



Punctuation practice: Pause for commas

PARK RANGERS

Mark where capital letters and punctuation should be added to the sentences below. Remember to identify where in the sentence a comma can separate extra information.*

Sentences:

- at the end of a pleasant morning the lion lay down for a nap
- after a heavy meal he felt tired
- at that moment the monkey decided to shout
- his chattering got a bit quieter eventually
- however his whistling never stopped
- able to sleep through anything the tortoise slumbered on
- used to his tricks the ostriches ignored the monkey
- as for the zebras they turned their backs on him
- once in a while somebody looked at the lion
- they knew what would happen eventually
- the lion glared angrily shaking his mane
- throwing back his head he roared



Punctuation practice: Pause for commas

PARK KEEPERS

Use something from each column to make eight different sentences. Always begin with a subordinate (less important) clause and remember to include a capital letter and full stop.*

CLAUSE	CLAUSE	CONJUNCTION	COMMA
you start feeding the animals	the animals need extra water	although	,
take greater responsibility for animal welfare	an accident could occur	because	,
record results on a spreadsheet	you move the pythons	in case	,
you want to improve your skills	you are head keeper	whenever	,
you finish giving out food	you must weigh meal portions	after	,
get to know all the animals	you want to judge the animals' progress	before	,
have somebody to assist	you may have special favourites	as	,
use equipment carefully	attend new courses	if	,



Punctuation practice: Punctuation choice

Read the text below then punctuate it considering how your choice of marks will set the mood. Compare your ideas with a partner. Did you choose the same punctuation? Remember, there is not always a correct mark; a writer can choose, so your classmate might pick a different mood to express than you.

What a fantastic place the safari park is Why haven't you been to visit There are mischievous monkeys giant giraffes and crawling crocodiles As for other animals the list is endless lions elephants peacocks pythons and so many more There is something to watch all the time a monkey swinging from a climbing frame a peacock catching food a lion climbing a ladder If you are interested in food a delicious menu is available with indoor and outdoor eating Are you still too busy to visit Surely not The park is open every day between 8am and 8pm So book a date now The animals are expecting you



Possible version (Other punctuation is possible.)

What a fantastic place the safari park is! Why haven't you been to visit? There are mischievous monkeys, giant giraffes and crawling crocodiles. As for other animals, the list is endless: lions, elephants, peacocks, pythons and so many more. There is something to watch all the time: a monkey swinging from a climbing frame, a peacock catching food, a lion climbing a ladder. If you are interested in food, a delicious menu is available, with indoor and outdoor eating. Are you still too busy to visit? Surely not! The park is open every day between 8am and 8pm. So book a date now. The animals are expecting you!

Punctuation practice: In parentheses

The sentences below are taken from the **Interactive resource**, 'Animal punctuation: Descriptive texts' and can be used with the activity 'In parenthesis' in the 'Further ideas' section (pages 18–19, October '09 issue).*



- Our monkeys some born in the safari park are in tip-top health
- The adults and the cubs still very small belong to one family group
- Crocodiles and tortoises not usually kept together are happy here
- The trees sturdy and bushy give our elephants fun and food
- Suki known for her big appetite is the tallest giraffe in Europe
- These zebras admired for their stripes are our most photographed animals in the park
- One ostrich the one ignoring you is very shy
- Our deer who are perfectly safe have freedom to roam
- The peacocks' colours blue red and purple are magnificent
- The pythons known to bite are kept behind safety glass

Punctuation practice: Semi-detached sentences

Cut out the sentences below and pair them up. Decide which sentences can pair up and think about whether they can be separated by either a full stop or a semi colon. Cut out the full stop and semi colon and place it where you think it should go. Mark where any capital letters should be.



