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# The Punctuation Detective Agency

- Become an expert on the written underworld
- Cut out punctuation crime
- Make punctuation marks work harder

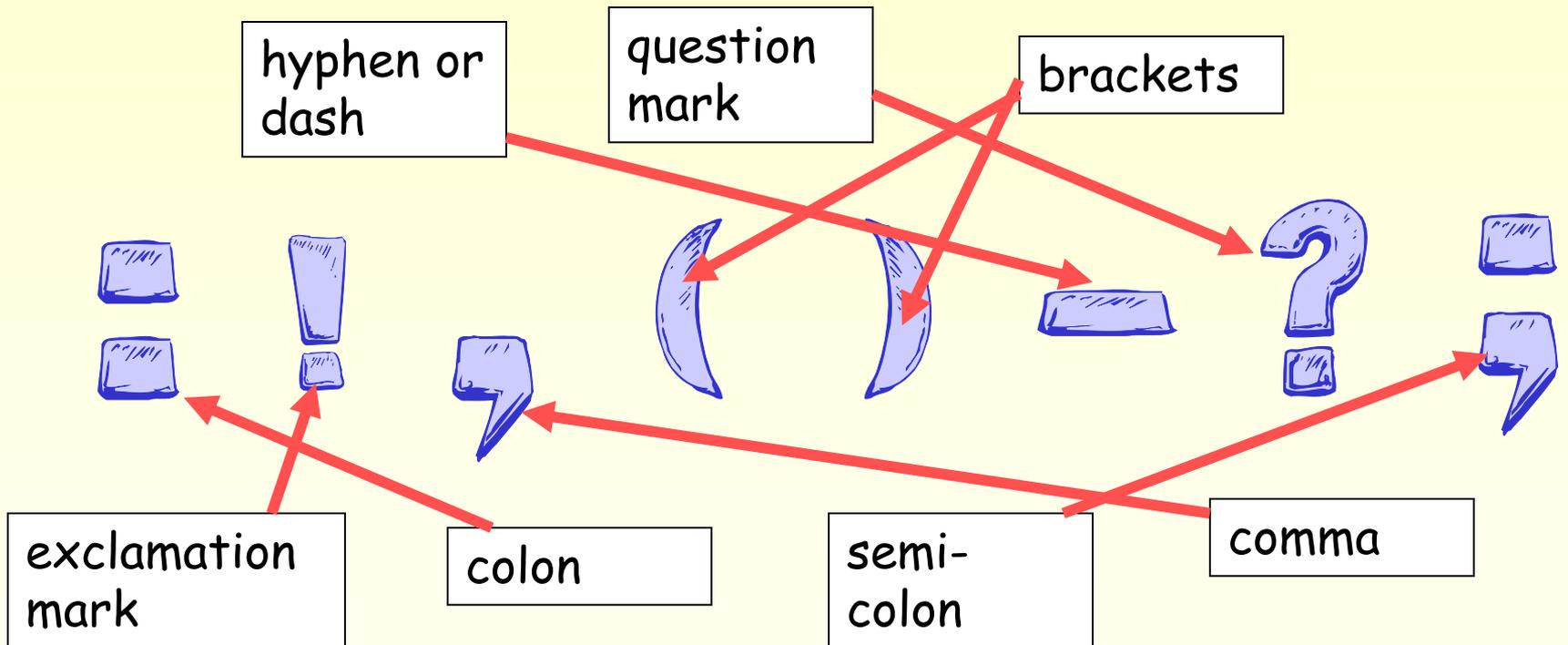
Complete this course, in order to become a punctuation detective.



**TASK 1:** you are going to see some punctuation marks.



As you read, match the right name to each one. Click to check you are right.





colon



exclamation  
mark



semi-  
colon

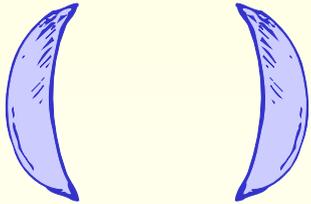


comma

Here they are again.



Did you  
remember full  
stops,  
apostrophes  
and speech  
marks?



