

Play with punctuation

Semicolon (;) Use this to separate independent clauses. This is for when you want to connect ideas without creating a run-on.

People need to learn lessons; consequences teach them.
Many find it interesting that the meeting was canceled; however, I don't think it means anything.

Colon (:) Use this to indicate the beginning of a list or to make an announcement.

You already have all you need to succeed: desire, intelligence, and drive.
She had one true love: chili cheese fries.

Dash (--) Use this to emphasize ideas or to create a dramatic pause.

The tasks a mom does -- cooking, cleaning, doing laundry, driving kids everywhere -- are endless and exhausting.
I can't believe I never told you this -- I was a childhood star!

Parentheses (()) Use these to add explanatory information or a lowkey sidenote.

The recipe for pot roast (found on Food Network's website) is easy to follow.
Joe brought his dog Spot (the sweetest animal ever) to the picnic.

Brackets ([]) Use these to indicate changes to a direct quote or for parenthetical information within a quote or parentheses.

"Four score and seven [today we'd say eighty-seven] years ago..."
"Bill shook hands with [his son]."

Ellipses (. . .) Use these to show missing parts of quotations (although NEVER to begin a quote) or to indicate a thought that's trailing off.

The principal reminded us, "The school day. . . begins at 7:25."

It was a good day, or at least I thought it was. . .

Single quotes (' ') Use these ONLY for quotes within quotes.

The news reporter said, "All of the stores on the block have burned down. One shop owner screamed, 'I cannot believe this is happening!' as the flames engulfed her store."

Double quotes (" ") Use these around the exact words someone says, always putting the period inside the quote, and around the titles of shorter works.

Paul said, "That was quite a storm we had last night."

My report is on the short story "The Most Dangerous Game," but hers is on the poem "Burn Bright."

Italics are used to indicate longer works and to refer to words and numbers as themselves.

We are going to read *Merchant of Venice* soon.

Have you ever played *Call of Duty*?

You will need to familiarize yourself with the word *usury*.

Punctuate these sentences:

It's generally true that the major holidays Thanksgiving Christmas and the Fourth of July involve big meals.

At midnight last night, Skip a guard dog for Bonds Ltd in Westbury hospitalized two burglars before returning to eat the steaks they had thrown him.

It was the thing that would make her love him his ability to write beautiful poetry.

The race will be postponed because the winds will be too dangerous, according to The Plain Dealer reporter Robert Clancy.

You need new brakes otherwise, you may not be able to stop in time.

