

# HYPHENS, DASHES, PARENTHESES, ELLIPSES, COLONS

## EDITING PRACTICE

For the next two weeks, we will be practicing editing our work use some create punctuation marks that are used by mature writers: hyphens, dashes, parentheses, ellipses, and colons. By \_\_\_\_\_ please complete the following Odyssey folder that will enhance your writing maturity.

Assignment Name: Hyphens, Dashes, Parentheses, Colons	
Level: 8	Subject: LA Extensions
Task Type	Task Title
-5236	Using Hyphens with Words and Numbers
-8208	Dashes, Hyphens, Parentheses I
-8209	Dashes, Hyphens, Parentheses II
-5146	Word Clause Punctuation
-5293	Using Punctuation: Commas and Semicolons
-8206	Colons and Semicolons I
-8207	Colons and Semicolons II

### REMEMBER WHEN YOU JOURNAL YOUR THOUGHTS:

1. *Recap the quote in your own words*
2. *Share your opinion*
3. *Offer a personal experience to prove your opinion*
4. *Include the importance of this quote in the future / to your life / to the world*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# HYPHEN RULES

Hyphens' main purpose is to glue words together. They notify the reader that two or more elements in a sentence are linked.

**1** Hyphenate two or more words when they come before a noun they modify and act as a single idea. This is called a compound adjective.

*Examples: an off-campus apartment  
state-of-the-art design*

When a compound adjective follows a noun, a hyphen may or may not be necessary.

*Example: The apartment is off campus.*

However, some established compound adjectives are always hyphenated. Double-check with a dictionary or online.

*Example: The design is state-of-the-art.*

Hyphenate modifiers (adjectives) if you can't...

1. reverse their order
2. remove one of them without damaging the meaning

**2** Hyphens are often used to tell the ages of people and things. When writing about years, months, or any other period of time use hyphens unless the period of time (years, months, weeks, days) is written in plural form:

*With hyphens:*

*We have a two-year-old child.*

*We have a two-year-olds.*

*No hyphens: The child is two years old. (Because years is plural.)*

*Exception: The child is one year old. (Or day, week, month, etc.)*

Note that when hyphens are involved in expressing ages, two hyphens are required. Many writers forget the second hyphen.

**3** Hyphenate all compound numbers from *twenty-one* through *ninety-nine*.

*Examples:*

*thirty-two children*

*one thousand two hundred twenty-one dollars*

Two commandments about hyphens:

- must never be used interchangeably with dashes, which are noticeably longer.
- should never be spaces around hyphens.

**4** Hyphenate all spelled-out fractions.

*Example: more than two-thirds of registered voters*

**5** Hyphenate prefixes when they come before proper nouns or proper adjectives.

*Examples:*

*trans-American*

*mid-July*

**6** For clarity, hyphenate prefixes ending in a vowel when the root word begins with the same letter.

*Example:*

*ultra-ambitious*

*semi-invalid*

*re-elect*

**7** Hyphenate all words beginning with the prefixes *self-*, *ex-* (i.e., *former*), and *all-*, and the suffixes *-style*, *-elect*, *-free*, *-based*.

*Examples:*

*self-assured*

*ex-mayor*

*all-knowing*

*Examples:*

*Modernist-style paintings*

*Mayor-elect Smith*

*sugar-free soda*

*oil-based sludge*

# DASHES RULES

Dashes indicate added emphasis, an interruption, or an abrupt change of thought.

**1** Dashes are used to offset parenthetical information – that is, information which you might put in parentheses. When you use parentheses, though, the emphasis is taken off the parenthetical information and put on the rest of the sentence. When you use dashes (two of them), the emphasis is put on the information within the dashes.

For this usage, do make sure there are two dashes: one on each side of the parenthetical information.

*Ex. While I was shopping – wandering aimlessly up and down the aisles, actually – I ran into our old neighbor.*

*Ex. He was going to call off the project – or was he? – when the client increased the payment.*

**2** An appositive is a small section of extra information which is inserted into a sentence for clarification. Commas are usually used to offset the appositive, but if the appositive contains one or more commas, that would get confusing for the reader. When using an appositive that contains a comma, offset it with dashes, instead.

*Ex. Four of us – Mike, Amanda, Katy and me – went to the conference last week.*

*Ex. The question words – who, what, when, where, why, and how – used to retrieve information in English.*

**3** When a sentence begins with an independent clause and ends with a list, you can use a colon between the clause and the list. When the list comes first, it's better to use a dash to connect the list to the clause. This helps to take three potentially random things and focus them towards one idea which is easier for the reader to process.

