

# GRAMMAR

SENTENTIA GRAMMATICAE INTERPUNCTIQUE



# 4-9™

## PRIMER

The **4-9™** Primer Contains:

- The basic rules for the Period (5 rules)
- The basic rules for the Comma (12 rules)
- The basic rules for the Question Mark (3 rules)
- The basic rules for the Quotation Marks (3 rules)
- The basic rules for the Colon (6 rules)
- The basic rules for the Semicolon (3 rules)
- The basic rules for the Parentheses (3 rules)
- The basic rules for the Exclamation Point (2 rules)

The Grammar Glossary:

- The basic rules for the Concrete Nouns
- The basic rules for the Abstract Nouns
- The basic rules for the Proper Nouns
- The basic rules for the Pronouns
- The basic rules for the Action Verbs
- The basic rules for the Helping Verbs
- The basic rules for the Adverbs
- The basic rules for the Adjectives
- The basic rules for the Prepositions
- The basic rules for the Conjunctions
- The basic rules for the Interjections

**Remember:**  
Spelling Matters!  
Capitalization  
Matters!  
End of Sentence  
Punctuation  
Matters!

**Remember:** ONLY correct sentences go into the Primer. This means that the sentence must correctly follow the rules, be capitalized correctly, spelled correctly, and have proper end-of-sentence punctuation.

# GRAMMAR PUNK™

## 4-9

### Punctuation Preview ~ Plus Two

- Period: Full Stop | at the end .
- Comma: Soft Stop | to give pause ,
- Question Mark: What? | to ask a direct question ?
- Quotation Marks: Who said that? | to indicate quotes, dialogue or definitive “ ”
- Colon: Emphatic Stop | to call attention to what follows :
- Semicolon: Firm Stop | to separate ideas ;
- Parentheses: Speed Bump | to insert extra information ( )
- Exclamation Point: Excitable Stop | at the end *enthusiastically* !



Period | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Periods end declarative and most imperative sentences. Periods are also used in abbreviations, to show decimals, and denote dollars and cents in writing. Think of periods as causing a “full stop” at the end of a sentence.

1. Use a period at the end of a complete sentence that is a statement.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: S I 4* | Sylvia was quite astonished to find that she had slept through the entire dentist visit.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use a period after an indirect question.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: N O 5* | “I wonder if it is altogether acceptable to bring one’s own popcorn to the movies,” Gwendolyn wondered.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Use a period after initials used in names or other proper nouns.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: B O 3* | My brother, Jim Bob, Jr., just graduated from St. Michael’s College with a B.S. or Bachelor of Science Degree.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Use a period to show decimals and dollars and cents in writing.

Examples: This costs \$6.99. Two and one half is written 2.5.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: N I 4* | Dirk had a feeling he’d been swindled after he paid \$6.99 for the neon, glow-in-the-dark, singing yo-yo.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. If the last word in the sentence ends in a period, do not follow it with another period.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: Wrong:* Mom said you’re supposed to clean your room, walk the dog, do the dishes, etc.. | *Right:* Mom said you’re supposed to clean your room, walk the dog, do the dishes, etc.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Acronyms, or words formed from the initials or other parts of several words (BLOG - web log; USA - United States of America; AWOL - Absent Without Leave), do not require periods between the letters.



Comma | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Commas separate the elements of sentences into manageable segments. Commas let you pause and take a breath. Commas keep the thoughts, ideas and information in your sentences from running into each other. Think of commas as causing a soft stop.

1. Use a comma between two independent clauses that are joined by a conjunction.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: B U 3* | Dave was in charge of the barbecue, but John was supposed to bring the briquettes.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use a comma to separate adjectives that modify the same noun.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: C A 3* | The cat really hated the noisy, nasty vacuum cleaner.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Use commas to separate parenthetical or interrupting elements within a sentence.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: L E 4* | The butterflies, gathered near the fieldstone fence, waited for the frogs to eventually leave.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Use commas to set off appositives (refers to the same person or thing).

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: D E 5* | Sharon, my hairstylist, sobbed uncontrollably as she glimpsed my bleached, frizzled, floppy new hairstyle.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Use commas to separate individual words, phrases or clauses in a series.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: P O 4* | The room was filled to the tip-top with balloons, soda pop, party hats, and lots of potato soup.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Use a comma after an introductory phrase or clause.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: C U 4* | After causing a fuss, cousin Harold's dog got stuck in the couch.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Comma | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Use commas to set off items in a date.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: R A 3* | Jenny's birthday falls on February 16, 1996, which is a Saturday.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Use commas to set off items in an address.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: P I 3* | The field trip will take us to 1716 South Pine Street, Salt Lake City, Utah where we'll visit the Museum of Prehistoric Art.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Use commas to set off the speaker's exact words from the rest of the sentence.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: M E 2* | "I wish you would spend more time on your homework," my teacher said as she looked at my paper.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Use commas to set off mild interjections.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: N I 4* | My goodness, that penquin is certainly fascinated with that container of frozen sardines.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Use commas to separate numerals in large numbers.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: C A 5* | Basically, Mrs. Claus was worried that 61,366 candy canes would not be enough to decorate the gingerbread castle.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12.

