

1

Starting and finishing a sentence

A

Task 1

Divide the words below into two sentences. Each sentence should start with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

the fastest land mammal in the world is the cheetah it can reach speeds of over sixty miles per hour

Task 2

Divide the words below into three sentences.

lions are sociable creatures they live in families rather than in big herds as other animals do in each family group there are between six and twenty animals

Task 3

Divide the words below into four sentences.

snakes are cold-blooded creatures they are only as hot or cold as the air around them that is why you don't find many snakes in cool countries such as Britain it's simply too chilly for them to stay alive

Now check your answers and then consult the **Reference** section before going on to B.

Reference

- a** A sentence is a group of words that makes complete sense. There is only one way of starting a sentence. The first word of a sentence must begin with a capital letter.
- b** A full stop is used to mark the end of a sentence – except when you are asking a direct question (?) or making an exclamation (!).

e.g.

Does anyone know where Shefali is? She is absent again. What a nuisance!

Of all the punctuation marks, the full stop is the most important. Just as a red traffic-light stops one line of traffic from crashing into another, so too the full stop prevents one sentence from running into the next. It stops one set of words from becoming confused with another.

- c The exclamation mark (!) is a very 'loud' punctuation mark. We use it to express very strong emotions (like anger, shock, pleasure or amazement).

e.g. What a stupid thing to say!

B

Task 1

Correct the sentences below. Each sentence should begin with a capital letter and finish with either a question mark (?) or an exclamation mark (!).

- 1 what is her name
- 2 what a surprise
- 3 how embarrassing
- 4 how did it happen
- 5 do you know the answer
- 6 do it now

Score: /6

Task 2

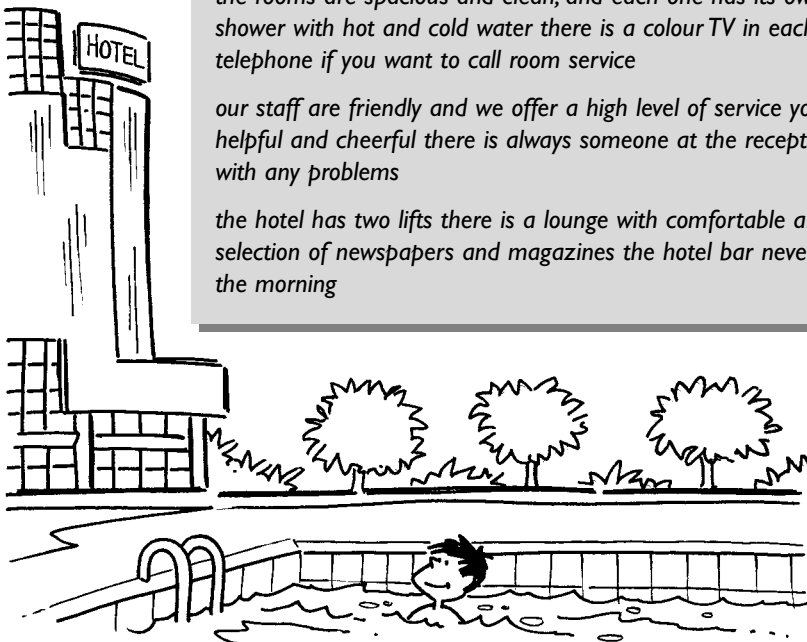
Correct the advertisement below. Each sentence should start with a capital letter. Each sentence should end with a full stop.

come and enjoy a relaxing holiday at the Dolphin Hotel it is very near a clean beach and there are plenty of shops nearby the hotel is situated in a quiet area and has its own large swimming pool

the rooms are spacious and clean, and each one has its own private bath and shower with hot and cold water there is a colour TV in each room and a telephone if you want to call room service

our staff are friendly and we offer a high level of service you will find everybody helpful and cheerful there is always someone at the reception desk to help you with any problems

the hotel has two lifts there is a lounge with comfortable armchairs and a wide selection of newspapers and magazines the hotel bar never closes before two in the morning



Score: /22

2

Showing what someone has said

A

Task

In the sentences below, some of the punctuation marks are missing. Can you supply them? You will need to use speech marks (“...”), the full stop, the comma, and the question mark where appropriate. At the same time, the first word of each sentence must start with a capital letter.

- 1 have you seen Suzy recently
no, I haven't seen her for ages
- 2 i am sure I know you he said
i think you are mistaken she replied
aren't you Tariq's sister he asked
yes, I am she said
- 3 that jacket looks nice she said can I try it on
- 4 please do not touch that vase he said it's extremely valuable

Now check your answers and then consult the **Reference** section before going on to B.