the park owner is from Africa

there are four in this park

the park opened last year

ostriches always surprise
the visitors

the speed limit is 5mph

the park has millions of visitors
each year

those four were very
popular newcomers

the monkey den has filled
up gradually

it was an immediate hit

the four giraffes arrived last year

crocodiles are always popular

there is a safety
inspection regularly

they seem to be enjoying
themselves

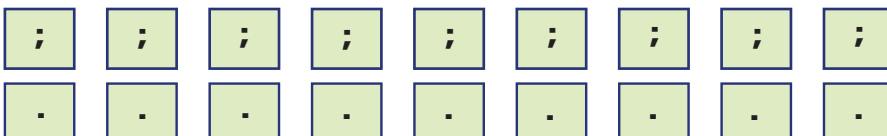
the park is filling up with people

visitors seem happy to drive
very slowly

people find their appearance
unusual

safety is an important concern

the park planner is from Brazil





Punctuation practice: Sophisticated marks

The safari park keeper has written a memo to the Editor of the *Safari Gazette*. He wants the news article to use some tricky punctuation marks. Read through the unpunctuated text and see if you can help out by placing the punctuation marks that the safari park keeper wants to include.*

MEMO

From: Keeper
To: Editor

Please publish the text below. As well as full stops and capital letters, there must be:

- : colon x3
- , comma x1
- ' apostrophe x1
- ; semi colon x3
- () pair of brackets x1
- , , parenthetic commas x3
- – dash x1
- ! exclamation mark x1

Unpunctuated text:

the safari park is thriving everyone is really happy the weather is amazing we have sunny days and high temperatures the cafés ice cream is really popular we are close to the middle of july july and august always bring more children children make ideal visitors they pay attention to the animals and they eat a lot our caring keeper has had a wonderful idea he is teaching the monkeys new exercises if he is successful there will be many benefits our customers the visitors will gain pleasure the monkeys his pupils will have fun john the keeper may win an award however small



Punctuation practice: Teachers' notes: Descriptive texts

Use this month's activities to help your class use punctuation more fluently. Descriptive texts tend to be longer and therefore use more punctuation. This means more chance of error, so it is important to keep returning to the basics and confirming accuracy. Nevertheless, there is also more opportunity for choice and the children will enjoy exploring the subtle differences made by their selections.

1 Daily description

Discuss with the children how the animals, people or objects on the **Poster**, 'Punctuation Safari Park' can look like punctuation marks. Practise your class' animal code: the agreed sounds or simple hand or body movements that remind them of those animals and marks. (See July 09's **Photocopiable 3**, 'Punctuation practice: Teachers' notes'.) Write and display a description of the park – a short paragraph describing one section – but deliberately omit punctuation. Read it aloud, asking the children to use the animal code to tell you what punctuation mark to put where.

2 Punctuation pitfall A

Using a comma instead of a full stop is a common mistake. Help children to avoid this punctuation pitfall by teaching this difference: a comma introduces another part of a sentence; a full stop marks the end of one sentence. Put the children into pairs, one holding a card 'p' (phrase) the other holding an 's' (sentence). Display an unpunctuated sentence or phrase: partners must decide who should hold up their letter. For example:

- *the lion is sleepy (s)*
- *a car full of people (p)*
- *under the tree next to the rock (p)*
- *there are three elephants (s)*
- *similar animals to tigers in appearance (p)*
- *where is the missing tortoise (s)*

3 Punctuation pitfall B

Let the children practise their learning from the previous activity by placing commas, full stops and capital letters in the text below. Write it unpunctuated on the whiteboard:

That picnic area looks so welcoming. By always being clean and tidy, it invites people to stop and enjoy their food. The area is swept and raked regularly, rubbish taken away promptly. Sometimes reaching crumbs before the peacocks, the park attendant is determined that everywhere looks its best. Up the steps and inside the café, the visitors receive the same welcome. In fact, it's a wonder people have time to visit the animals at all!

- Encourage partners to read aloud, discuss and justify decisions with each other.

