

- LO: To revise the use of commas

Commas separate short asides and additions from the rest of the sentence.

For example:

Well, I will do what I can.

It's very cold today, isn't it?

His excuse, for what it's worth, is that he forgot.

Look at where the commas have been added

- You should of course wash your hands before you handle food.

You should, of course, wash your hands before you handle food.

- Yes Katy is here.

Yes, Katy is here.

- It's the 23rd isn't it?

- It's the 23rd, isn't it?

Your turn!

1. Yes I like the car.
2. No it's not too red.
3. I shouldn't eat the cake should I?
4. Well then shall we sign the papers?
5. Oh what a beautiful day!
6. That's a bit harsh isn't it?
7. He said he would arrive today however I don't believe him.
8. Still I can't believe it!
9. The man fell to the floor and as you can well imagine he found himself in considerable pain.
10. I was of course disgusted by his behaviour.

Check your answers

- Yes, I like the car.
- No, it's not too red.
- I shouldn't eat the cake, should I?
- Well then, shall we sign the papers?
- Oh, what a beautiful day!
- That's a bit harsh, isn't it?
- He said he would arrive today, however, I don't believe him.
- Still, I can't believe it!
- The man fell to the floor, and as you can well imagine, he found himself in considerable pain.
- I was, of course, disgusted by his behaviour.

Here's a mix of all the types of commas we've looked at so far...

1. Wow that painting you did is amazing!
2. Her room is always a mess however she tries to be tidy.
3. The spoons spatula and whisk belong in the top drawer.
4. We yawn when we are tired sleepy or bored.
5. According to legend a mermaid is a young girl with the tail of a fish.
6. Hey do you think it will be a nice day tomorrow?
7. He walked into the room said hello poured himself a drink and sat down.
8. Matthew please pick that pen up!
9. Kym Parnell the Head of English marched into the room.
10. I like sausages on the other hand I also like vegetarian food.

Check your answers

1. Wow, that painting you did is amazing!
2. Her room is always a mess, however, she tries to be tidy.
3. The spoons, spatula, and whisk belong in the top drawer.
4. We yawn when we are tired, sleepy or bored.
5. According to legend, a mermaid is a young girl with the tail of a fish.
6. Hey, do you think it will be a nice day tomorrow?
7. He walked into the room, said hello, poured himself a drink and sat down.
8. Matthew, please pick that pen up!
9. Kym Parnell, the Head of English, marched into the room.
10. I like sausages, on the other hand, I also like vegetarian food.

Commas can also be used to mark a short pause, or to add extra information

For example:

The play that we're seeing tonight is about a middle-aged man who has been fascinated by orchids all his life and who is now obsessed with growing the biggest orchid in the world, even though this has cost him his job and his family.

If they are not here by seven, we shall start without them.

Using a Camera (add the commas)

Using a camera we are told is the most popular route into art. However as well as being creative photos are a great way to keep memories. Most of us have a photo album at home. In the old days when I was young taking pictures was hard work. Now with new cameras it's easy. You just point and shoot. Digital cameras although expensive are really easy to use. You don't even have to print off pictures you don't like. You can delete your mistakes before anyone else sees them. Now we can all look like experts.

Using a Camera (add the commas)

Using a camera, we are told, is the most popular route into art. However, as well as being creative, photos are a great way to keep memories. Most of us have a photo album at home. In the old days, when I was young, taking pictures was hard work. Now, with new cameras, it's easy. You just point and shoot. Digital cameras, although expensive, are really easy to use. You don't even have to print off pictures you don't like. You can delete your mistakes before anyone else sees them. Now, we can all look like experts.

Write your own paragraph about what you will be doing this weekend.

- Try to include at least 5 commas.
- Try to make the commas different types, e.g. a list, subordinate clause, fronted adverbial, afterthought, prepositional phrase etc.
- Feel free to include other sorts of punctuation, e.g. speech, questions etc.