Use commas to avoid a misreading.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: P E 2* | When you expect the worst, the worst happens.

This last rule should be remembered for **all** rules of the comma.



Question Mark | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Question marks end all direct questions. That’s pretty much it for question marks. What would we do without them when we want to ask a question?

1. Place a question mark at the end of a direct question.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: B A 4* | How on earth did the baboon’s baby end up in the rabbit’s cabbage patch?

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use question marks within parentheses to show uncertainty.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: C I 2* | Mike’s great-uncle Cletus (?) was a circus clown in Cincinnati.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Question marks appear **inside** quotation marks if they are part of the quotation.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: T E 3* | She paused pointedly, “Are you trying to tell me the dog actually ate your homework?”

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If question marks are not part of the quotation, they appear outside the quotation marks.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: N I 3* | Is it true that in class we are speaking “Pig Latin”?

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do **not** use question marks after **indirect** questions.  
Incorrect *Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: W A 4* | I can’t understand what came over Claire just because I asked if she’d seen my wheat waffled wafers?

## Quotation Marks | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Quotation marks signal the direct quotation of a person's exact words—either spoken or in print. Quotation marks let you know who is saying what to whom. Quotation marks are also good for calling attention to unusual words or just information you want to stand out from the rest of the sentence.

1. Use quotation marks to show someone's exact words (quotations or dialogue).

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: T I 5 | “The situation is getting tricky,” Matilda hinted indistinctly.*

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use quotation marks to emphasize unique words, distinguish words used in a unique way, or to indicate that a word is unfamiliar.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: N O 2 | Jed wasn't sure what a “rhinoceros egg” omelet was, but he knew he didn't want one for breakfast.*

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Use quotation marks to set off referenced titles such as essays, short stories, short poems, songs, articles in periodicals, etc.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: L E 3 | Natasha's favorite article is “How to Succeed At Jelly Bean Farming Without Really Trying.”*

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Placement of other punctuation marks in conjunction with quotation marks:

Commas and periods always go inside quotation marks.

Semicolons and colons always go outside the quotation marks.

Question marks, exclamation marks, and dashes go inside quotation marks when they are part of the quotation, and outside when they are not part of the quotation.



Colon | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Colons introduce or call attention to what follows them. Colons make you stop and pay attention. Hint: Think of colons as causing an emphatic or definite stop.

1. Use a colon after the salutation of a business letter.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* L E 5 | Dear Mr. Smith: I'm writing to tell you that I really like the lemon-lime licorice you sent.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use a colon between the hours, minutes, and seconds of a number indicating time.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* H E 2 | Carol can actually stand on her head from 6:20 to 7:23.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Use a colon at the end of a sentence to emphasize another word, phrase or clause.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* D I 3 | It didn't take long to be sure of one thing: Sophie did not like spiders.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Use a colon to introduce a list.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* R E 4 | The recipe required three things: radishes, broccoli, and hamburger.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Use a colon between a title and a subtitle, chapter and verse, and volume and page.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* B O 4 | The book was opened to Chapter 10:1, Bob And The Fabulous Boat.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Use a colon before an announcement, instruction or directive.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* N I 5 | Attention: Pink, polka-dotted aliens are in the vicinity.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. **Note:** Do not misuse the colon by placing it between a verb and its complement, OR between a preposition and its object. The safest rule is to change the words before the colon to form an independent clause.



Semicolon | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

;

Semicolons separate (yet connect) two separate thoughts or independent clauses in the same sentence. Semicolons are even better than commas at letting you take a pause in the middle of a complicated or just *long* sentence. Semicolons allow you to fit everything you need to in one sentence if it belongs there. Think of semicolons as a firm stop.

