



Growing Grammar IV – Syllabus

Course Description: This final grammar and mechanics class will provide thorough studies in rules of capitalization and punctuation. Students will learn about commas, semi-colons, colons, parentheses, brackets, braces, hyphens, dashes, underline/italics, quotation marks, apostrophes, slashes, and ellipses. In addition, students will study the variety of rules for number writing.

Course Outline:

Week One: Capitalization Rules Review

Week Two: Pausing Points

- A. The Comma
- B. The Semi-Colon
- C. The Colon

Week Three: Parentheses, Brackets, & Braces

Week Four: Hyphens & Dashes

Week Five: Italics & Quotation Marks

Week Six: Other Points

- A. The Apostrophe
- B. The Slash
- C. The Ellipsis

Week Seven: Rules for Writing Numbers

Week Eight: Final Review



Growing Grammar IV – Grading Outline

All grammar classes will be graded based on the number of answers in each assignment. Assignments will not be graded on creativity or writing skills, as most of the assignments are technical. Assignments will be graded similar to a test or quiz. For example, if a student must underline ten nouns in an assignment and misses two, the student would receive an 80% on that assignment.

As there are numerous assignments in each lesson, the total number of required answers per lesson will be added up. Any incorrect answers will be subtracted from the score, and the grade will be given accordingly. For example, if there are 50 answers in a lesson, and a student misses 4, the grade is as follows:

$$50 - 4 = 46 \text{ points}$$

$$46/50 = 92\%$$

Course Components	Percentage of Final Grade
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Weekly Assignments	70%
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Final Test	30%
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EXAMPLE

assignment grades: 70, 80, 90, 75, 87, 92, 94, 86 = 84%

average test grade: 94 %

$$.84 \times 70 = 58.8$$

$$.94 \times 30 = 28.2$$

FINAL GRADE: 87%



Growing Grammar IV

Lesson Two: Pausing Points

SAMPLE LESSON

One of the most important elements of grammar is punctuation. In our other grammar classes, we do not address many punctuation rules except for the proper end marks for declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences. However, there are many other rules to know.

The English language contains fourteen punctuation marks. These are the period, question mark, exclamation point, comma, semi-colon, colon, dash, hyphen, parenthesis, brackets, braces, apostrophe, quotation mark, and ellipsis. We also add to our studies the underline and italics. You should already know the rules for the period, question mark, and exclamation point. So, we begin this week with three pausing points: the comma, the semi-colon, and the colon.

THE COMMA –

The comma is one of the most commonly used punctuation marks in the English language. It is meant to imply a pause in your writing.

When To Use a Comma:

1. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

Elijah is playing softball, and his sister is taking gymnastics.

2. Use a comma after dependent clauses, introductory phrases, or introductory words that come before the main (independent) clause.

If you finish your dinner, you may have dessert.

To get a ticket, you should arrive early.

Well, I wasn't really hungry.

3. Use a comma near the end of a sentence to separate contrasting but equal elements or to indicate a pause or shift.

She was distracted, not thoughtless.

The actor was friendly, almost overly so.

4. Always use a comma before or after a direct address.

Callie, will you please load the car for me?

Will you please load the car for me, Callie?

5. Always use a comma after the salutation and complimentary close of a personal or informal business letter.

Dear John,

Best regards,

6. Always use a comma to separate the name of a city and a state or a country. Whenever using the name of a city and state/country at the beginning or in the middle of the sentence, also place a comma after the name of the state or country. When writing a complete address, use a comma to separate the road name from the name of the city or town.

We live in Seattle, Washington.

Jenny lives in Florence, Italy.

Our family moved from Peoria, Illinois, to Dayton, Ohio, when I was twelve.

Roanoke, Virginia, is home to the Virginia Transportation Museum.

We live at 11111 Alpine Drive, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

7. Always use a comma to separate the month and day from the year.

I will be traveling to Spain on June 17th, 2013.

8. Always use a comma to separate a group of three or more nouns in a sentence.

Please don't forget to bring pens, pencils, paper, and envelopes.

We're going to need balls, helmets, and flags for the tournament.

9. Always use a comma before or after a quotation.

Melanie said, “Do not forget to go to the library today.”
“It is too hot outside today,” James said.

10. Use a comma after interjections such as *yes*, *no*, or *well* when they are used at the beginning of a sentence and are not meant to be strong. (Use an exclamation point if the interjection is meant to be strong.)

Yes, we are going shopping tonight.

11. Use a comma between two adjectives when you could say *and* or *but* in place of the comma.

The soft, yellow blanket was her present.
The soft and yellow blanket was her present.

12. Use a comma to set apart appositive phrases or nonessential relative clauses.

Mr. Smith, our manager, will be there.
Alex, tall and handsome, is a favorite with the ladies.
Hudson and Addie, who read a lot of books, are especially excited about the library on Thursdays.

When Not to Use a Comma:

1. Do not use a comma to separate the subject from the verb.

Incorrect: The most important characteristic of a leader, is a collected demeanor.
Incorrect: Baking cookies, is something I really enjoy doing.

