



Adding Commas

I can add commas to clarify the meaning of a sentence.



Read the sentences as an editor and decide if you think commas need to be added. If you decide to add commas, explain your reason for doing so.

Sentence	Explain your reason for adding commas or leaving the sentence as it is.
The rabbit had long sharp pointy teeth.	
As the campers sat round the fire eating the bear stayed in the bushes.	
Lucy wanted a biscuit but she couldn't have one.	
David who was 10 wore glasses.	
Hetty dressed and performed for the packed audience.	
There was lots to do at the fair including face painting and a raffle.	
While the onions were cooking soup was brought from the shop.	
If you have got everything you need then we are ready to go!	
Hanging out the washing is one of the most boring things in the world.	
He was cold without his jacket even though the sun was shining.	



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Sentence	Explain your reason for adding commas or leaving the sentence as it is.
The rabbit had long sharp pointy teeth.	
While the campers sat round the fire eating the bear crouched just metres away in the bushes.	
Lucy wanted a biscuit but she couldn't have one.	
David who was in year six had lots to say about most subjects.	
Hetty dressed and performed for the packed audience.	
There were a lot of different activities at the fair including face painting and a raffle.	
At the same time as the onions were cooking soup was being bought from the shop.	
If you have got everything you need then we are ready to go!	
Hanging out washing is one of the most boring things in the world.	
He was cold without his jacket even though the sun was shining.	

★ Read the sentences as an editor and decide if you think commas need to be added. If you decide to add commas, explain your reason for doing so.

Sentence	Explain your reason for adding commas or leaving the sentence as it is.
The rabbit had long, sharp, pointy teeth.	<i>Commas do not change or clarify the meaning in this sentence so there is no correct answer. Commas can be added to provide the reader with mini pauses or left out altogether at the discretion of the author.</i>
As the campers sat round the fire eating, the bear stayed in the bushes.	<i>A comma is needed here to separate the subordinate clause from the main clause and to make it clear that the campers are not eating the bear!</i>
Lucy wanted a biscuit, but she couldn't have one.	<i>In a compound sentence like this, a comma is often used before the conjunction, but it can be written without.</i>
David, who was 10, wore glasses.	<i>Commas are needed here to surround the embedded clause so that the sentence is read correctly.</i>
Hetty dressed, and performed for the packed audience.	<i>The comma in this sentence clarifies the meaning. Without it, it sounds as though Hetty getting dressed is part of the show!</i>
There was lots to do at the fair, including face painting and a raffle.	<i>Although this sentence is correct without a comma, using a comma to signify adding additional information seems to help it read with an extra focus on the individual examples of activity.</i>
While the onions were cooking, soup was bought from the shop.	<i>A commas is needed in this complex sentence to divide the opening subordinate clause from the main clause to avoid confusion – the onions are not cooking soup!</i>
If you have got everything you need, then we are ready to go!	<i>A comma is needed here to separate the opening subordinate clause from the main clause in this complex sentence. There are two places where the comma could go and each of them would contribute a slightly different meaning to the sentence. The second one suggests that it has taken some time to get everything together!</i>
Hanging out the washing is one of the most boring things in the world.	<i>This is just a simple sentence which does not require commas – no ambiguity and no further clarification necessary.</i>
He was cold without his jacket even though the sun was shining.	<i>This sentence doesn't need a comma to clarify meaning.</i>

 Read the sentences as an editor and decide if you think commas need to be added. If you decide to add commas, explain your reason for doing so.

In these case there may be no clear correct answer but the matter of including commas or not is a suggestion and open to debate and discussion.

Sentence	Explain your reason for adding commas or leaving the sentence as it is.
The rabbit had long, sharp, pointy teeth.	<i>Commas do not change or clarify the meaning in this sentence so there is no correct answer. Commas can be added to provide the reader with mini pauses or left out altogether at the discretion of the author.</i>
Whilst the campers sat round the fire eating, the bear crouched just metres away in the bushes.	<i>A comma is needed here to separate the subordinate clause from the main clause and to make it clear that the campers are not eating the bear!</i>
Lucy wanted a biscuit, but she wasn't allowed to have one.	<i>In a compound sentence like this, a comma is often used before the conjunction, but it can be written without.</i>
David, who was in year six, had lots to say on most subjects.	<i>Commas are needed here to surround the embedded clause so that the sentence is read correctly.</i>
Hetty dressed, and performed for the packed audience.	<i>The comma in this sentence clarifies the meaning. Without it, it sounds as though Hetty getting dressed is part of the show!</i>
There were a lot of different activities at the fair, including face painting and a raffle.	<i>Although this sentence is correct without a comma, using a comma to signify adding additional information seems to help it read with an extra focus on the individual examples of activity.</i>
At the same time the onions were cooking, soup was being bought from the shop.	<i>A commas is needed in this complex sentence to divide the opening subordinate clause from the main clause to avoid confusion – the onions are not cooking soup!</i>
If you have got everything you need, then we are ready to go!	<i>A comma is needed here to separate the opening subordinate clause from the main clause in this complex sentence. There are two places where the comma could go and each of them would contribute a slightly different meaning to the sentence. The second one suggests that it has taken some time to get everything together!</i>
Hanging out the washing is one of the most boring things in the world.	<i>This is just a simple sentence which does not require commas – no ambiguity and no further clarification necessary.</i>
He was cold without his jacket even though the sun was shining.	<i>This sentence doesn't need a comma to clarify meaning.</i>