

Rules of Punctuation

Periods:

- 1) A statement (declarative sentence) is followed by a *period*.
- 2) Titles of respect are abbreviated when followed by a person's name. A *period* should follow the abbreviation.
- 3) Initials and most abbreviations are followed by *periods*.

Question Marks:

- 4) A question (interrogative sentence) is followed by a *question mark*.

Exclamation Points:

- 5) A sentence that expresses strong feeling as surprise (exclamatory sentence) ends with an *exclamation point*. Some exclamatory sentences contain only one word. For example: *Amazing!*

Commas:

- 6) Words in a series should be separated by *commas*. (Do not use a comma before the first item or after the last item in a series.)

[Note: A series is three or more similar words written one after another.]

- 7) An introductory word, such as *yes* or *no*, is separated by a *comma* from the rest of the sentence.
- 8) Use a *comma* to separate an introductory phrase or clause from the rest of the sentence.
- 9) A *comma* in a date is used to separate the year from other words in the sentence.
- 10) A *comma* in an address is used to separate the name of a city from the name of a state, and the name of a state from the rest of the sentence.
- 11) Use a *comma* to set off words of direct address.
- 12) The words that someone says are always separated from the rest of the sentence by a *comma*.

Quotation Marks:

- 13) A quotation begins and ends with *quotation marks*. (A quotation is someone's exact words.)
- 14) Periods and commas belong *inside quotation marks*.
- 15) When a quotation is broken into parts, a comma comes **before** the *quotation mark* at the beginning of the second part.
- 16) Quotation marks are used to set off titles of reports, articles, short stories, songs, and poems.

Underline / Italics:

- 17) The names of books and movies are underlined when written by hand or printed in *italic* by a computer.