we will use from now on as we have done here for the first time: for purification, for life, for wichosani, for health.
3. He looked up at the group of big brown boys on the rock and shouted, “Bonjour! Merci! Au revoir! Monsieur, monsieur!” while he hooked his fingers round his ears and wagged them.

ANSWERS 16

1. They construct a long, water-permeable barrier known as a *makhloba*.
2. This little lodge, these rocks, the water, the fire—these are sacred, these we will use from now on as we have done here for the first time: for purification, for life, for *wichosani*, for health.
3. He looked up at the group of big brown boys on the rock and shouted, “*Bonjour! Merci! Au revoir! Monsieur, monsieur!*” while he hooked his fingers round his ears and wagged them.

IRONY

Use quotation marks to indicate **irony**.

We use quotation marks to give an ironic twist to certain words and phrases. We might also think of ironic quotation marks as marks that tell the reader that certain words are only *so-called*, or *their words, not mine*.

Although italics can be used to indicate irony, quotation marks are the more common choice.

This function of quotation marks has both a noble and a petty purpose. When used more nobly, these marks indicate to the reader, *Look, just because these people call it this, you and I, dear reader, are under no obligation to do so*.

And this is quite true. If a word is used inaccurately, we are under no obligation to use the word inaccurately ourselves.

The petty use of ironic quotation marks is quite similar to *air quotes*, as in *Oh, you're quite the "comedian."* Here you can imagine the speaker waxing ever so sarcastic while flexing a pair of fingers, one on each side of his or her head.

YOUR TURN (continued)

For each of the following, identify the ironic words or phrases that should be placed inside quotation marks. Look to the bracketed clues for assistance.

4. The essay that is considered literature in our day is not an ambitious or impassioned analysis of human nature. [*The writer does not really agree that this sort of essay qualifies as literature.*]
5. Most of the luxuries and many of the comforts of life are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind. [*Others may think of these things as comforts, but this writer doesn't agree one bit.*]
5. The vast majority of research turned out in the modern university is essentially worthless, resulting in no measurable benefit to anything or anybody. [*Those at the university may call it research, but not this writer.*]

ANSWERS

4. The essay that is considered “literature” in our day is not an ambitious or impassioned analysis of human nature.
5. Most of the luxuries and many of the “comforts” of life are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind.
5. The vast majority of “research” turned out in the modern university is essentially worthless, resulting in no measurable benefit to anything or anybody.

DASHES — LESSONS 17-18

Lesson 17: Dashes and the Sentence- Within-a-Sentence

We will now hearken way back to Lesson 2. In Lesson 2 we learned how parentheses can be used to punctuate the **sentence-within-a-sentence**. We will now see how dashes can be used to accomplish the same task.

Here are two sentences:

- **first sentence:** Born to humble parents Arachne * was put to work on the loom as a young girl.
- **second sentence:** Her father was a dyer of wool.

Because the second sentence relates to the *humble parents* of the first sentence, we decide to move the second sentence inside the first sentence, just after the word *parents*. This key spot is marked with an asterisk (*).

In Lesson 2, we used parentheses to accomplish the task of inserting one sentence inside another. Here in Lesson 17, we'll accomplish this same task with dashes.

- **sentence-within-a-sentence:** Born to humble parents—her father was a dyer of wool—Arachne was put to work on the loom as a young girl.

One more example:

- **first sentence:** Winston had never been able to feel sure * whether O'Brien was a friend or an enemy.
- **second sentence:** Even after this morning's flash of the eyes it was still impossible to be sure.
- **sentence-within-a-sentence:** Winston had never been able to feel sure—even after this morning's flash of the eyes it was still impossible to be sure—whether O'Brien was a friend or an enemy.

YOUR TURN 17

For each of the following, use dashes to insert the second sentence within the first sentence. Read your finished products out loud and note the spots where dashes would appear.

1.

first sentence: Alyosha was a skinny little fellow * lop-eared and with a large nose.

second sentence: His ears stuck out like wings.

2.

first sentence: This is caused by the people * who routinely manage, by careful placement, to block the entire aisle with a shopping cart.

second sentence: And you just know these are the same people who drive slowly in the left-hand lane.

3.

first sentence: And we threw all our snowballs into the smoke * and ran out of the house to the telephone box.

second sentence: I think we missed Mr. Prothero.

ANSWERS 17

1. Alyosha was a skinny little fellow—his ears stuck out like wings—lop-eared and with a large nose.
2. This is caused by the people—and you just know these are the same people who drive slowly in the left-hand lane—who routinely manage, by careful placement, to block the entire aisle with a shopping cart.
3. And we threw all our snowballs into the smoke—I think we missed Mr. Prothero—and ran out of the house to the telephone box.

Lesson 18: Dashes Used as Parentheses

The term *parenthetical material* to refer to words, phrases, or clauses inserted within complete sentences. And, as we would expect, parenthetical material is often enclosed within parentheses.

However, dashes can also perform the work of parentheses—as we have seen earlier.

It should be noted that the choice between parentheses and dashes is not an arbitrary one. Though they can be grammatical equals, the two marks differ in the tone or emphasis they lend the parenthetical material.

With parentheses we are meant to take the parenthetical material and to bring it down a notch, as if we are whispering from behind our hand; with dashes, we are meant to read the parenthetical material at the same level as the primary sentence—or possibly even with extra emphasis.

Examples:

- **the parenthetical material is subdued:** This sometimes happens when the cornea (the front of the eyeball) has been inflamed over a long period, and it is very difficult to treat.
- **the parenthetical material asserts itself:** This sometimes happens when the cornea—the front of the eyeball—has been inflamed over a long period, and it is very difficult to treat.

YOUR TURN 18

This exercise is similar to exercise 17. The only difference is that the added, parenthetical material is less than a complete sentence.

