

Commas!

Commas are really fun; you can perform a lot of grammatical tricks while using them. Your sentence logic will be maintained using commas. They should not be taken lightly. For this group assignment, work in your usual groups of 2-4. Take a look at these and answer to the best of your ability. Hopefully your reading of the course material in Wadsworth before class was accentuated by our discussion and further emphasized by this handout.

Combine these independent clauses using the coordinating conjunction in parentheses

1. Dr. Paris shuns modern technology. He does have an email address. (but)
2. The new mayor waited only a few days before meeting with the opposition party. He did not wait to meet their leader. (nor)
3. Bethany and I were set up by a friend who thought we had mutual interests. We are dating. (and)

Correct the use of commas in these sentences. Some of them may be correct already

4. Those enrolled at the university include undergraduates, graduate students and teaching assistants.
5. Within the English department there are scholars for Classical Greek, Critical Theory, Gay and Lesbian Literature, and Medieval literature.
6. In Dr. Estes' medieval survey course students normally read *The Canterbury Tales*, *Sir Gawain & The Green Knight*, and *Piers Plowman*.

Set off nonessential elements in these sentences with offsetting commas

7. Lauren a great student in the medieval class is now a professor of medieval literature in California.
8. Many students in the class such as Trent Chris and Jennifer failed because they did not do their readings and slept during class.
9. Dr. Estes a merciful professor if there ever was one ended up allowing Jennifer to take an incomplete due to a number of factors.

For homework tonight, please annotate the first few paragraphs of David Hume's classical philosophical treatise *An Enquiry Concerning the Principal of Morals*. One of the many reasons I love Hume is his absolute adoration of commas. Even for the 18th century, he was an ardent user of commas. I have removed all of them from this excerpt; take a look at it and add commas where you see fit.

David Hume: An Enquiry Concerning the Principal of Morals

DISPUTES with men pertinaciously obstinate in their principles are of all others the most irksome except perhaps those with persons entirely disingenuous who really do not believe the opinions they defend but engage in the controversy from affectation from a spirit of opposition or from a desire of showing wit and ingenuity superior to the rest of mankind. The same blind adherence to their own arguments is to be expected in both the same contempt of their antagonists and the same passionate vehemence in enforcing sophistry and falsehood. And as reasoning is not the source whence either disputant derives his tenets it is in vain to expect that any logic which speaks not to the affections will ever engage him to embrace sounder principles.

Those who have denied the reality of moral distinctions may be ranked among the disingenuous disputants nor is it conceivable that any human creature could ever seriously believe that all characters and actions were alike entitled to the affection and regard of everyone. The difference which nature has placed between one man and another is so wide and this difference is still so much farther widened by education example and habit that where the opposite extremes come at once under our apprehension there is no scepticism so scrupulous and scarce any assurance so determined as absolutely to deny all distinction between them. Let a man's insensibility be ever so great he must often be touched with the images of Right and Wrong and let his prejudices be ever so obstinate he must observe that others are susceptible of like impressions. The only way therefore of converting an antagonist of this kind is to leave him to himself. For finding that nobody keeps up the controversy with him it is probable he will at last of himself from mere weariness come over to the side of common sense and reason.