

Trivia Review

Category 1 Hyphens, Em, En, and Ellipses Oh My!

Question One: Are hyphens needed below? Where or where not?

Example 1-We're looking for a pet friendly hotel.

Answer: Yes. We're looking for a **pet-friendly** hotel.

Why? In the sentence pet-friendly is a compound modifier (*two words that describe or refer to another part of speech*) for the noun hotel. (Pet and friendly) are working together to describe hotel.

Note: There are differences in meanings between a pet hotel that just houses pets and a friendly hotel that could house anyone or anything. The subjects of the sentence (We) are looking specifically for a hotel that is friendly for pets.

Example 2-Is Chez Bow Wow hotel pet friendly?

Answer: No. Question is correct as is.

Why? The reason for this is there is no noun following for the compound modifier to describe.

Go to: <https://writersofwsbg.weebly.com/resources.html> to review Stan's Mastering Hyphens under Resources for more information on using or not using hyphens for Adverbs, Compound Words, Numbers, Prefixes, Original Compound Words or Phrases, Ages, and to Eliminate a Problem.

Question Two: Em or En Dash or Ellipses? WHAT goes in the blank?

Example 1-Have you seen my ____? (The speaker trails off.)

Example 2-Nanowrimo runs from November 1st ____30th.

Example 3-Have you seen my____did you see that? (The speaker was interrupted.)

Answers:

1 ... is an ellipsis The three dots represent someone trailing off. If used at the end of a sentence with a period to follow, most programs will automatically space the fourth period slightly separate from the others. Most often used in dialogue rather than prose.

2 – is an en dash This is slightly longer than a hyphen. Usually used to indicate a range like in dates. Probably won't use much but you can Google to learn how to make one.

3 — is an em dash This is done by space, hyphen, hyphen, type next word, hit space. Your typing program will make a long, continuous dash. Used when a thought is interrupted and new information presented.

BONUS : Hyphen? Where or Where not?

Carl carried a concealed weapons permit.

Answer: Yes. Carl carried a **concealed-weapons** permit.

Why? There are differences between a concealed permit and a weapons permit and one that allows you to carry concealed weapons. Remember, if the words work together describe the following noun, then there is a hyphen.

Category 2 Punctuating the “Say What, . ? !” of Dialogue

Question One: What type of tags are below?

Example 1-“I love children,” she said.

Answer: She said is simply called a dialogue tag. It is simply marking who said the comment.

Punctuation: When using plain dialogue tags like in “I love children,” she said. there will be a comma at the end of dialogue and the first word of the tag will be lowercase (small).

Note: It is not necessary to include a tag of any kind each time someone speaks. Use them sparingly. Also, said is the usual dialogue tag because readers are used to seeing said. It’s not that noticeable and readers continue on.

Example 2-“I love children.” She turned to the girl.

Answer: She turned to the girl is an example of an action tag. Your speaker is doing something.

Punctuation: The last word of the quote is followed by a period (or other mark of punctuation) and the first word of the tag will be capitalized.

Note: It is a good idea to have a variety. Some dialogue will have no tags. Some will have plain dialogue tags. Some will have action tags. See below.

Example 3-

My wife turned to me. “I don’t love you, Seth.” (No tag, but you can tell she’s speaking.)

“Monique, what are you saying?” (No tag, but you can tell he is speaking.)

“I think I was clear,” she said. (Dialogue)

“Clear isn’t what I would call it.” My hands flew to my eyes to catch my tears. (Action)

Question Two: How would you punctuate next statement of dialogue?

“He won’t be back” she screeched “because my psychic says so.”

Answer: “He won’t be back,” she screeched, “because my psychic says so.”

Why: This is an interrupted line of dialogue. Since it’s basically one sentence, you put a comma at the end of the first part, have the first word of the tag lowercase (unless it’s a proper name like Sally or Betty or Eunice), then a comma after the dialogue tag, and a lowercase on the second part of the sentence.

Note: Screeched is a regular dialogue tag and not an action one. How can you tell? If you can substitute the word said for screeched and it makes sense, it’s a dialogue tag.

Let’s try it with an action tag.

“He won’t be back.” Sarah threw herself back on the bed.

The test? “He won’t be back.” Sarah **said** herself back on the bed.

If you end up with Say What?= It’s an action tag.

(Stan would have Sarah throw herself back on the bed before dialogue. Good idea!)

BONUS: Which is correct? Why?

Example 1-“Why do you keep kissing me?” Shane asked.

Example 2_“But he travels and,” she whispers, “I am afraid to be alone.”

Answer: Both, technically. However, you would be better off to choose to leave off Shane asked, since the question mark already establishes this is question. If you need to let the reader know Shane is talking, try an action tag. The second sentence is another example of an interrupted line of dialogue.

For more information, see Stan’s presentation of Formatting Dialogue under Resources on the website and review a whole bunch of specific information on how to punctuate and utilize dialogue.

Category 3 Where does this D@#\$%*N comma go?

Question One: Would a comma go in the following sentences? Why or why not?

Example 1-I always eat dessert first and my meal second.

Example 2-My favorite dessert is cheesecake but my second favorite is carrot cake.

Answer: None in the first sentence and one after cheesecake in the second.

Why? This is an example of the rule of putting a comma before the coordinating conjunction, and. The difference lies in dependent and independent clauses or phrases.

So look at what is on each side of the and.

Example 1-I always eat dessert first and my meal second.

First side-is a complete thought all on its own, so it is independent.

Second side- my meal second doesn’t make sense on it’s own and it doesn’t have a subject and verb.

So unless both sides can stand on their own, there is NO comma.

Example 2 does have a comma before and because there are two independent sides.

My favorite dessert is cheesecake, but my second favorite is carrot cake.

Both of the above can be two separate sentences own their own with their own subjects and verbs.

Question Two: Would a comma go in the following sentences? Where or where not?

Example 1: Rather than eating my meal in shirtsleeves I always eat my dessert in formal dress. (Strange sentence but it lessens the confusion for showing the rule.)

Answer: There is a comma after shirtsleeves.

Why: This is called an introductory clause or phrase. It comes at the beginning of the sentence and doesn't stand alone. The comma is to show you where the next part start.

Rather than eating my meal in shirtsleeves (You're like, "And????")

So a comma is needed to indicate the next part is starting.

Rather than eating in my shirtsleeves, (Next part.) I always eat my dessert in formal dress.

BONUS: What are the commas used below indicating?

"Harold, you are a cheater."

"I believe, Bart, your wife is the person you should be speaking with."

"You aren't even fit to breathe the same air as me, Harold Carstairs!"

Answer: These are called Commas of Direct Address.

Why: These sentences are being directed specifically to someone. You separate their name from the rest of the sentence with a comma or two if name is in the middle of a sentence

Here's a basic source for using commas. It will cover most instances you will need. <https://www.iue.edu/student-success/coursework/commas.html>

Goldie's presentation 11-2-21 with Stan's previous presentations liberally utilized and sampled.