For each of the following, use dashes to insert the second sentence within the first sentence—into the slot marked by an asterisk. Read your finished products out loud and note the spots where dashes would appear.

1.

primary sentence: He married Beauty, and lived with her many years, and their happiness * was complete.

parenthetical material: as it was founded on virtue

2.

primary sentence: Damon hastened straightaway to the palace and * gladly offered to be held hostage for his friend.

parenthetical material: much to the amazement of King Dionysius

3.

primary sentence: I think somebody * may care for Myron as we cared for Aunt Leora.

parenthetical material: perhaps his brother, Andrew

ANSWERS 18

1. He married Beauty, and lived with her many years, and their happiness—as it was founded on virtue—was complete.
2. Damon hastened straightaway to the palace and—much to the amazement of King Dionysius—gladly offered to be held hostage for his friend.
3. I think somebody—perhaps his brother, Andrew—may care for Myron as we cared for Aunt Leora.

HYPHENS - LESSONS 19-20

Lesson 19: Hyphens with Compound Adjectives

The hyphen can perform a variety of duties. We use hyphens with numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine, to reduce confusion in otherwise confusing letter combinations (*recreation vs. re-creation*), and with certain prefixes (*self-sufficient*).

A hyphen is not a dash. While word processing, hyphens are made by hitting the hyphen key one time only. Hyphens and dashes do not perform the same duties.

We, however, will study only one use of the hyphen: to hyphenate **compound adjectives**.

In the examples below, adjectives are boldfaced; the nouns being described by those adjectives are underlined.

- **example 1:** The cream came from a **happy** cow in the lowlands north of Seattle.
- **example 2:** The cream came from a **meditative, happy** cow in the lowlands north of Seattle.
- **example 3:** The cream came from a **grain-fed** cow in the lowlands north of Seattle.

Cow is a noun. In example 1, the word to the left of *cow* is an adjective, describing the cow. What kind of cow is it? A **happy** cow.

In example 2, the two words to the left of *cow* are adjectives, describing the cow. Because the two adjective each describe the cow independently of one another, they are separated with a comma. What kind of cow is it? A **meditative** cow. What kind of cow is it? A **happy** cow.

In example 3 the two words *grain* and *fed* do not independently describe the cow, which we can test by asking the same test question asked of the previous two examples. What kind of cow is it? A **grain** cow.

By itself, *grain* does not describe *cow*. However, when attached to *fed*, we get something that does make sense: What kind of cow is it? A **grain-fed** cow.

Because the words *grain* and *fed* work together as if they were a single adjective, we hyphenate the two words.

More examples of hyphenated compound adjectives:

- an **intelligent-looking** woman
- **pollution-free** alternatives
- a **gray-haired** news anchor
- **red-blooded** Americans
- a **plastic-and-steel** coffee maker

Note that the *plastic-and-steel* combination gives us a three-word compound adjective. Because compound adjectives can be created from scratch, they provide an area of potential creativity, allowing us to construct long compound adjectives should we so desire, as in *This caused me to experience **way-too-many-product-choices** rage*.

YOUR TURN 19

In each of the following, determine where a hyphen should be placed. Begin by identifying the key three-word combination: ***adjective adjective noun***. The hyphen belongs between the two adjectives.

1. According to scientific sounding literature, the Contour Points take advantage of reflexology.
2. I would hate to think that my work as a writer could not be done without a dependence on strip mined coal.
3. That's not necessarily bad, but you will note a certain similarity of content among chain owned papers.
4. Some foodstuffs can't be broken down by the digestive enzymes and are used by the gas producing bacteria instead.

ANSWERS 19

1. According to **scientific (-) sounding literature**, the Contour Points take advantage of reflexology.
2. I would hate to think that my work as a writer could not be done without a dependence on **strip (-) mined coal**.
3. That's not necessarily bad, but you will note a certain similarity of content among **chain (-) owned newspapers**.
4. Some foodstuffs can't be broken down by the digestive enzymes and are used by the **gas (-) producing bacteria** instead.

Lesson 20: Canceling Hyphens

In the previous lesson we learned to hyphenate compound adjectives. In this lesson we will learn two exceptions to that rule.

EXCEPTION 1: FOLLOWING AN *-LY* ADVERB

Study this sentence:

- The **totally-vulnerable** tourist depended on the kindness of strangers.

In this example, *tourist* is a noun. To the left of *tourist*, it appears that we have the compound adjective *totally-vulnerable*. But a closer inspection tells us that this is not the case. In reality, *totally* is an *-ly* adverb modifying the adjective *vulnerable*.

When the left-hand word of what appears to be a compound adjective is actually an *-ly* adverb, we **cancel the hyphen**. The corrected version looks like this:

- The totally **vulnerable** tourist . . .

Here are two more hyphenless examples:

- The occasionally **frightened** children worked silently.
- Evelyn did not know what to do with her recently **acquired** ranch.

YOUR TURN 20

In the following sentences, locate the adverb-adjective-noun combination. Note how the left-hand word in each word pair (the adverb) describes the middle word (the adjective) and how that adjective describes the right-hand word (the noun). Then mentally remove the hyphen.

1. This is a totally-different philosophy.
2. The horse was unsteady due to his drastically-limited vision.
3. Zeke had lost control of his normally-reliable curveball.

ANSWERS 20

1. This is a **totally different** philosophy.
2. The horse was unsteady due to his **drastically limited** vision.
3. Zeke had lost control of his **normally reliable** curveball.

EXCEPTION 2: THE COMPOUND ADJECTIVE APPEARS TO THE RIGHT OF THE NOUN

In Lesson 19, we encountered this sentence:

- The cream came from a **grain-fed** cow in the lowlands north of Seattle.

