

Signs: A Grammar Handbook

Online Exercises

Section III

Chapter 15

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Use commas to set off introductory words, phrases, or clauses where needed.

1. For curiosity's sake what are the warning signs that something is not scientific?
2. In answer to your question pseudoscience is often either impossible to test or excuses are made which keep it from being tested.
3. In some cases when evidence does not support the claim, instead of abandoning their ideas, pseudo-scientists add conditions to their theories or explain away the evidence so that it is impossible to test the claim empirically.
4. For example a psychic who cannot demonstrate mind reading or other psychic feats under carefully controlled conditions in the laboratory might claim that "the skeptical vibes of experimenters" are blocking his or her psychic powers.
5. In other cases pseudoscientific theories cannot be tested right from the start.

Adapted from <http://woofighters.org/2010/06/warning-signs-that-something-is-not-scientifi/>

EXERCISE 2

Directions: Add commas in the following sentences when and where needed. Some sentences may not need commas. Be able to explain why you choose to add a comma.

1. Genuine science adapts and updates its theories in response to new evidence and this is especially true when there is refuting evidence.
2. Pseudoscience tends to maintain its initial claims and instead dismisses or ignores counter-evidence.
3. Peer review an effective safeguard against human error is the checking of scientific-journal articles by other scientists.
4. Pseudo-scientists tend to avoid close scrutiny and in many cases their descriptions of procedures and mechanisms are vague.
5. The terms they use may be undefined or under-defined (e.g., "energy") but they may claim that "orthodox science" conspires against them.

Adapted from <http://woofighters.org/2010/06/warning-signs-that-something-is-not-scientifi/>

EXERCISE 3

Directions: Add commas where needed, setting off non-essential clauses, phrases, and appositives. Not all sentences will need a comma.

1. Scientific studies all of which use null hypotheses are designed to disprove hypotheses.
2. This is because confirming evidence cannot tell us if the hypothesis is always true or if we have simply not seen a case in which it is false.
3. For example, we could test the hypothesis that all birds fly by dropping birds from a bridge.
4. We would confirm our hypothesis many times over, but we would not discover that it was wrong unless we happened to drop a penguin which does not fly.
5. Pseudo-scientists as part of their detailed explanations often claim to have discovered a completely new way of looking at the world, one which requires existing scientific knowledge to be tossed out.

Adapted from <http://woofighters.org/2010/06/warning-signs-that-something-is-not-scientifi/>

EXERCISE 4

Directions: Add commas where needed for transitions, interjections, direct address, or tag questions. All sentences may not need commas.

1. Psychic surgeons can claim to remove tumors from a patient's abdomen without cutting the skin can't they?
2. This though is considered an extraordinary claim as it defies the laws of nature as we know them.
3. Doctors such claims require extraordinary evidence don't they?
4. Pseudo-scientists meanwhile tend to rely on evidence that is testimonial with engaging and vivid personal stories.
5. Although such testimonies may be useful starting points in the early stages of scientific study, they rarely provide enough evidence to accept a claim.

Adapted from <http://woofighters.org/2010/06/warning-signs-that-something-is-not-scientifi/>

Chapter 16

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Revise these sentences, adding semi-colons where needed. Not all sentences will need semi-colons.

1. Cleveland was once a magical place *Forbes* magazine, in one of those “best and worst” lists that clutter the Internet, named it last year “the most miserable city in America.”
2. During the 50 years since I left for college back East and a career in New York, Cleveland’s population has declined to something around 430,000 that is less than half of what it was when, in 1950, it ranked as the seventh-largest city in America.
3. The number of impoverished residents is high the big downtown department stores are shuttered.
4. Even with the damning statistics of above, I couldn’t resist a call to return to Cleveland.
5. Finding some wonder still in the city of Cleveland, I wrote about the world-famous Cleveland Orchestra, still flourishing in its opulent home of Severance Hall that is where I acquired my love of classical music.

Adapted from <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/Clevelands-Signs-of-Renewal.html>

Chapter 17

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Add colons where needed in the following sentences. Not all sentences may need a colon.

1. Across the street, waterfowl still flocked to the lagoon at the Cleveland Museum of Art, which had begun a \$350 million renovation to house its superb holdings Egyptian mummies, classical sculpture, Asian treasures, Rembrandts, and Warhols.

2. Other places were still intact and thriving the region's "Emerald Necklace"—an elaborate network of nature trails—was blossoming; the canopy of magnificent trees that had given Cleveland its Forest City nickname was still beautiful; and the stadiums of the Browns and Indians had undergone renovation and renewal.
3. Signs of renewed vitality were everywhere downtown warehouses had been turned into lofts and restaurants, and several old movie palaces had been transformed into Playhouse Square, the country's largest performing arts complex after Lincoln Center.
4. The lakefront boasted the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, in a futuristic design by I. M. Pei.
5. Cleveland's treasures require a taste for discovery you might find yourself in Nighttown when the Count Basie Orchestra is playing, or you might eat at tiny Aldo's eating lasagna better than any you've ever eaten.

Adapted from <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/Clevelands-Signs-of-Renewal.html?c=y&page=2>

Chapter 18

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the correct punctuation mark: period (.), exclamation point (!) or question mark (?).