*Ex. Dishes, laundry, dusting – they're all done now, and I need a rest.*

*Ex. Do this, do that, go here, go there – there's so much to do that I don't get much accomplished during the day.*

**4** Dashes can act like little warnings (like yellow road signs) that whatever the writer has been doing is about to change. Dashes identify a sudden break in the sentence as the writer changes tack, perhaps going entirely in another direction, or perhaps just pausing to insert another thought. This effect is usually fairly informal, and isn't recommended for academic writing (as it might look like you don't know what you're talking about).

*Ex. Mary, could you – no, Mikey, don't touch the sharp knife! – Mary, could you please set the table?*

A "sharp turn in thought" could be the switch when suddenly talking to a new person.

*Ex. Dinner is at 6:30 – not 6:29 or 6:31.*

This dash is for emphasis on the "amplification": making sure the time is clarified.

*Ex. Would you please – oh, never mind....*

**OPENER—sentence**

*Ex. Rushing, rushing, rushing—I raced into the room with a huff and a sigh.*

**Sent—INTERRUPTER—ence**

*Ex. The stars glittered for all they were worth—which was considerable—and every single one held its place.*

**Sentence—CLOSER**

*Ex. He wouldn't go for the double—just a single.*

# PARENTHESES RULES

The use of parentheses indicates that the writer considered the information less important—almost an afterthought.

- 1** Use parentheses to enclose information that clarifies or is used as an aside.

*Example: He finally answered (after taking five minutes to think) that he did not understand the question.*

If material in parentheses ends a sentence, the period goes after the parentheses.

*Example: He gave me a nice bonus (\$500).*

# ELLIPSES RULES

An ellipsis (plural: ellipses) is a punctuation mark consisting of three dots. (...)

- 1** Use an ellipsis when omitting a word, phrase, line, paragraph, or more from a quoted passage. Ellipses save space or remove material that is less relevant. They are useful in getting right to the point without delay or distraction:

*Full quotation: "Today, after hours of careful thought, we vetoed the bill."*

*With ellipsis: "Today...we vetoed the bill."*

- 2** Ellipses can express hesitation, changes of mood, suspense, or thoughts trailing off. Writers also use ellipses to indicate a pause or wavering in an otherwise straightforward sentence.

*Examples:*

*I don't know...I'm not sure.*

*Pride is one thing, but what happens if she...?*

*He said, "I...really don't...understand this."*

# COLON RULES

A colon means "that is to say" or "here's what I mean."

- 1** Use a colon to introduce a series of items. Do not capitalize the first item after the colon (unless it's a proper noun).

*Examples:*

*You may be required to bring many things: sleeping bags, pans, utensils, and warm clothing.*

*I want the following items: butter, sugar, and flour.*

Avoid using a colon before a list when it directly follows a verb or preposition.

*Incorrect: I want: butter, sugar, and flour.*

*Correct:*

*I want the following: butter, sugar, and flour. OR I want butter, sugar, and flour.*

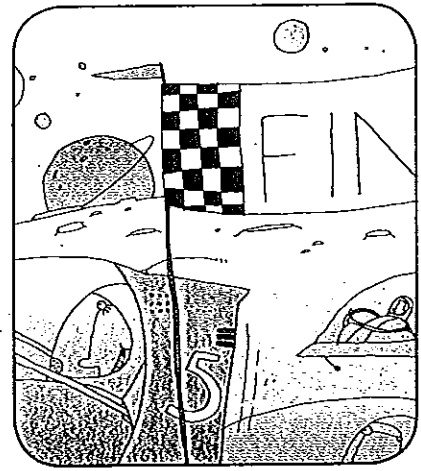
- 2** Use a colon rather than a comma to follow the salutation in a business letter, even when addressing someone by his or her first name. A comma is used after the salutation in more informal correspondence.

*Formal: Dear Ms. Rodriguez:*

*Informal: Dear Dave,*

# Hyphens 1

Hyphens are used to divide words at the end of a line. They are also used between numbers in fractions, to join certain letters and words, and to avoid awkward spellings. (See 608.4, 610.2, and 610.3 in *Write Source* for more about using hyphens.)

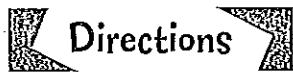


## Examples

She won the race by six-tenths of a second.  
(The hyphen is used between numbers in the fraction.)

I bought my T-shirt at the concert.  
(The hyphen joins a letter and a word.)

She had to re-create her report after her soda spilled on it.  
(The hyphen avoids confusion in the word "re-create.")