In that lesson, we learned to hyphenate compound adjectives. In this case the words *grain* and *fed* work together, as if they were a single adjective.

However, when we move that same compound adjective to the right of the noun they modify, we cancel the hyphen.

- **with a hyphen:** The cream came from a **grain-fed** cow.
- **without a hyphen:** The cream came from a cow that is **grain fed**.

In both examples above, the words *grain-fed* describe the cow. But in the first version, *grain-fed* appears to the left of *cow* and is therefore hyphenated; in the second version *grain fed* appears to the right of *cow* and is therefore hyphenless.

Some more examples:

- the **intelligent-looking** woman, but
- the woman is **intelligent looking**
- a **plastic-and-steel** coffee maker, but
- a coffee maker made of **plastic and steel**

YOUR TURN (continued)

Find the compound adjective in each of the following sentences. Move that compound adjective to the right of the noun it modifies or describes. (Adding *that is* or *that are* simplifies this task.) As you move the compound adjective to the right, remove the hyphen.

4. According to scientific-sounding literature, the Contour Points take advantage of reflexology.
5. I would hate to think that my work as a writer could not be done without a dependence on strip-mined coal.
5. You will note a certain similarity of content among chain-owned papers.

ANSWERS

4. According to literature that is **scientific sounding**, the Contour Points take advantage of reflexology.
5. I would hate to think that my work as a writer could not be done without a dependence on coal that is **strip mined**.
5. You will note a certain similarity of content among papers that are **chain owned**.

DASHES — LESSONS 21-22

Lesson 21: Dashes to Emphasize Repeated Words and Contrasting Statements

WITH REPEATED WORDS

The strategic **repetition** of a word or words can lend some style to our writing. The problem is that punctuating two appearances of the same word or words can be a little tricky. This is where the dash comes in.

Note how the writers of the following sentences identify a word they'd like to repeat, drop in a dash, and then repeat that word to the right of the dash:

- I'm **better** than that—**better** than I was before.
- Ahead of us now is only one more **hump**—the last **hump**.
- I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was **something** new to me in those eyes—**something** known only to her and to the mountain.

WITH CONTRASTING STATEMENTS

As we write, we find that some concepts can best be expressed through **contrast**: telling not only how it is, but also how it's not. Because the distinction between an *it's this way* statement and a *not this way* statement is such a sharp one, dashes are often the best choice for punctuating such distinctions.

Example:

- The hors d'oeuvres were bowls of cherry tomatoes and carrot sticks, grown by local gardeners—no brownies from a box, no cheese sticks.

Note how the dash sits between what is there and what's not there—providing a strong, clear, distinct break between the two opposed statements.

Here are two more examples:

- You could fry an egg on those rocks by ten in the morning—not that he had any eggs.
- I know that he will return before the appointed time—unless, of course, he

dies or is held captive by some evil force.

YOUR TURN 21

In this Your Turn, you are given a sentence. You will use one or two dashes to add repeated words or a contrasting phrase to the sentences you are given.

Note: The direction to use two dashes tells you that the words you add will be added mid-sentence; the direction to use one dash tells you that the words you add will be added to the end of the sentence.

1. Inglis breaks down the purpose of modern schooling into six basic functions.

repeated words: Add the words *the actual purpose* to the sentence above, with two dashes.

2. Electricity is sold at a discount to the aluminum industry in the Pacific Northwest.

repeated words: Add the words *electricity that comes from dams that were built at the public's expense* to the sentence above, with one dash.

3. According to this argument, if taxes are raised, the state's economy will be ruined.

contrasting phase: Add the words *not a likely scenario, given the size of the proposed increase* to the sentence above, with one dash.

4. This is the most overlooked aspect of a successful suspension policy.

contrasting phase: Add the words *yet most important* to the sentence above, with two dashes.

ANSWERS

1. Inglis breaks down the purpose—the actual purpose—of modern schooling into six basic functions.
2. Electricity is sold at a discount to the aluminum industry in the Pacific Northwest—electricity that comes from dams that were built at the public's expense.
3. According to this argument, if taxes are raised, the state's economy will be ruined—not a likely scenario, given the size of the proposed increase.
4. This is the most overlooked—yet most important—aspect of a successful suspension policy.

Lesson 22: Dashes with Appositives

In the previous lesson we observed that, when we choose to repeat words, dashes help us to draw a clear distinction between the first occurrence of a word and the second. In the same way, dashes are commonly used with **appositives**.

An appositive is another name for a noun or pronoun, another way of saying the same thing. So though appositives are not exactly the same word, they are the next closest thing.

Example:

- It seems so cruel and unjust to strike a helpless animal—a harmless little creature. (*the appositive is underlined*)

In this example we have *a helpless animal* followed by a harmless little creature. To understand what an appositive is, we must see that the *harmless little creature* is the *helpless animal*. They are two ways of saying the same thing. *A harmless little creature* is the appositive for *a helpless animal*.

Here are a couple more examples.

- I fear what this choir—the one I attempt to sing in—actually looks like.

Here, *the one I attempt to sing in* is the appositive for *this choir*.

- He was a mass of imbecile enthusiasms—one of those completely unquestioning drudges on whom the stability of the Party depended.

Here, *one of those completely unquestioning drudges on whom the stability of the Party depended* is the appositive for *he*.

YOUR TURN 22

In numbers 1 and 2 of this Your Turn, you will add appositives to sentences you are given. You must locate the slots in which to insert the appositives. In numbers 3 and 4, you will create appositives of your own.

Once again, *two dashes* tells you to add the appositive mid-sentence; *one dash* tells you to add the appositive at the end of the sentence.

1. These otherwise nice young men lobbied me so hard to approve their major project proposal that I finally relented just to see if they intended to follow through.

Add the appositive *breaking through the school's network security* to the sentence above, with two dashes.