2. Do not put a comma between the two verbs or verb phrases when using a compound verb.

Incorrect: We practiced the piano, and tuned our guitars.
Incorrect: I turned the corner, and jumped back out of surprise.

3. Do not add a comma before the first or after the last item in a series.

Incorrect: We ordered, pizza, chicken wings, and salad for dinner.

Incorrect: We ordered pizza, chicken wings, and salad, for dinner.

4. Do not add a comma after “such as” or “like” or “although.”

Incorrect: I like many kinds of animals such as, lions, tigers, and bears.

Incorrect: We came up with several ideas like, painting the living room and buying a new couch.

Incorrect: Our dinner plans got canceled although, we were not that upset about it.

5. Do not use a comma between adjectives that are not interchangeable.

Incorrect: Five, hungry children descended upon the kitchen at once.

Incorrect: Five and hungry children descended upon the kitchen at once.

6. Do not use a comma between adjectives and nouns.

Incorrect: The hard-working, friendly, waiter received a large tip.

7. Do not use a comma after coordinating conjunctions (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) unless they are followed immediately by an interrupting phrase.

Incorrect: We have not finished our chores but, we are going outside.

Correct: We have not finished our chores, and, of course, this means we cannot go outside.

Assignment 2A: Write whether the comma used in each sentence below is correct or incorrect.

1. Mom, we are going to the store.
2. Well, we don't know, if we can make it yet.
3. Harold, diligent and respectful got the job promotion, easily.
4. Would you be able to attend the meeting, Helen?
5. Indeed, we need a new computer, and a new dishwasher.
6. Elijah is the oldest son but, Josiah is the tallest.
7. Dear Elizabeth, I have some exciting news for you.
8. Going to the beach, is one of our favorite summer activities.

9. Our store will begin a remodel on September 27th, 2012 .
10. Mrs. Francisco said, “James, you need to finish your homework.”
11. In 2005 and 2009, I traveled to Bucharest Romania.
12. The short, stout, man was quite funny.
13. There are several supplies you will need, such as, pencils, paper, and crayons.
14. No, you may not go, Lucy.
15. My cousins Jessie, Jordan, and Jacob were born recently in Augusta, Maine.

Assignment 2B: Add commas where necessary in the following sentences. (Note: many sentences require more than one comma.)

1. We walked the pier at Charlotte Beach but we did not go in the sand.
2. The hydrangea plant whose flowers come in numerous colors is native both to Asia and the Americas.
3. “Under the couch I found a penny a tennis ball and three blocks” said Bella.
4. Our family enjoys board games bike rides and Sunday afternoon tea.
5. When the fireworks were over everyone rushed to their cars hoping to leave the parking lot first.
6. Calvin took a seat at the piano raised his hands and promptly forgot every note he had memorized.
7. You must study these training manuals with careful methodical attention.
8. When Ella struggled to have a conversation with you she was very nervous not rude.
9. Jill who had just returned from a trip abroad asked if she could give a travel presentation at the library.
10. Drive down to the stop sign turn right and then look for the fifth house on your left.
11. After eating her ice cream cone Tessa washed her face.
12. “Oh no” Benjamin groaned. “I was supposed to water the flowers and check the mail today not feed the turtles and water the lawn.”
13. Below the many trains sat in the yard awaiting their restoration.
14. To be prepared for the exam the student should watch all of the unit videos.
15. We may visit New York again for Christmas but our plans depend completely on Dad's work schedule.
16. Caralee was adopted in Reading Pennsylvania on March 22 2017.
17. You don't want to stop at this store do you?
18. If Mom does not get out of work by 4 P.M. we will not be going to the swimming pool.
19. Quietly quickly and warily the deer darted across the path.
20. We used to live at 57 Elmwood Drive Cheyenne Wyoming but we recently moved to 1854 Laramie Circle Twin Falls Idaho.

THE SEMI-COLON –

The semi-colon looks like a period on top of a comma. Just like commas, semi-colons are used to imply a pause in your writing. There are very few specific rules for the semi-colon, but it is most often recommended for use when a sentence already contains several commas.

Semi-Colon Rules:

1. The semi-colon is used to separate groups in a series when one or more of the groups contain commas.

INCORRECT: I have friends who live in Rochester, Minnesota, Springfield, Missouri, Houston, Texas, and other places as well.

NOTE: With only the commas, it is impossible to tell if you are referring to six entirely different locations, or if you are referring to various city/state groups. To fix this, we use the semi-colon.

CORRECT: I have friends who live in Rochester, Minnesota; Springfield, Missouri; Houston, Texas; and other places as well.

2. The semi-colon can be used between independent clauses joined by a conjunction, when one or more commas are already used in the first clause. You may also use a semi-colon in place of a comma and coordinating conjunction to join two independent clauses.

If you forget to practice, you will not learn as quickly; and this will be frustrating.

Please buy bread, peanut butter, and jelly; and I will pay you back for the cost.