## Directions

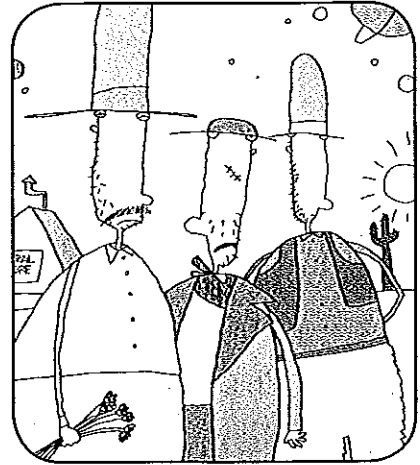
Place hyphens as needed in the following sentences. The first sentence has been done for you.

1. Yesterday my cousin turned twenty-one.
2. He moved the high jump bar exactly one quarter of an inch higher for a record setting attempt.
3. My parents wouldn't let me see the R rated movie.
4. The game was three fourths over, and Bob hadn't missed a single three point shot.
5. He came back from Chicago with a fashionably ragged pair of jeans and his usual start of winter cold.
6. We will have to recover the chair because it looks too worn to go with our new indoor outdoor carpeting.
7. The standard photos come only in four inch widths; enlargements come in 5 by 8 inch or 9 by 12 inch sizes.
8. The Kennedy Nixon television debate is an important event in political history.
9. His self conscious cousin was nervous about performing in the third grade holiday pageant.
10. We need to recruit six 12 year old girls for our volleyball team.

## Day 2 – HYPHENS 2

# Hyphens 2

Hyphens may be used to form compound words, new words using certain prefixes and suffixes, and single-thought adjectives. (See 608.2, 608.3, and 610.1 in *Write Source* for additional examples of the uses of hyphens.)



### Examples

I hit fast-forward to watch my favorite part of a movie.

(“Fast-forward” is a compound word.)

*The Wild Bunch* is my all-time favorite western.

(“All-time” is a new word formed by combining the prefix “all” with “time.”)

My collection of award-winning films includes 20 comedies.

(“Award-winning” is a single-thought adjective modifying “films.”)

### Directions

Read the sentences below and insert hyphens where necessary between compound words, single-thought adjectives, and new words formed by using prefixes and suffixes. The first one has been done for you.

1. People probably should eat more fat-free foods.
2. Hard to understand instructions seem like they are written in Greek.
3. The heart pounding ending left me breathless.
4. The “easy to follow” instructions for the new VCR confused me.
5. The new book of student written poems was high on my must read list.
6. The 12 year old skating champion fell after trying the triple jump.
7. I stopped at a fast food deli for lunch.
8. The one run loss was becoming routine for the hard luck baseball team.
9. I want to replace an ink jet printer with an up to date laser model.
10. The company halted in house production of its magazine.



## DAY 4 - DASHES

# Dashes

You probably will not find many reasons to use dashes in your writing. Still, you should know when and how to use dashes. (Review the examples below and see 612.1–612.3 in *Write Source* for additional explanations and examples.) You should note that dashes are formed by two hyphens--without spacing before or after--in any typed work.

### Examples

The 1998 New York Yankees were an amazing team—in fact, an astonishing team—during regular and postseason play.

(To indicate sudden breaks in sentences.)

After winning the American League championship, the team had a final goal—sweeping the World Series.

(To set off a word, a phrase, or a clause for emphasis.)

Oh no—not that—yes, I heard you, but I can't believe it.

(To show interrupted speech.)



### Directions

In the sentences below, insert dashes where they are needed. The first one has been done for you.

1. The 1998 Yankees had one aim and one aim only—winning.
2. I think the Yankees proved proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that they had more overall talent than anyone else.
3. After 162 regular season games and 15 postseason games, the players had one thing in mind a long vacation without any baseball.
4. Playing more than 170 games can be wearing even on the most dedicated player.
5. Each Yankee player received something special a World Series ring.





## DAY 6 – PARENTHESES

As the thoughts you express in writing become more complex, punctuation marks become more important. Some of the most useful punctuation marks are *semicolons* [;], *colons* [:], *hyphens* [-], *dashes* [—], and *parentheses* [( )]. (See pages 594, 596, 608, 610, and 612 in *Write Source* for information about these special forms of punctuation.)



### Directions

Using the punctuation rules in *Write Source*, place marks correctly in each sample sentence. Then explain the rule that applies to the punctuation mark you've used. The first one has been done for you.

1. We raised money for our outdoor education program by selling pizzas and sausages, delivery day is today.

*Rule:* A semicolon is used to join two independent clauses when the clauses are not already connected with a coordinating conjunction.

2. To earn money, we sold the following cheese pizzas, sausage pizzas, pepperoni pizzas, cutters, and sausages.

*Rule:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. The pizza order forms I hope I added my totals up correctly were handed in to Mr. Pennington.