2. Repetition of blows produced a series of regular horizontal folds in Mr. Coyote's body tissues.

Add the appositive *a rare and painful condition that caused Mr. Coyote to expand upward and contract downward alternately as he walked* to the sentence above, with one dash.

Now you'll create appositives of your own:

3. There is the danger that education will damage the sense of wonder that is part of our original equipment at birth.

Create an appositive of your own; place it after the word *wonder*, with two dashes.

4. Across the country, there are thousands of brownfields.

Create an appositive of your own; place it after the word *brownfields*, with one dash.

ANSWERS AND POSSIBLE ANSWERS 22

1. These otherwise nice young men lobbied me so hard to approve their major project proposal—breaking through the school's network security—that I finally relented just to see if they intended to follow through.
2. Repetition of blows produced a series of regular horizontal folds in Mr. Coyote's body tissues—a rare and painful condition that caused Mr. Coyote to expand upward and contract downward alternately as he walked.
3. Third, there is the danger that education will damage the sense of wonder—the sheer joy in the created world—that is part of our original equipment at birth.
4. Across the country, there are thousands of brownfields—abandoned, toxic manufacturing sites that are being cleaned up one by one at the public's expense.

REVIEW

Lesson 23: Shared Duties

Over the course of the 22 previous lessons, we have been studying the functions of the various punctuation marks. Several of these functions—or duties—can be fulfilled by more than one punctuation mark.

As writers, we need to be aware of situations that offer us options. The more we are aware of our options, the more various and wide-ranging our sentence constructions will be.

- **function:** a pause
- **choices:** commas for normal pauses; dashes for stronger pauses
- **function:** the pause before the conjunction in a compound sentence
- **choices:** commas for normal pauses and dashes for stronger pauses
- **function:** pauses that accompany appositives
- **choices:** commas for normal pauses; dashes for stronger pauses
- **function:** distinguishing external pauses from internal-comma pauses
- **choices:** dashes or parentheses
- **function:** to enclose a sentence-within-a-sentence
- **choices:** dashes or parentheses
- **function:** to enclose explanatory or parenthetical information
- **choices:** commas, dashes, or parentheses
- **function:** to indicate that the following (right-hand) information explains the previous (left-hand) information
- **choices:** colons or dashes
- **function:** to separate a list from a general statement
- **choices:** colons when the list is on the right and dashes (reverse-directional) when the list is on the left
- **function:** to indicate words used as words
- **choices:** italics or quotation marks

- **function:** to indicate irony
- **choices:** italics or quotation marks

YOUR TURN 23

In this Your Turn you will need to dig deep into your understanding of the various punctuation marks we have studied. Each of the nine sentences below is followed by a question. The question asks you to name the two or three different punctuation marks that can be inserted into key spots in the sentence, marked by asterisks (*).

Here is your word bank: *colons, commas, dashes, italics, parentheses, quotation marks.*

1. Corporations privatize the commonwealth * the water, the forests, the labor * for profit and externalize as many of the costs as possible, passing them on to communities, workers, and nonhuman species. [*Which two punctuation marks could replace the asterisks?*]
2. During a 20-minute conversation, however, he displayed a vocabulary that consisted mostly of one word: cool. [*What should be done with the last word of the sentence? Choose two from the word bank.*]
3. Eric and I had always been pretty much the same * even-tempered and sensible. [*Which two punctuation marks could replace the asterisk?*]
4. It includes the poems generally considered great * and they are many. [*Which two punctuation marks could replace the asterisk?*]
5. It took 100 beans to make this perfect cup of coffee * about one fortieth of the beans that grew on the coffee tree that year. [*Which two punctuation marks could replace the asterisk?*]
5. Lavinia * while unaware of her sister's poetic genius * luckily had the good sense to ignore the instructions Emily had left in her will. [*Which three punctuation marks could replace the asterisks?*]
7. Lying in ruins before you, you can see the ancient castle * a castle with great and high-ceilinged rooms. [*Which two punctuation marks could replace the asterisk?*]
3. Teach your children what we have taught our children * that the earth is our mother. [*Which two punctuation marks could replace the asterisk?*]
3. There wasn't a single abnormality in the eyelids * I had wondered if I had

missed something last time * but as the bright sunshine slanted across the eyeballs, I could just discern the faintest cloudiness in the cornea. [*Which two punctuation marks could replace the asterisks?*]

ANSWERS 23

1. **dashes, parentheses**—Corporations privatize the commonwealth * the water, the forests, the labor * for profit and externalize as many of the costs as possible, passing them on to communities, workers, and nonhuman species.
2. **italics, quotation marks**—During a 20-minute conversation, however, he displayed a vocabulary that consisted mostly of one word: cool. [*cool* or “cool”]
3. **colon, dash**—Eric and I had always been pretty much the same * even-tempered and sensible.
4. **comma, dash**—It includes the poems generally considered great * and they are many.
5. **comma, dash**—It took 100 beans to make this perfect cup of coffee * about one fortieth of the beans that grew on the coffee tree that year.
5. **commas, dashes, parentheses**—Lavinia * while unaware of her sister’s poetic genius * luckily had the good sense to ignore the instructions Emily had left in her will.
7. **comma, dash**—Lying in ruins before you, you can see the ancient castle * a castle with great and high-ceilinged rooms.
3. **colon, dash**—Teach your children what we have taught our children * that the earth is our mother.
9. **dashes, parentheses**—There wasn’t a single abnormality in the eyelids * I had wondered if I had missed something last time * but as the bright sunshine slanted across the eyeballs, I could just discern the faintest cloudiness in the cornea.