Please buy bread, peanut butter, and jelly; I will pay you back for the cost.

3. It is preferable to use a semicolon before conjunctive adverbs such as *namely, however, therefore, that is, for example, or for instance* when they introduce a complete sentence. A comma should be placed after the introductory word.

You will want to bring many backpacking items; for example, sleeping bags, pans, and warm clothing will make the trip better.

THE COLON –

Next up is the **colon**. *In most cases, a colon is a punctuation mark used to give further meaning or explanation. Its implied meaning is “here is what I mean.” However, there are some other basic uses for the colon as well. Below, we cover common rules for colon use.*

Colon Rules:

1. When a phrase, dependent clause, or independent clause follows an independent clause AND is used for further meaning or explanation, divide the two with a colon.

- Hudson got what he had hoped for: a new Lego train. (notice how the phrase 'a new Lego train' *explains* what Hudson had hoped to get.)
- Abby learned an important lesson while traveling: that she must always be aware of where her bags are. (notice how the dependent clause *explains* what the important lesson is.)
- Uncle James and Aunt Rochelle told us great news: they are adopting a puppy next weekend! (notice how the independent clause *explains* what the news is.)

2. You may also use a colon in the same way to introduce direct quotations, when the quotation explains something in an independent introductory clause.

- In his book *The Story of Philosophy*, Will Durant gives the reader important advice: “Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” (notice how the quotation *explains* what the advice is.)
- In his book *The Story of Philosophy*, Will Durant says, “Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” (here, the quote is not used to explain something in the introductory portion, so we use a comma rather than a colon before it.)

3. Use a colon to introduce a series of items. Do not capitalize the first item after the colon (unless it is a proper noun).

- I need the following ingredients for my cookies: butter, sugar, and flour.
- You should bring many items to stay warm: a coat, a hat, gloves, and a scarf.

4. Do not use a colon before a list when the list directly follows a verb or preposition.

INCORRECT: I *need*: butter, sugar, and flour.

INCORRECT: You should avoid the following bad habits, *including*: biting your nails, chewing with your mouth open, or interrupting people.

5. The colon is used in the greeting of a formal business letter.

Dear Sir: *Dear Madam:*

6. The colon is used between the hours and minutes when writing times.

4:30 A.M. 6:20 P.M.

NOTE: the semi-colon and the colon are not interchangeable. Many people confuse the two punctuation marks, but they are not the same thing and cannot be used in the same situations.

Assignment 2C: Write whether each semi-colon or colon used below is correct or incorrect.

1. The colors on his shirt are: green, orange, and black.
2. For Addie's birthday, we decorated with pink and gold balloons; pink, purple, and gold streamers; and a dozen strings of Christmas lights.
3. I can choose from two flavors of coffee: hazelnut and vanilla.
4. We got a flat tire: therefore, we will be late arriving to the soccer game.
5. Ethan ran into the house with excitement; he had just received an acceptance letter from the robotics program.
6. Grandpa's recent trip included visits to Madrid, Spain; Amsterdam, Holland; Helsinki, Finland, and Dublin, Ireland.
7. The show was supposed to start at 6;45 P.M.
8. We have so much to do before we leave for vacation tomorrow: go to the grocery store; do the laundry, both clothes and sheets; clean out the car; and pack everything!
9. Aunt Kayla was very tired; however, she did not want to miss her niece's gymnastics meet.
10. Mr. Carlson made an announcement; "Lemonade and cupcakes will be served in the foyer after the performance."

Assignment 2D: Write whether a semi-colon or colon is needed in the following sentences.

1. This is what the neighbor told me ____ Our road will be closed next week for improvements and paving.”
2. Leia chose a strawberry-frosted donut ____ Nolan chose a chocolate cake donut with confectioners' sugar.
3. Ice skating lessons begin each Tuesday at 1 ____ 15 P.M.
4. Minecraft ____ it is one of the most popular video games in the world.
5. Joseph missed the bus ____ nonetheless, he ran and made it to the interview on time.
6. We have been discussing vacation options for several months ____ however, we need to make the final decision by this weekend.
7. To every piano lesson, you must bring the following items ____ your piano book, a lined notebook, and a pencil.
8. This plant needs two things ____ fertilizer and pruning.
9. For Christmas, we gifted Grandma a soft, blue blanket ____ a pair of warm, fuzzy slippers ____ a box of various flavors of tea ____ and a gift card to the local bookstore.
10. Dear President Anderson ____ We look forward to meeting with you next week!
11. During this morning's swim practice, Coach Elliot talked to us about the following things ____ focus, confidence, and perseverance.
12. After we arrive home, Lydia will make dinner ____ and Daniel will walk the dogs.
13. The Hess family recently traveled to Augusta, Maine ____ Concord, New Hampshire ____ and Montpelier, Vermont.
14. If you get a sunburn, this is what you should do ____ take a cool bath or shower for pain relief, use an aloe vera lotion to soothe the skin, and drink plenty of extra water.
15. Please remember to be on time for your appointment ____ otherwise, the office will charge you a late fee.