1. How Cleveland has changed
2. I wonder why it has had such a renaissance lately
3. I have to know; have you ever eaten at Aldo's
4. It was true I had to question how a city so down-trodden had revitalized itself
5. Charles Michener returned to Cleveland and is now writing a book about it

Chapter 19

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Add the missing apostrophes to the following paragraph.

Summer colds are a cruel oxymoron. Generally, the U.S. suffers through 1 billion to 2 billion colds annually with the average adult coming down with about two a year (childrens colds average three to four times that amount). Summer colds, while more annoying, are less common since we tend to be outdoors more (as opposed to sneezing all over each other during the winters prime holidays) and because the suns ultraviolet rays kill cold viruses, which can live on surfaces, especially our bathrooms surfaces for up to 24 hours. Unfortunately, some of the 200 or so viruses that cause common colds are still able to survive and infect us—usually just in time to ruin a long-awaited vacation.

Adapted from http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/31051312/ns/health-cold_and_flu/t/so-unfair-summer-colds-are-cruel-oxymoron/

Chapter 20

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Add quotation marks and capital letters where needed.

1. it's absolutely unjust to give me a cold at this time of year, says anne macdonald, a 57-year-old media relations director from ithaca, n.y, who was rudely taken out by sniffles and sneezing fits just as the weather began to turn to summer.
2. the sun's out, the temperatures have gone up, i'm down with a cold, and it's not fair. it's past cold season and I should be done with them. i've had my share.
3. in a typical year, cold season goes pretty much through the school year and flu season is narrower, usually falling between december and march, says dr. neil schachter, medical director of the respiratory care department at mount sinai medical center in new york.

4. i once had a summer cold that I spread around to a few people, says debra ziss, a 38-year-old illustrator from brooklyn. my partner and a good friend ended up with it, and then we all went to argentina. they were hacking the whole time we were there and hating me.

5. in the wintertime, they probably like it as an excuse not to go to work, but in the summer, they don't want to be inconvenienced, to not have fun, the doctor says.

Adapted from http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/31051312/ns/health-cold_and_flu/t/so-unfair-summer-colds-are-cruel-oxymoron/

Chapter 21 and Chapter 22

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Add a hyphen or dash when needed.

1. The eighth annual National Punctuation Day occurred on September 24, 2011 and celebrated all punctuation marks from the everyday comma to the student confounding ellipsis.

2. Twenty-five people will be declared winners of this year's National Punctuation Day contest the Punctuation Paragraph Contest when entries are evaluated by an esteemed panel of judges following the September 24 celebration of the annual holiday that encourages worldwide literacy.

3. Last year, 356 students students from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Malta, and Italy submitted more than 3,000 haikus in our Punctuation Haiku Contest.

4. The deliberate and consistent use of proper punctuation is essential in all forms of business communications communications from the mightiest multi-million-dollar contract proposal to the simplest customer e-mail reply.

5. Our written communications reflect our level of professionalism not education, but professionalism.

Adapted from <http://www.nationalpunctuationday.com/>

Chapter 23

No exercises (as in book)

Chapter 24

No exercises (as in book)

Chapter 25

No exercises (as in book)

Chapter 26

No exercises (as in book)

Chapter 27

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Capitalize where needed.

appreciate the apostrophe, salute the semicolon and exalt the exclamation point. it's national punctuation day! the holiday started when jeff rubin, a newsletter publisher and former reporter, grew increasingly frustrated as he spotted errors in the newspaper. In 2004, he secured a listing for the day in the *chase's calendar of events* reference book, and national punctuation day was born. this year marks its seventh official celebration. "the first two years it was on august 22, because that's my birthday," rubin says. "I figured if you're going to start a holiday, you should have it on a day you can remember." but he moved the festivities to september 24 in 2006, placing it squarely in the school year and honoring the number of his favorite baseball hero, willie mays. the day isn't just for people who get cranky over misplaced commas or hyperventilate over errant hyphens. rubin says he wanted to help educators remind students that punctuation still matters, even in an age of rapid-fire tweets and text messages. "we are graduating children from high schools now who cannot read and cannot write," he says. "when these kids get out into the real world, they're going to be unemployable."

Adapted from http://articles.cnn.com/2010-09-24/living/national.punctuation.day_1_national-punctuation-day-lynne-truss-jeff-rubin?_s=PM:LIVING

Chapter 28

EXERCISE 1

Directions: Italicize when needed.

"The world is changing so fast. You used to could predict things," says a character in Clyde Edgerton's new novel, *The Night Train*. Set in rural North Carolina in 1963, Edgerton's tenth novel examines the changing landscapes of race and culture through the relationship of two teenage boys, one black, one white, who love music. Marked by Edgerton's signature blend of humor and poignancy, whimsy and sharp insight, *The Night Train* received warm reviews from *The New York Times Book Review* and *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. *The Night Train* was shared on August 10, 2011, entry by J. Peder Zane, who edits *The Top Ten* blog on the books that book contemporary authors believe are the best of all time. On that same day, the blog shared the top ten list of Michael Connelly, author of the novel *The Lincoln Lawyer*, which was made into a 2010 film. At the top of Connelly's list were *The Great Gatsby*, *The Day of the Locusts*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, all novels that have been made into films.

Adapted from <http://www.toptenbooks.net/home.cgi>