Punctuation Glossary of Terms

appositives: Words or phrases that rename nouns or pronouns. Normally punctuated with commas, appositives can also be punctuated with dashes.

compound adjectives: When two adjectives must work conjointly to describe a noun, these two adjectives should be hyphenated. However, we do not hyphenate when the left-hand word is an *-ly* adverb or when the compound adjective appears to the right of the noun being described.

compound sentence: Two sentences joined together. When joined by a coordinating conjunction, a dash may appear to the left of that conjunction.

contrasting statements: The dash is the punctuation mark for this job.

deleted words: When deleted from words that are quoted, ellipses show the spot where the deleted words appeared originally.

dramatic pauses: Easily created with dashes.

emphasis: Italics show emphasis.

explanatory information: Enclosed by brackets when occurring inside quotation marks.

foreign expressions: Should be italicized.

internal and external commas: Two different jobs performed by commas while punctuating lists. Parentheses or dashes can solve the problem.

irony: Can be indicated with quotation marks.

lead-in and trail-out ellipses: Only rarely do these need to be used.

opening and closing: Terms for the first or left-hand parenthesis or dash and the second or right-hand parenthesis or dash.

pronoun conversions: Indicated by brackets when occurring inside quotation marks.

repeated words: The dash is the punctuation mark for this job.

reverse-directional colon: A dash, actually, when the list appears to the left and the full statement appears to the right.

sentences-within-a-sentence: Can be punctuated with parentheses or dashes.

shared duties: Many of the jobs performed by punctuation marks can be performed by more than one mark—often with slight variations of voice or tone.

stronger than a comma: Refers to one of the functions of the dash—the dash as a strong comma.

verb conversions: Indicated by brackets when occurring inside quotation marks.

words that refer to words: Can be indicated with italics or quotation marks.

Test Questions

The Test Questions section consists of two sections:

Section 1: Punctuation

- Includes Test 1 to Test 9.
- Consists of thirty-six sentences divided into nine groups of four sentences each. Each sentence is followed by four multiple choice options. Within each group of four, each multiple-choice option gets used once.

Section 2: Sentence Structure and Devices

- Includes Test 10 to Test 11.
- Consists of fourteen sentences divided into two groups of seven sentences each. Each sentence is followed by seven multiple choice options. Within each group of seven, each multiple-choice option gets used once.

Notes:

- In a majority of the sentences, asterisks have been placed to mark the spot(s) where punctuation is needed.
- Many of the test sentences are drawn from the lessons above.
- The answer choices are in the plural form, but this does not necessarily mean that the sentence needs two or more of a particular punctuation mark. For example, the choice *dashes* may refer to one dash or to two dashes.

Section 1: Punctuation

TEST PART 1

1. I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes * something known only to her and to the mountain.
 - a. commas or dashes
 - b. commas, dashes, parentheses
 - c. dashes
 - d. italics
2. “Una momento,” said the guide, as he examined the gray hills off in the distance.
 - a. commas or dashes
 - b. commas, dashes, parentheses
 - c. dashes
 - d. italics
3. They had come from the banners in the church or from the waters and the fields about * but all had come to help on account of love.
 - a. commas or dashes
 - b. commas, dashes, parentheses
 - c. dashes
 - d. italics
4. I fear what this choir * the one I attempt to sing in * actually looks like.
 - a. commas or dashes
 - b. commas, dashes, parentheses
 - c. dashes
 - d. italics

ANSWERS PART 1

1. **(C: dashes)** I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes—something known only to her and to the mountain.
2. **(D: italics)** “*Una momento,*” said the guide, as he examined the gray hills off in the distance.
3. **(A: commas or dashes)** They had come from the banners in the church or from the waters and the fields about, but all had come to help on account of love. [OR] They had come from the banners in the church or from the waters and the fields about—but all had come to help on account of love.
4. **(B: commas, dashes, parentheses)** I fear what this choir, the one I attempt to sing in, actually looks like. [OR] I fear what this choir—the one I attempt to sing in—actually looks like. [OR] I fear what this choir (the one I attempt to sing in) actually looks like.

TEST PART 2

5. We could encourage the best qualities of youthfulness * curiosity, adventure, resilience, the capacity for surprising insight simply by giving students the autonomy they need.
 - a. colons
 - b. dashes
 - c. dashes or parentheses
 - d. do nothing
6. You could fry an egg on those rocks by ten in the morning * not that he had any eggs.
 - a. colons
 - b. dashes
 - c. dashes or parentheses
 - d. do nothing
7. All are tied together in this complex web * the consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement.
 - a. colons
 - b. dashes
 - c. dashes or parentheses
 - d. do nothing
8. Evelyn did not know what to do with her recently * acquired ranch.
 - a. colons
 - b. dashes
 - c. dashes or parentheses
 - d. do nothing

ANSWERS PART 2

5. **(C: dashes or parentheses)** We could encourage the best qualities of youthfulness—curiosity, adventure, resilience, the capacity for surprising insight—simply by giving students the autonomy they need. **[OR]** We could encourage the best qualities of youthfulness (curiosity, adventure, resilience, the capacity for surprising insight) simply by giving students the autonomy they need.
5. **(B: dashes)** You could fry an egg on those rocks by ten in the morning —not that he had any eggs.
7. **(A: colons)** All are tied together in this complex web: the consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement.
3. **(D: do nothing)** Evelyn did not know what to do with her recently acquired ranch. [*“Recently acquired” seems like a compound adjective in need of hyphenation; however, the left-hand word “recently” is an adverb describing the adjective “acquired,” so we cancel the hyphen.*]

TEST PART 3

9. “Golgotha * is also, according to Jerusalem tradition, the grave of Adam.”
[*Before being removed, the words “the Place of the Skull” appeared where the asterisk now stands.*]
- colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - ellipses
 - italics or quotation marks
10. He hardly had the strength for all these chores, but he did have a certain manner * he was always cheerful.
- colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - ellipses
 - italics or quotation marks
11. If there is one word that can describe its voice, it is the word authentic.
- colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - ellipses
 - italics or quotation marks
12. The consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement * all are tied together in this complex web.
- colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - ellipses
 - italics or quotation marks