Reference

- a** Speech marks can be single or double. This book uses double for direct speech (the actual words spoken by someone). Any other punctuation mark should go inside the speech marks.

e.g. “How are you?” he asked. / “Get out!” he shouted.

- b** We show that two different people are speaking by putting what they say on separate lines. If the spoken words are on their own, punctuation is straightforward.

e.g. “I enjoyed that film.”
 “So did I.”
 “What shall we do now?”
 “I don't know.”

c When the words in speech marks are accompanied by words like *he said*, we have to be extra careful with our punctuation.

- If the words in speech marks come first, we punctuate in the following way:

e.g.

“I am hungry,” she said.

“I am hungry,” she said. “Is there anything to eat?”

“I am hungry,” she said, “and I am tired as well.”

“I’m hungry!” she shouted.

“Are you hungry?” he asked.

- If words like *he said* come before the words in speech marks, we punctuate as follows:

e.g.

The soldier shouted, “Run for your lives!”

Then she said, “Why don’t we try something else?”

B

Task 1

Correct the passage below. Use capital letters, speech marks and other punctuation marks where appropriate.

he looked at her and said where did you get that from

i found it she said it was on the floor

i don’t believe you he shouted at the top of his voice

there’s no need to shout she said in a firm voice

give it to me he growled or you’ll be sorry

Score: /10

Task 2

Correct the joke below.

two small boys were discussing their future

what are you going to be when you grow up one of them

asked

a soldier answered the other

what if you get killed

who would want to kill me

the enemy

the other boy thought this over

okay he said when I grow up, I’ll be the enemy

Score: /16

3

Capital letters

A

Task

Read and correct the following advert for a pen-friend. Some of the words need to start with a capital letter.

My name is thomas smythe and I come from sheffield. I will be eleven next april. I don't have any brothers or sisters, but I've got a dog called bono.

I speak a little bit of french and I know a few words in spanish (I've been to spain twice).

My favourite subject at school is english and my favourite pop group is 'slick girls'.

I love playing football and I support sheffield united. My ambition is to play for england!

Now check your answers and then consult the **Reference** section before going on to B.

Reference

a We use capital letters at the beginning of the following kinds of words:

- the names of days, months and special times of the year

e.g. Monday / July / Diwali / Christmas

(but capitals are not necessary for the names of seasons: in summer, in autumn, in winter, in spring)

- the names of people, places and countries

e.g. Peter / Paris / Oxford Street / China

- the names of rivers, oceans and mountains

e.g. the (River) Nile / the Pacific Ocean / Mount Everest

- titles (when they are used with a name)

e.g. Mrs Doubtfire / Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde / Queen Elizabeth / Captain Hook

(but: He is a doctor. / He is a captain. / Is she a princess?)

- the main words of the title of a book or film

e.g. James and the Giant Peach, Treasure Island, Independence Day, Jurassic Park

- languages, nationality and school subjects

e.g. French / Irish / Mathematics

- b** We also use a capital letter
- at the beginning of a sentence

e.g. The tallest living animal is the giraffe. It lives in Africa.

- when we refer to ourselves (= I)

e.g. I told them that I wasn't interested.

- at the beginning of direct speech

e.g. He said, "Come along, please."

B

Task 1

Check your spelling by supplying the missing words below. Each missing word must start with a capital letter.

- a Monday, , , , Friday,
and Sunday
- b January, , March, , May, June, ,
..... , September, , November and

Score: /10

Task 2

Supply the missing words. Be careful how you spell each word and don't forget to put a full stop at the end.

e.g. He comes from Ireland. He is Irish.

- 1 Ayako comes from Japan. She is
- 2 Pedro comes from Spain. He is
- 3 Angus comes from Scotland. He is
- 4 Patrick comes from Australia. He is
- 5 Bola comes from Nigeria. She is

Score: /5

Task 3

Underline and change any word that needs a capital letter in the two passages below. The two passages also need full stops in several places. Can you supply them?

- 1 my brother, tony, is a doctor he lives in wales and he speaks welsh fluently we usually see him at christmas and, sometimes, at easter
- 2 for many years it was thought that the Nile was the longest river in the world in 1969, however, it was finally decided that the mighty Amazon in South America was 4,195 miles long, fifty more than the Nile

Score: /20

4

Using the comma

A

Task 1

Here are three jokes. Read them aloud. The problem with these jokes is that some commas are missing. Can you work out where they should go?

- 1 Gary: Have you been invited to Rashid's party?
 Mike: Yes but I can't go.
 Gary: Why not?
 Mike: The invitation says 4 to 7 and I am eight.
- 2 "Waiter there's a dead fly in my soup."
 "Oh dear it's the hot water that kills them."
- 3 "Dad will you do my homework for me?"
 "No it wouldn't be right."
 "Well at least you can try."

