

POWER BASICS[®]

Basic English

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Table of Contents

<i>To the Student</i>	v
Unit 1: Parts of Speech	
Lesson 1: Nouns	3
Lesson 2: Pronouns	11
Lesson 3: Adjectives	20
Lesson 4: Verbs	25
Lesson 5: Adverbs	58
Lesson 6: Prepositions	68
Lesson 7: Conjunctions	71
Lesson 8: Interjections	73
Unit 2: Parts of Sentences	
Lesson 9: Subjects and Predicates	81
Lesson 10: Complements	96
Lesson 11: Clauses	101
Unit 3: Usage	
Lesson 12: Agreement	109
Lesson 13: Confusing Words	115
Unit 4: Mechanics	
Lesson 14: Capitalization	131
Lesson 15: Punctuation	135
<i>Appendixes</i>	149
A. <i>The Verb To Be</i>	149
B. <i>The Verb To Have</i>	149
C. <i>Personal Pronouns</i>	149
<i>Glossary</i>	150
<i>Index</i>	159

UNIT 4

Mechanics



LESSON 15: Punctuation

GOAL: To learn to punctuate sentences correctly

WORDS TO KNOW

apostrophe	period	question mark
colon	punctuate	quotation marks
comma	punctuation	semicolon
exclamation point	punctuation marks	

End Punctuation

When you **punctuate** a sentence, you add the correct punctuation marks. **Punctuation marks** are special marks that help make the meaning of written work clear.

End punctuation is the **punctuation** that appears at the end of a sentence. There are three end punctuation marks. Each gives information about the type of sentence it ends.

Use a **period** at the end of a declarative sentence (a statement).

He said that.

I could not believe it.

My brother agrees with him.

Use a period at the end of an imperative sentence (a command) if the command is a mild request.

Please shut the door.

Carry this bag for me.

Use a **question mark** at the end of an interrogative sentence (a question).

He said that?

What did he mean?

Use an **exclamation point** at the end of an exclamatory sentence.

He said that!

I could not believe it!

Use an exclamation point at the end of an imperative sentence when the command shows strong feeling.

Shut the door now!

Don't get any closer to that bear!

■ PRACTICE 86: End Punctuation

Write the correct punctuation mark at the end of each sentence. (There may be more than one correct punctuation mark for some sentences.)

1. The boy went to bed early
2. It had been a long day
3. What happened
4. The boy saved a friend from a burning building
5. How did he do it
6. He called 9-1-1

7. Hooray
8. The boy is a hero
9. Will he get a medal
10. Yes, from the fire department

IN REAL LIFE



Punctuation marks can make a big difference in meaning. Imagine that a sales group received this memo from their boss:

Your group's sales figures last month did not meet our expectations.

The group might review figures, discuss ways to bring in more sales, and so on.

But what if they got this memo:

Your group's sales figures last month did not meet our expectations!

This memo communicates strong feeling. The salespeople might fear for their jobs. They would probably work on ways to increase sales fast!

Commas

Use a **comma** to separate three or more words or phrases in a row.

I speak English, Spanish, and Hebrew.

The dog ran into the house, up the stairs, and under the bed.

Use a comma to separate two independent clauses joined with a conjunction.

I love chocolate, but I am allergic to it.

We were hungry, so we made a sandwich.

I am going to eat, and then I am going to work.

Use a comma to separate an introductory phrase from the rest of the sentence.

On our way to school, we saw a car accident.

Finally, the bus ride ended.

Although she was ill, she still had a good time.

Use a comma before a quotation.

He said, "Hurry up!"

She asked, "What time is it?"

Use a comma after a quotation, if the quotation is a declarative sentence and the quotation does not end the sentence.

"I'll be there in a minute," she called.

Please come over here," he said

■ PRACTICE 87: Commas

The following sentences need commas. Rewrite each sentence with commas in the correct place.

1. My favorite months are June July and August.

2. He wrote a paper and his mother read it.