1. Use a semicolon to join two independent clauses.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: M O 3* | The mosquitoes waited patiently at the edge of the moors; their time would come soon enough.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use a semicolon before a conjunctive adverb (also, besides, however, instead, meanwhile, then, and therefore) when the adverb connects two independent clauses.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: H E 3* | Joyce went to the store for ice cream; instead, she showed up with a puzzling combination of shellfish and hamburgers.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Use a semicolon to separate groups of words or items in a series that already contain commas.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: L E 5* | The clubhouse was inexplicably full of leopards, lemurs and ostriches; owls and hamsters; emus and butterflies.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Parentheses | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parentheses are used to add further information to a sentence that is clearly separated from the rest of the sentence. Parentheses allow you to tuck in extra, explanatory or just interesting information into a sentence without interrupting the flow. Think of parentheses as causing a speed bump.

1. Use parentheses to enclose explanatory or added material that interrupts the normal sentence flow. *When needed, special punctuation like question marks and exclamation marks are placed within the parentheses.*

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: N E 5* | The giraffe peered over the fence, looking for the new neighbors, (hyenas of all things); there went the neighborhood.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use parentheses when clarifying a written number.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: J A 4* | Jake bought one (1) pair of pajamas, three (3) video games and four (4) packages of flapjack mix to the Jamboree.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Parentheses enclose numbers and letters that divide items in a sentence.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: W I 5* | The rules were clear: (a) no gum chewing, (b) no whimpering and whining at bedtime, and (c) no throwing paper airplanes out the windows.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*The Grammar Bible* by Michael Strumpf states: "The punctuation for **parenthetical** items remains within the parentheses. Punctuate the primary portion of the sentence as if the parenthetical portion were not there."

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: H A 4* | My three Himalayan long-hair cats (Natasha, Boris and Seymour) are deathly afraid of hamsters.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: T A 4* | My Aunt Louise (who goes nowhere without her cats, feathered hats and teapots) is coming for an extended visit.



**Exclamation Point** | Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Exclamation points are used at the end of a sentence or after an interjection to show strong emotion, emphasis or surprise. Think of exclamation points as causing an enthusiastic stop.

1. Use an exclamation point to end an exclamatory sentence.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* T O 5 | I won't tell you again to keep your pet alligator, Troy, out of the bathtub!

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Use an exclamation point after an interjection.

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* N I 3 | Yikes! Someone didn't shut the door to the man-eating, incredibly vicious, really scary, butterfly's cage!

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DO NOT use the exclamation point in formal or business writing.

Use exclamation points sparingly. Using them too often will make them less useful.

**Concrete Nouns**

Nouns are naming words that give a title to a person, place or thing. Concrete means you can see, hear, taste, touch or smell the thing the noun is giving a name to.

**Examples:** house, dog, France, rabbit, taxicab, door, moose, flock, spaceship, tulip, movie, limousine, lions, tigers, bears, sailboat, Mr. Beeson, storm, button, Dr. Seuss, phone, brooch, London, eyetooth, library, bull's-eye, sweater, tugboat, mailbox, parade, baseball, cloud

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* L I 5 | The lightning flickered eerily, lighting up odd corners of the silent and deserted library.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some of your own concrete nouns: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Abstract Nouns**

These are also naming nouns, but you *can not* use your senses to detect abstract nouns. Abstract nouns give name to a quality or idea. Abstract nouns are the names we give to emotions, or ideas.

**Examples:** hope, apathy, trouble, joy, panic, dismay, happiness, paradox, time, mood, comfort, sympathy, enthusiasm, excitement, giddiness, knowledge, distress, diligence, mercy, sincerity, anger, cleverness, fear, excitement, laziness, sympathy, jealousy, zeal

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* M A 4 | Marigolds work hard to eliminate embarrassment and humiliation from the other flowers by blooming early.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some of your own abstract nouns: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Proper Nouns**

Proper nouns are the words which name specific people, organizations or places. Proper nouns will always begin with a capital letter, no matter where it appears in a sentence.

**Examples:** Dr. Jones, Cindy, Zeke, Mariah, The Declaration of Independence, Delilah, Carl, Denny, Library of Congress, Ms. Scarlet, San Francisco Bay, Louie, Colonel Mustard, Julie, Jack, Kate, M & M's, Batman, Harry Potter, Minute Maid Lemonade, Sam, Sheila, Utah

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example:* L I 2 | Stu had been so sure the culprit was Mrs. Peacock, in the lounge, with the candlestick.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some of your own proper nouns: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Pronouns

Pronouns are words that can take the place of or refer back to a noun or another pronoun in a sentence. By using pronouns you can refer to the same person, place or thing (remember those nouns) without having to use the same noun (or name) over and over again.

**Examples:** I, ourselves, no one, everybody, her, who, some, theirs, all, whom, this, those, he, she, we, they, which, nobody, them, his, someone, everyone, something, me, you, us

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: S U 3* | She wasn't at all sure how it had happened, but she had somehow confused salt with sugar in her cake recipe.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Action Verbs

Action verbs show *what's happening*. Action verbs show you what the subject of the sentence is doing. Action verbs are all about action.