Task 2

Here are two extracts from a child's diary (describing a family holiday in Italy). There are some commas missing. Can you put them in?

- 1 For breakfast I had orange juice bread jam six sugar lumps hot chocolate and two crispy things.
- 2 The train stopped in Milan so we had to drive to Toscalano. We got there at siesta time and everything was shut so we had to wait a while.

Now check your answers and then consult the **Reference** section before going on to B.

Reference

a General use of the comma:

- When we speak, we pause naturally at certain places. In the same way, a comma indicates a very brief pause within a sentence.

e.g.

By the way, have you seen Michael?
 Excuse me, is this the right way to the station?

- Quite often it is entirely up to you whether to use a comma or not. Look at the two sentences below. They are both correct. Read them aloud. Can you hear the difference between the way *of course* is being used?

Of course I'll help you.
 Of course, you don't have to go if you don't want to.

b Some specific uses of the comma:

- We use commas to separate words that are listed together.
 In a list of words, the final two items are connected by *and* instead of a comma.

e.g. I went on a picnic with Christopher, Mark, Nick and Sarah.

- When we use *so* to join two parts of a sentence, we usually put a comma in front.

e.g. We arrived early, so we had to wait.
 We were late, so we missed the train.



In the examples above, *so* means 'and for that reason'.

B

Task 1

There are three commas missing in the following joke. Can you put them in?

Kelly: What's bright purple has twenty-four legs and ears that stick two inches out of its head?

Beth: I don't know.

Kelly: I don't know either but there's one crawling up your arm.

Score: /3

Task 2

Look at the following sentences. There are some commas missing. Can you put them in?

- 1 The moon has no atmosphere and no water so no life is possible.
- 2 People have been mining gold silver tin iron copper and lead for thousands of years.
- 3 Scientists have discovered that bees mosquitoes wasps and other stinging insects prefer to sting girls rather than boys.
- 4 It started to rain so we stopped playing tennis.
- 5 He was wearing a pink shirt green trousers and white shoes!

Score: /5

5

Being careful with the comma

A

Task 1

What is wrong with the sentences below? Can you correct them?

- 1 I was sweating, I felt really uncomfortable.
- 2 I hate Keith, he is such a nasty boy.

Task 2

Look at the six sentences below. In three of the sentences we can put a comma in the middle of the sentence to show more clearly that there are two parts to it. Which three sentences? Where exactly should the comma be placed?

- 1 When she heard the news she burst into tears.
- 2 She was very upset when she heard the news.
- 3 If it stops raining we'll go for a walk this afternoon.
- 4 We'll go down to the beach tomorrow if the weather is nice.
- 5 As he came nearer I became frightened.
- 6 We got to the station just as the train was leaving.

Now check your answers and then consult the **Reference** section before going on to **B**.

Reference



a Never use a comma to join two complete sentences.

- I liked the book, it was really exciting.
- I liked the book. It was really exciting.
- I liked the book because it was really exciting.

b When a sentence can be divided naturally into two parts, you can use a comma to mark that division. You do not have to use a comma, but the sentence will look clearer and neater if you do.

A natural division will always occur in a sentence if you begin the first part of the sentence with such words as *When, As soon as, If, As, Just as, While, Before, After*.

e.g.

- If I see her at the party tonight, I'll give her the message.
- When I got home, I had supper and went straight to bed.
- As it grew darker, we became more frightened.

- c However, you must not use a comma if you use those same words as 'joining' words in the middle of a sentence.

e.g. My father will buy me a bike if I pass the exam.
 I got the shock of my life when I saw her.
 I had a shower as soon as I got home.

B

Task 1

Correct the sentences below.

- 1 I didn't like the film, it was boring.
- 2 I don't like Karen, she's so bossy.
- 3 You should eat fruit, it's good for you.

Score: /3

Task 2

Supply a comma where appropriate in the sentences below. Tick any sentence where a comma is definitely not needed.

- 1 When I get to Paris I'll give you a ring.
- 2 I'll tell you when I'm ready.
- 3 If you don't do your homework your teacher will be annoyed.
- 4 We will miss the train if you don't hurry up.



- 5 She telephoned me as soon as she got the news.
- 6 As soon as I have enough money I am going to buy a bike.
- 7 As it was getting late we decided to turn back.
- 8 Nicholas is upset because his team didn't win.
- 9 Our house was burgled while we were away on holiday.
- 10 While we were waiting for a bus we saw two foxes.
- 11 Just as I was leaving the postman arrived.
- 12 They arrived just as we were leaving.

Score: /12