4 Taking dictation

- Play 'Taking dictation' (see July 09's **Photocopiable 3**, 'Punctuation practice: Teachers' notes'.) in which partners, working separately, write a short descriptive text containing at least three commas and three full stops. In turn, they should dictate their text to their partner 'secretary' to write it down. When they reach punctuation, they must use the animal code. (See 'Daily description', left.) Will their secretary remember the code and punctuate what they write correctly? Will their secretary agree with their choice of punctuation?

5 Clearing confusion

- Read aloud the following three sentences taken from the unseen, corrected version on **Photocopiable 3**, 'Punctuation practice: Punctuation choice':
 - There are mischievous monkeys, giant giraffes and crawling crocodiles.
 - As for other animals, the list is endless: lions, elephants, peacocks, pythons and so many more.
 - There is something to watch all the time: a monkey swinging from a climbing frame, a peacock catching food, a lion climbing a ladder.
- Ask what the structure of the three sentences has in common? (All contain a list.) What punctuation mark do the children expect to separate the items? Display the sentences for the children to confirm the use of commas. Ask: *Which list is quite complicated? Why?* (Details of the actions of the listed animals are described in the third sentence.) What alternative punctuation mark is there? (Semi colon) Explain that a semi colon is sometimes used instead of a comma in a complicated list; some writers prefer its clearer division. Display:
 - *There is something to watch all the time: a monkey swinging from a climbing frame; a peacock catching food; a lion climbing a ladder.*



Punctuation practice: Answers

Answers for Photocopiable 1, 'Punctuation practice: Pause for commas – Park rangers'

- At the end of a pleasant morning, the lion lay down for a nap.
- After a heavy meal, he felt tired.
- At that moment, the monkey decided to shout.
- His chattering got a bit quieter, eventually.
- However, his whistling never stopped.
- Able to sleep through anything, the tortoise slumbered on.
- Used to his tricks, the ostriches ignored the monkey.
- As for the zebras, they turned their backs on him.
- Once in a while, somebody looked at the lion.
- They knew what would happen, eventually.
- The lion glared angrily, shaking his mane.
- Throwing back his head, he roared.

Answers for Photocopiable 2, 'Punctuation practice: Pause for commas – Park keepers'

Possible answers:

- Before you start feeding the animals, you must weigh meal portions.
- After you finish giving out food, the animals need extra water.
- As you are head keeper, take greater responsibility for animal welfare.
- In case an accident could occur, use equipment carefully.
- Whenever you move the pythons, have somebody to assist.
- If you want to improve your skills, attend new courses.
- Although you may have special favourites, get to know all the animals.
- Because you want to judge the animals' progress, record results on a spreadsheet.

Answers for Photocopiable 4, 'Punctuation practice: In parentheses'

- Our monkeys, some born in the safari park, are in tip-top health.
- The adults and the cubs, still very small, belong to one family group.
- Crocodiles and tortoises, not usually kept together, are happy here.
- The trees, sturdy and bushy, give our elephants fun and food.
- Suki, known for her big appetite, is the tallest giraffe in Europe.
- These zebras, admired for their stripes, are our most photographed animals in the park.
- One ostrich, the one ignoring you, is very shy.
- Our deer, who are perfectly safe, have freedom to roam.
- The peacocks' colours, blue, red and purple, are magnificent.
- The pythons, known to bite, are kept behind safety glass.

Answers for Photocopiable 6, 'Punctuation practice: Sophisticated marks'

- Possible version (alternatives are possible):
- The safari park is thriving – everyone is really happy. The weather is amazing: we have sunny days and high temperatures. The café's ice cream is really popular. We are close to the middle of July; July and August always bring more children. Children make ideal visitors: they pay attention to the animals and they eat a lot! Our caring keeper has had a wonderful idea: he is teaching the monkeys new exercises. If he is successful, there will be many benefits: our customers, the visitors, will gain pleasure; the monkeys, his pupils, will have fun; John, the keeper, may win an award (however small).