**Examples:** fled, went, whimpered, crushed, shined, froze, hung, patter, run, bite, push, smile, flits, laugh, dream, sing, fidget, badger, fly, deliver, skip, jump, carry, climb, guessed, commands, floats, laughed, wiggled, parachuted, harass, direct, discard, help, lunge, cavort

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: W E 5* | We worried whether the weather would interfere with our annual blueberry picking weekend.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Some of your own action verbs: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Helping Verbs

Helping verbs, also known as auxiliary verbs, are usually used with main verbs to show tense (or when the action takes place), form a question or create passive or active voice. They "help" the main verb.

**Examples:** am, are, is, was, were, be, being, been, do, does, did, shall, will, may, must, might, have, has, had, can, could, would, should

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: L E 2* | Sylvia was quite sure she should have taken her parka on the field trip to the North Pole.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Adverbs

Adverbs are words that change, modify, limit and intensify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Adverbs point out the manner, time, place, cause, or degree of things. Adverbs also answer questions like how, when, where, or how much. Adverbs let you show how the sentence feels about the word and what might happen next.

**Examples:** quickly, very, stubbornly, once, loudly, too, daily, eternally, silently, rather, far, primly, here, hesitantly, quite, primly, late, softly, exuberantly, where, most, enough, even, enormously, very, merrily, unexpectedly, joyously, stubbornly, too, rarely, soon, irritably

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: M E 2 | With a tickly scuffle of wiggly little feet, the mice made for the safety of the stairs.*

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some of your own adverbs: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Adjectives

Adjectives are words that modify, change, enhance and make nouns or pronouns more precise. Adjectives are great for giving your nouns color, sound, movement and emotion. Adjectives tell you what kind of person, place or thing is being described, referred to or talked about.

**Examples:** bashful, big, innocent, mad, nice, injured, wrong, shaggy, our, little, some, much, blue, light, loud, burly, hard, slow, incredible, fantastic, portable, sympathetic, joyous, jittery, nasty, scrawny, new, odd, clumsy, dizzy, scary, magnificent, quaint, rainy, rare, red

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: H A 4 | What on earth is that shaggy, lumpy little thing there behind the hamper?*

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Some of your own adjectives: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Prepositions

Prepositions are words that show the relationship between a noun or pronoun and some other word or phrase in a sentence. Prepositions tell you what's up, down, over here, or over there.

**Examples:** aboard, between, in, along, from, within, on, instead of, toward, regarding, at, across, without, till, to, towards, up, above, before, beside, through, since, past, among

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: B O 3 | Clyde was certain he'd put his blue-bottle flies in their box above the bookshelf beside his aquarium, along with his frog Harold, but now they were gone.*

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words that create a connection between words or groups of words. Conjunctions bring together elements of thought, words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Conjunctions also show the relationship between the ideas they join, telling you which idea has more importance or urgency. Conjunctions allow ideas, thoughts and concepts to be joined together without making much of a fuss about it.

**Examples:** for, and, but, either, or, yet, although, so, whereas, neither, after, also, although, nor, though, when, because, till, whenever, unless, that, whether, while

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: D A 5* | It was on a Wednesday that the dragons and the badgers sat down for Darjeeling tea and dandelion biscuits.

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

## Interjections

Interjections often appear at the beginning of a sentence, usually followed by an exclamation point or a comma. Interjections introduce *emotion* to a sentence. Interjections let your sentence show how it really is! Is it happy, sad, angry, afraid, etc. Interjections should be used sparingly in most writing, but they are very handy to have around when you want to say something with feeling!

**Examples:** alas, mercy, well, sure, wow, hey, oh no, good grief, boo, ah, indeed, dear me, goodness, oh dear, yikes, oops

*Grammar Punk™ 4-9 Example: S E 3* | Goodness, how can it possibly be tomorrow already when it seems like it was just yesterday!

Your sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations!

Today is your day.

You're off to Great Places!

You're off and away!

You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes

You can steer yourself

any direction you choose.

You're on your own. And you know what you know.

And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go.

You'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over with care.

About some you will say, "I don't choose to go there."

With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet,

you're too smart to go down any not-so-good street.

And you may not find any

you'll want to go down.

In that case, of course,

you'll head straight out of town.

It's opener there

in the wide open air.

Out there things can happen

and frequently do

to people as brainy

and footsy as you.

*Oh the Places You'll Go*—Dr. Seuss