

TEN-MINUTE GRAMMAR

COMMA RULES: Lesson One

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students should understand that...
 - a. Three or more items in a **list** should be separated by **commas**.
 - b. **Two adjectives** that describe a noun **may or may not** be separated by a comma. If there is an obvious order (for example "**big red**") to the adjectives, no comma is needed. If you can put them in any order (for example "**stinky, ugly**" or "**ugly, stinky**"), they are called "**equal adjectives**" and you do separate them with a comma.
 - c. When a speaker addresses someone by name, which is called a "**direct address**," the name should have commas around it.
 - d. When a **full date** is written out, there should be a comma between the day and the year, as well as after the year if the sentence continues afterwards.
 - e. When an **address or location** is written out, there should be a comma after the street name, after the city, *and* after the state *if* the sentence continues afterwards.
2. Students should be able to...
 - a. Correct sentences and passages that contain comma-use errors with lists, equal adjectives, direct addresses, dates, and locations.
 - b. Write sentences that correctly use commas with lists, equal adjectives, direct addresses, dates, and locations.

Identify the comma errors in each of the following sentences (where do commas need to be added?):

1. I went to the store to buy a bag of chips a can of soda and a box of Twinkies.
2. My neighbor has a hideous stinky pet dog.
3. I don't know what to tell you John.
4. My brother was born on July 4 1997 so we always light fireworks for his birthday party.
5. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is located at 1100 Rock and Roll Boulevard Cleveland Ohio.

Read the following example sentences from Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy by Gary D. Schmidt. Find the missing commas in each sentence:

6. Turner Buckminster had lived in Phippsburg Maine for almost six whole hours.
7. The ball dropped onto the granite plate bounced up against his knee plopped back onto the plate and rolled still against his ankle.

In the last two days, you have learned several comma rules. Create your own example sentence for each of the following rules:

1. Separate three or more items in a list with commas.
2. Separate two equal adjectives with a comma.
3. With dates, use a comma between the day and the year *and* after the year *if* the sentence continues.
4. With addresses or locations, use a comma after the street name, after the city, *and* after the state *if* the sentence continues.

A “direct address” is when a speaker addresses or speaks to a person and calls that person by name. Separate a direct address with commas.

Decide whether the bold name needs commas before or after it (answer YES or NO):

5. I need to talk to you about your video game addiction **Jason**.
6. **Jason** needs to stop playing video games so much.
7. I think **Hilary** should stop being so rude to my sister.
8. Listen **Hilary** you can't talk about my sister like that.

In each of the following sentences, decided where a comma needs to be **ADDED**:

1. Eric you really need to get to work on that essay.
2. On July 4, 1776 fifty-six men signed the Declaration of Independence.
3. To play the game, you need a baseball a bat, and a glove.
4. The Empire State Building is located at 350 5th Avenue, New York City New York.
5. A dark filthy apartment was the scene of the crime.

In each of the following sentences, decided where a comma needs to be **DELETED**:

6. Mark, thinks *Star Wars* is lame, so he won't watch it with me.
7. Whose birthday is on April, 1, 2000?
8. You are a very, rude girl, Jennifer.
9. I want to see the surf shops, and the beaches on our trip to Pensacola, Florida.