ANSWERS PART 3

9. **(C: ellipses)** “Golgotha . . . is also, according to Jerusalem tradition, the grave of Adam.” [*Before being removed, the words “the Place of the Skull” appeared where the ellipsis now stands.*]
10. **(A: colons or dashes)** He hardly had the strength for all these chores, but he did have a certain manner: he was always cheerful. **[OR]** He hardly had the strength for all these chores, but he did have a certain manner—he was always cheerful.
11. **(D: italics or quotation marks)** If there is one word that can describe its voice, it is the word *authentic*. **[OR]** If there is one word that can describe its voice, it is the word “**authentic.**”
12. **(B: dashes)** The consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement—all are tied together in this complex web.

TEST PART 4

13. Subcomandante Marcos will no longer be making public appearances due to the severe “threats to the Zapatista * a group based in Chiapas * and his concern for his own safety.”
- brackets
 - do nothing
 - hyphens
 - italics
14. The gray * haired news anchor gazed calmly into the camera
- brackets
 - do nothing
 - hyphens
 - italics
15. The news anchor is gray * haired.
- brackets
 - do nothing
 - hyphens
 - italics
16. Whenever we quote, we must be careful to view our quotation from a reader’s point of view. [*We want to emphasize that we must not view our quotation from our own point of view.*]
- brackets
 - do nothing
 - hyphens
 - italics

ANSWERS PART 4

13. **(A: brackets)** Subcomandante Marcos will no longer be making public appearances due to the severe “threats to the Zapatista [a group based in Chiapas] and his concern for his own safety.”
14. **(C: hyphens)** The gray-haired news anchor gazed calmly into the camera
15. **(B: do nothing)** The news anchor is gray haired. [*If the compound adjective “gray haired” were to the left of “news anchor,” it would be hyphenated; however, because it appears to the right, we cancel the hyphen.*]
16. **(D: italics)** Whenever we quote, we must be careful to view our quotation from a **reader’s** point of view. [*We want to emphasize that we must not view our quotation from our own point of view.*]

TEST PART 5

17. She acted as if she'd gained all the weight Eric had lost * not on her body, because she was long and lanky, but inside her head.
- brackets
 - commas or dashes
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses
18. "Goodbye," said the Wart for the last time * and the poor fellow went quickly out of the room.
- brackets
 - commas or dashes
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses
19. Hardly a week passed in which the *Times* did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak * "child hero" was the phrase generally used * had denounced his parents to the Thought Police.
- brackets
 - commas or dashes
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses
20. The sadness we feel when looking at the night sky is because "the moon has a stony face, while the earth's face is slaphappy burlesque."
[For the sake of the reader, the original pronoun "it" was changed to "the moon."]
- brackets
 - commas or dashes
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses

ANSWERS PART 5

17. **(C: dashes)** She acted as if she'd gained all the weight Eric had lost—not on her body, because she was long and lanky, but inside her head.
18. **(B: commas or dashes)** “Goodbye,” said the Wart for the last time, and the poor fellow went quickly out of the room. **[OR]** “Goodbye,” said the Wart for the last time—and the poor fellow went quickly out of the room.
19. **(D: dashes or parentheses)** Hardly a week passed in which the *Times* did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak—“child hero” was the phrase generally used—had denounced his parents to the Thought Police. **[OR]** Hardly a week passed in which the *Times* did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak (“child hero” was the phrase generally used) had denounced his parents to the Thought Police.
20. **(A: brackets)** The sadness we feel when looking at the night sky is because “the moon has a stony face, while the earth’s face is slaphappy burlesque.” [*For the sake of the reader, the original pronoun “it” was changed to “the moon.”*]

TEST PART 6

21. I will not leave my money to you worthless layabouts! [*The speaker is emphasizing that, if other people want to leave their money, that's just fine.*]
- commas, dashes, parentheses
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics
22. It seemed that every part of the clutter had a history * sometimes a history that remembered the origin of the earth.
- commas, dashes, parentheses
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics
23. Mrs. Joe * the wife of the blacksmith * felt that the difficulty of raising Pip was too much to bear.
- commas, dashes, parentheses
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics
24. Yet these projects * the steady diet of virtual trips to the Antarctic, virtual climbs to the summit of Mount Everest, and trips into cyber-orbit that represent one technological high after another * generate only vicarious thrills.
- commas, dashes, parentheses
 - dashes
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics

ANSWERS PART 6

21. **(D: italics)** I will not leave *my* money to you worthless layabouts! [*The speaker is emphasizing that, if other people want to leave their money, that's just fine.*]
22. **(B: dashes)** It seemed that every part of the clutter had a history—sometimes a history that remembered the origin of the earth.
23. **(A: commas, dashes, parentheses)** Mrs. Joe, the wife of the blacksmith, felt that the difficulty of raising Pip was too much to bear. [OR] Mrs. Joe—the wife of the blacksmith—felt that the difficulty of raising Pip was too much to bear. [OR] Mrs. Joe (the wife of the blacksmith) felt that the difficulty of raising Pip was too much to bear.
24. **(C: dashes or parentheses)** Yet these projects—the steady diet of virtual trips to the Antarctic, virtual climbs to the summit of Mount Everest, and trips into cyber-orbit that represent one technological high after another—generate only vicarious thrills. [OR] Yet these projects (the steady diet of virtual trips to the Antarctic, virtual climbs to the summit of Mount Everest, and trips into cyber-orbit that represent one technological high after another) generate only vicarious thrills.