*Rule:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. After delivering hundreds of pizzas, I knew I soon wanted to become an ex salesperson.

*Rule:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## DAY 6 - continued

5. The pizza order forms included information addresses, phone numbers, prices, customer totals that made the deliveries easy.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



### Directions

Punctuate the following sentences correctly by adding the necessary colons, semicolons, dashes, parentheses, and hyphens. The first one has been done for you.

1. The truck pulled up with our 299 cases of pizzas, we all jumped to our stations.
2. We needed ten students to process the delivery system and five to give the parents some valuable information where to park. (*for emphasis*)
3. Each step of the system sign-in, pickup, loading, and carryout had to run like clockwork. (*added information*)
4. The driver had separated all of the items cheese pizzas, sausage pizzas, pepperoni pizzas, pizza cutters, and sausages.
5. Safety is one thing that is very important actually vital in the car-loading station. (*sudden break*)
6. Mr. Pennington inspected the whole operation, but we all worked to make it an accident free day. (*creating a new word*)
7. The sale was a success we had handled 145 orders and 3,578 pizzas!
8. Mr. Pennington was happy. "I want you to know that we've earned about four no, make that five thousand dollars!"

# DAY 7

## SENTENCE TO CORRECT

Plants are shaped by cultivation and men by education. We are born weak we need strength. We are born totally unprovided we need aid. We are born stupid we need judgment. Everything we do not have at our birth and which we need when we are grown is given to us by education.

--Jean Jacques Rousseau French philosopher

### RULES - Why did you make the change?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### JOURNAL YOUR THOUGHTS

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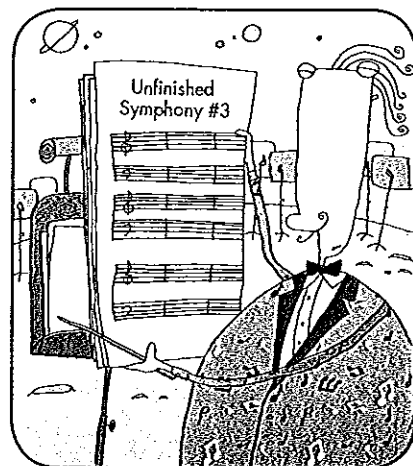
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## DAY 9 – COLONS

# Colons

A colon may be used to introduce a list or an important point. A colon can also set off a word or phrase from the rest of the sentence for emphasis. A colon follows the salutation of a business letter and comes between numbers that show time. (See page 596 in *Write Source* for additional information about colons.)



### Examples

**Dear Mr. Valenza:**

(The colon follows the salutation of a business letter.)

**Musician Wanda Landowska made this statement: "I never practice; I always play."**

(The colon is used to formally introduce the quotation.)

**Most burglaries take place between 1:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m.**

(The colon is used between numbers showing time.)

**A good student does the following: reads, writes, and remembers.**

(The colon introduces a list.)

**The police were missing one important piece of information: a motive.**

(The colon sets off the phrase "a motive" for emphasis.)



### Directions

Place colons where they are needed in the following sentences. The first two sentences have been done for you.

1. There was one problem with the 7:00 a.m. class; the time of day.
2. Dad's sports rules were the following: play hard, play fair, and play often.
3. John gave us some good advice for losing weight: eat less.
4. He also told us to avoid the following: eating between meals, eating before going to bed, and eating foods that are mostly sugar or salt.

## DAY 9 - continued

5. The library doors were locked at exactly 500 p.m.
6. Lucas has three major dislikes whiners, bullies, and braggarts.
7. On the other hand, there was one thing he really liked football.
8. The most involved people have the least input in one area education.
9. Students are often the last to be heard after the following groups have had their say politicians, parents, administrators, and educators.
10. Some follow this saying "Children should be seen and not heard."



### Directions

Rewrite the sentences below so that each sentence uses one or more colons. The first sentence has been done for you.

1. Reading, sleeping, and eating are Aaron's favorite activities.

Aaron's favorite activities are the following: reading, sleeping, and eating.

2. Chad was lost in the woods from ten in the morning until eleven at night.

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3. He dropped his backpack and spilled energy bars, a water bottle, and his flashlight.

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4. "It's always darkest before dawn" was my grandfather's favorite saying.

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5. The one thing I liked about Uncle Bill was listening to his scary campfire stories.

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# DAY 10

## SENTENCE TO CORRECT

The secret to happiness and well being is no mystery Forget apologize admit errors avoid mistakes listen to advice keep your temper shoulder the blame make the best of things maintain high standards think first and act accordingly put the needs of others before your own and forgive.

### **RULES - Why did you make the change?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### **JOURNAL YOUR THOUGHTS**

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