

Commas

Adjective Commas

If you can put the word _____ between the words, or if you can _____ the order of the _____ and the sentence would still make sense, you can use a comma.

Aardvark is a blue and small mammal.

Aardvark is a small and blue mammal.

Aardvark is a small, blue mammal.

Punctuation changes everything



Sentence-Joining Commas and Conjunctions

When you join two _____ that could be sentences on their own with a word such as *and*, *but*, or *or*, you usually need a comma _____ the _____.

Squiggly covered under a rock, but he felt brave.

Comma Splice – BAD!!!

If you put a comma between two _____ clauses without a conjunction (*Squiggly ran to the forest, Aardvark chased the peeves*) it's an error called a comma splice or comma fault.

Squiggly ran to the forest; Aardvark chased the peeves.

Commas around Nonessential Info

Commas offset something that could be _____ but that wouldn't change the _____ of the rest of the sentence.

The snail, which happened to be yellow, was named Squiggly.

Commas and Conditional Sentences

Conditional sentences have an _____ clause such as "If you have any questions, let me know." The action depends on something else.

You will only let me know if you have questions.

If you don't have questions, you won't let me know.

Commas and Interjections

_____ at the beginning of sentences are _____ by commas (or exclamation points if you want to be more dramatic).

Indeed, he's quite irritating.

Yes! I do want to go to the beach.

Why is comma placement so important? The people at Rogers Communications, Inc. misplaced a comma in a contract – the comma changed the contract's meaning and cost them \$2.13 million. Below is the sentence:

The agreement shall continue in force for a period of five years from the date it is made, and thereafter for successive five year terms, unless and until terminated by one year prior notice in writing by either party.

DIRECTIONS: Determine which type of comma usage (ex. adjective commas) is appropriate and write its name on the line underneath the sentence. Then, insert the comma(s) to make the sentence grammatically correct.

1. The aardvark is a friendly blue beast.

2. Oh he's coming along too?

3. His best friend Squiggly went to the store.

4. We don't need to go to the store if we already have milk.

5. If we have milk we don't have to go to the store.

6. Squiggly ran to the forest and Aardvark chased the peeves.