TEST PART 7

25. Long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands * Big Joe Brady's restaurant.
- brackets
 - colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - do nothing
26. Our current system offers us "the same bargain as that offered by Mephistopheles * the devil character in Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* * ."
- brackets
 - colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - do nothing
27. The problem is particularly * severe when the weather is bad.
- brackets
 - colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - do nothing
28. Confusion, class position, indifference, emotional and intellectual dependency, conditional self-esteem, surveillance * all of these lessons are prime training for permanent underclasses.
- brackets
 - colons or dashes
 - dashes
 - do nothing

ANSWERS PART 7

25. **(B: colons or dashes)** Long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands: Big Joe Brady’s restaurant. **[OR]** Long ago there used to be a restaurant where this store stands—Big Joe Brady’s restaurant.
26. **(A: brackets)** Our current system offers us “the same bargain as that offered by Mephistopheles [the devil character in Christopher Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus*].”
27. **(D: do nothing)** The problem is particularly severe when the weather is bad. [*“Particularly severe” seems like a compound adjective in need of hyphenation; however, the left-hand word “particularly” is an adverb describing the adjective “acquired,” so we cancel the hyphen.*]
28. **(C: dashes)** Confusion, class position, indifference, emotional and intellectual dependency, conditional self-esteem, surveillance—all of these lessons are prime training for permanent underclasses.

TEST PART 8

29. They use the word reform, and they try so hard to act as if they really mean it.
- do nothing
 - ellipses
 - hyphens
 - italics
30. This coffee maker is steel * plated.
- do nothing
 - ellipses
 - hyphens
 - italics
31. You'd be better off with the plastic * and * steel coffee maker.
- do nothing
 - ellipses
 - hyphens
 - italics
32. We live in denial of death, which * is not really living at all. [*Before being removed, the words "in Heidegger's opinion" appeared where the asterisk now stands.*]
- do nothing
 - ellipses
 - hyphens
 - italics

ANSWERS PART 8

29. **(D: italics)** They use the word *reform*, and they try so hard to act as if they really mean it.
30. **(B: do nothing)** This coffee maker is steel * plated. [*If the compound adjective “steel plated” were to the left of “coffee maker,” it would be hyphenated; however, because it appears to the right, we cancel the hyphen.*]
31. **(C: hyphens)** You’d be better off with the plastic-and-steel coffee maker.
32. **(D: ellipses)** We live in denial of death, which . . . is not really living at all. [*Before being removed, the words “in Heidegger’s opinion” appeared where the ellipsis now stands.*]

TEST PART 9

33. You have a nice multiflora cineraria there.
- brackets
 - colons
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics
34. Writers know they are meant to write when “the motive to write sends its roots down to the deepest places in their hearts.” [*The verb “sent” was changed to “sends” to conform to the present tense.*]
- brackets
 - colons
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics
35. We found dogs sleeping in every room of the house * spaniels, Airedales, bulldogs, collies, and a Great Dane.
- brackets
 - colons
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics
36. I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice * its name had been changed since the time of the kings * past the shadow of Sainte Chapelle.
- brackets
 - colons
 - dashes or parentheses
 - italics

ANSWERS PART 9

33. **(D: italics)** You have a nice *multiflora cineraria* there.
34. **(A: brackets)** Writers know they are meant to write when “the motive to write [sends] its roots down to the deepest places in their hearts.” [*The verb “sent” was changed to “sends” to conform to the present tense.*]
35. **(B: colons)** We found dogs sleeping in every room of the house: spaniels, Airedales, bulldogs, collies, and a Great Dane.
36. **(C: dashes or parentheses)** I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice—its name had been changed since the time of the kings—past the shadow of Sainte Chapelle. **[OR]** I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice (its name had been changed since the time of the kings) past the shadow of Sainte Chapelle.

Section 2: Sentence Structure and Devices

Tests Part 10 and 11 consist of sentences (with the asterisks still in place) taken from Parts 1-9 above. In each, you are given seven multiple-choice options. Each option gets used once.

TEST PART 10

1. I fear what this choir * the one I attempt to sing in * actually looks like.
 - a. compound sentence
 - b. contains an appositive
 - c. contrast
 - d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - e. repeated word or words
 - f. reverse-directional
 - g. sentence-within-a-sentence

2. I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes * something known only to her and to the mountain.
 - a. compound sentence
 - b. contains an appositive
 - c. contrast
 - d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - e. repeated word or words
 - f. reverse-directional
 - g. sentence-within-a-sentence

3. I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice * its name had been changed since the time of the kings * past the shadow of Sainte Chapelle.
 - a. compound sentence
 - b. contains an appositive
 - c. contrast
 - d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas

- 2. repeated word or words
 - ∴ reverse-directional
 - 3. sentence-within-a-sentence

- 4. The consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement * all are tied together in this complex web.
 - 1. compound sentence
 - 2. contains an appositive
 - 3. contrast
 - 1. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - 2. repeated word or words
 - ∴ reverse-directional
 - 3. sentence-within-a-sentence

- 5. They had come from the banners in the church or from the waters and the fields about * but all had come to help on account of love.
 - 1. compound sentence
 - 2. contains an appositive
 - 3. contrast
 - 1. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - 2. repeated word or words
 - ∴ reverse-directional
 - 3. sentence-within-a-sentence

- 5. We could encourage the best qualities of youthfulness * curiosity, adventure, resilience, the capacity for surprising insight * simply by giving students the autonomy they need.
 - 1. compound sentence
 - 2. contains an appositive
 - 3. contrast
 - 1. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - 2. repeated word or words
 - ∴ reverse-directional

3. sentence-within-a-sentence

7. You could fry an egg on those rocks by ten in the morning * not that he had any eggs.

a. compound sentence

b. contains an appositive

c. contrast

d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas

e. repeated word or words

f. reverse-directional

g. sentence-within-a-sentence

ANSWERS PART 10

1. **(B: contains an appositive)** I fear what this choir * the one I attempt to sing in * actually looks like. [*The appositive “the one I attempt to sing in” renames the noun “choir.” Either commas, dashes, or parentheses could replace the asterisks.*]
2. **(E: repeated word or words)** I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something new to me in those eyes * something known only to her and to the mountain. [*The repeated word “something” calls for a dash to replace the asterisk.*]
3. **(G: sentence-within-a-sentence)** I walk along the fence of the Place of Justice its name had been changed since the time of the kings past the shadow of Sainte Chapelle. [*The underlined sentence sits within the outer sentence. It could be punctuated with dashes or parentheses.*]
4. **(F: reverse-directional)** The consumer products, the cruelty, the pollution, the exploitation, the debasement * all are tied together in this complex web. [*The list sits to the left; the general statement (and the key word “all”) sits to the right. This reverse-directional sentence calls for a dash.*]
5. **(A: compound sentence)** They had come from the banners in the church or from the waters and the fields about * but all had come to help on account of love. [*The conjunction “but” sits between two complete sentences. The spot marked by the asterisk will usually be filled by a comma, but occasionally by a dash.*]
5. **(D: external pauses in conflict with internal commas)** We could encourage the best qualities of youthfulness * curiosity, adventure, resilience, the capacity for surprising insight * simply by giving students the autonomy they need. [*The underlined list requires internal commas; the two asterisks mark the two external-to-the-list positions. The asterisks can be replaced by dashes or parentheses.*]
7. **(C: contrast)** You could fry an egg on those rocks by ten in the morning * not that he had any eggs. [*The dash is the perfect mark to emphasize the contrast between the positive statement and the negative.*]

TEST PART 11

3. Confusion, class position, indifference, emotional and intellectual dependency, conditional self-esteem, surveillance * all of these lessons are prime training for permanent underclasses.
 - a. compound sentence
 - b. contains an appositive
 - c. contrast
 - d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - e. repeated word or words
 - f. reverse-directional
 - g. sentence-within-a-sentence

9. “Goodbye,” said the Wart for the last time * and the poor fellow went quickly out of the room.
 - a. compound sentence
 - b. contains an appositive
 - c. contrast
 - d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - e. repeated word or words
 - f. reverse-directional
 - g. sentence-within-a-sentence

10. Hardly a week passed in which the *Times* did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak * “child hero” was the phrase generally used * had denounced his parents to the Thought Police.
 - a. compound sentence
 - b. contains an appositive
 - c. contrast
 - d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
 - e. repeated word or words
 - f. reverse-directional

3. sentence-within-a-sentence

1. It seemed that every part of the clutter had a history * sometimes a history that remembered the origin of the earth.

a. compound sentence

b. contains an appositive

c. contrast

d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas

e. repeated word or words

f. reverse-directional

3. sentence-within-a-sentence

2. Mrs. Joe * the wife of the blacksmith * felt that the difficulty of raising Pip was too much to bear.

a. compound sentence

b. contains an appositive

c. contrast

d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas

e. repeated word or words

f. reverse-directional

3. sentence-within-a-sentence

3. She acted like she'd gained all the weight Eric had lost * not on her body, because she was long and lanky, but inside her head.

a. compound sentence

b. contains an appositive

c. contrast

d. external pauses in conflict with internal commas

e. repeated word or words

f. reverse-directional

3. sentence-within-a-sentence

4. Yet these projects * the steady diet of virtual trips to the Antarctic, virtual climbs to the summit of Mount Everest, and trips into cyber-orbit

that represent one technological high after another * generate only vicarious thrills.

- a. compound sentence
- o. contains an appositive
2. contrast
1. external pauses in conflict with internal commas
2. repeated word or words
3. reverse-directional
3. sentence-within-a-sentence

ANSWERS PART 11

3. **(F: reverse-directional)** Confusion, class position, indifference, emotional and intellectual dependency, conditional self-esteem, surveillance * all of these lessons are prime training for permanent underclasses. [*The list sits to the left; the general statement (and the key word “all”) sits to the right. This reverse-directional sentence calls for a dash.*]
9. **(A: compound sentence)** “Goodbye,” said the Wart for the last time * and the poor fellow went quickly out of the room. [*The conjunction “and” sits between two complete sentences. The spot marked by the asterisk will usually be filled by a comma, but occasionally by a dash.*]
10. **(G: sentence-within-a-sentence)** Hardly a week passed in which the *Times* did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak * “child hero” was the phrase generally used * had denounced his parents to the Thought Police. [*The underlined sentence sits within the outer sentence. It could be punctuated with dashes or parentheses.*]
11. **(E: repeated word or words)** It seemed that every part of the clutter had a history * sometimes a history that remembered the origin of the earth. [*The repeated word “history” calls for a dash to replace the asterisk.*]
12. **(B: contains an appositive)** Mrs. Joe * the wife of the blacksmith * felt that the difficulty of raising Pip was too much to bear. [*The appositive “the wife of the blacksmith” renames “Mrs. Joe.” Either commas, dashes, or parentheses could replace the asterisks.*]
13. **(C: contrast)** She acted like she’d gained all the weight Eric had lost * not on her body, because she was long and lanky, but inside her head. [*The dash is the perfect mark to emphasize the contrast between the positive statement and the negative.*]
14. **(D: external pauses in conflict with internal commas)** Yet these projects * the steady diet of virtual trips to the Antarctic, virtual climbs to the summit of Mount Everest, and trips into cyber-orbit that represent one technological high after another * generate only vicarious thrills. [*The*

underlined list requires internal commas; the two asterisks mark the two external-to-the-list positions. The asterisks can be replaced by dashes or parentheses.]

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