brackets



question  
mark

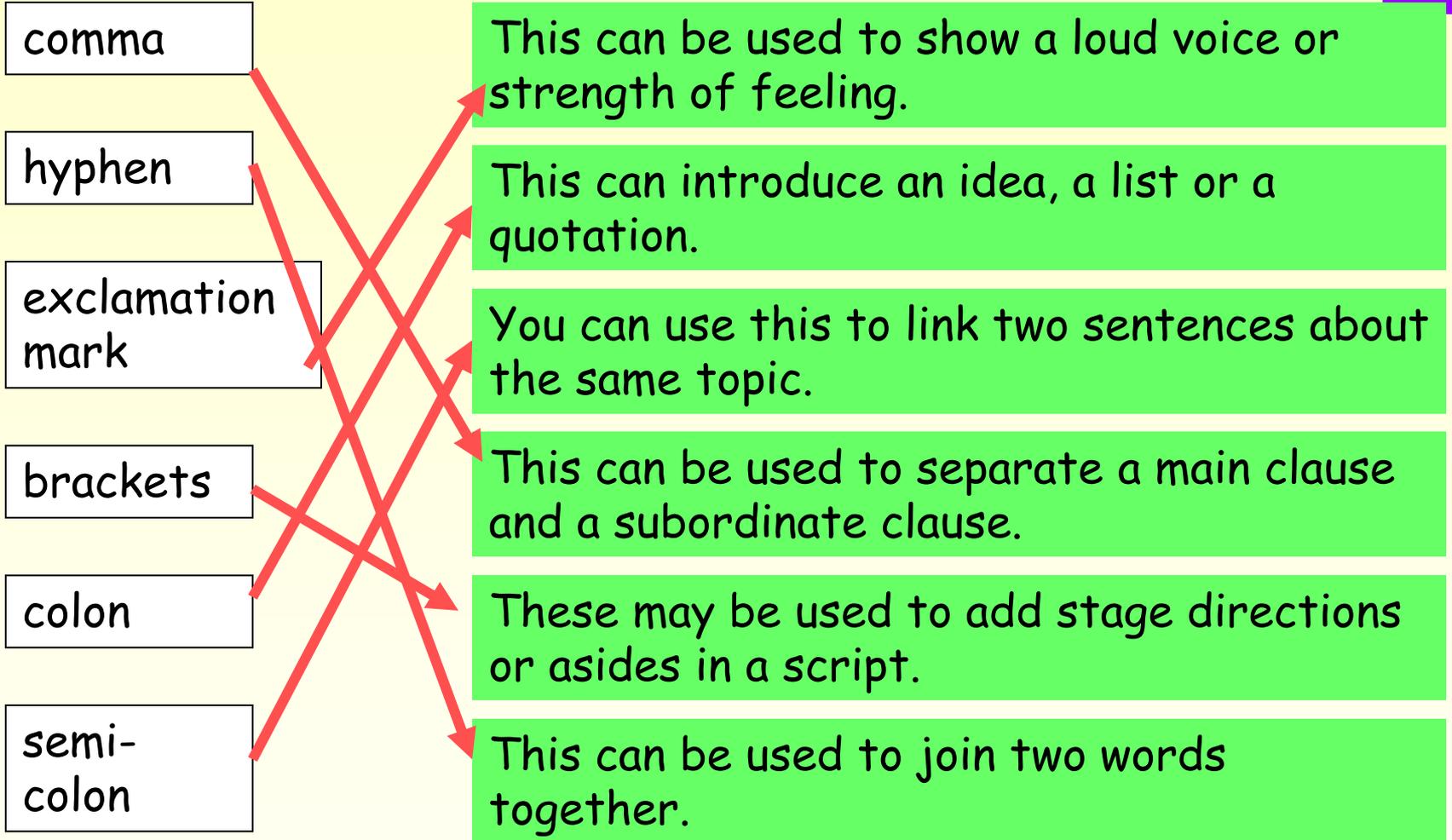


hyphen or  
dash





**TASK 2:** Now see if you can match up the name and one of the jobs of each of these punctuation marks.



**TASK 3:** You must now investigate some punctuation crime. Read each sentence in turn and see if you can spot the missing punctuation before the answer appears.



Punctuation



It was a very dingy, dirty place.

comma

' Indeed, ' said Holmes.

comma

(See if you can spot the missing punctuation before the answer appears.)



Punctuation



**apostrophe**

What's the matter with that?

'Minnie!' he shouted hoarsely.

**Exclamation  
mark**

(See if you can spot the missing punctuation before the answer appears.)



Punctuation



The pale-faced man nodded.



**hyphen**

However here I felt safe.



**comma**





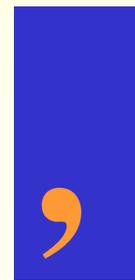
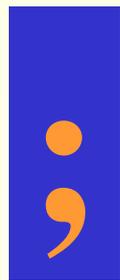
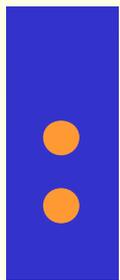
# Punctuation Casebook

You must now complete a casebook on punctuation. Your casebook should:

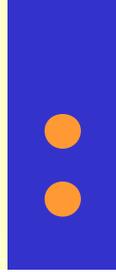
- explain when to use the punctuation mark
- give examples, from prominent texts, of it being used effectively.

Now **click on your punctuation mark.**

After this task, click here to go to the effects of punctuation.



# The colon



Punctuation



You have chosen the **colon**.

Click here for an explanation of colons.

Click here for examples of colon use.

In your casebook:

1. explain the functions of the colon
2. give three examples of how it might be used.

Go back to casebook.

Go to end of presentation.



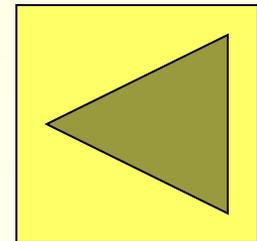
# When to use colons



A colon is used to introduce things: ideas, items in a list, a quotation or an explanation. *He'd lost everything: his friends, his happiness and his pride.*

A colon can also be used between a statement and an explanation of the statement. *This time he'd win: he couldn't afford to lose.*

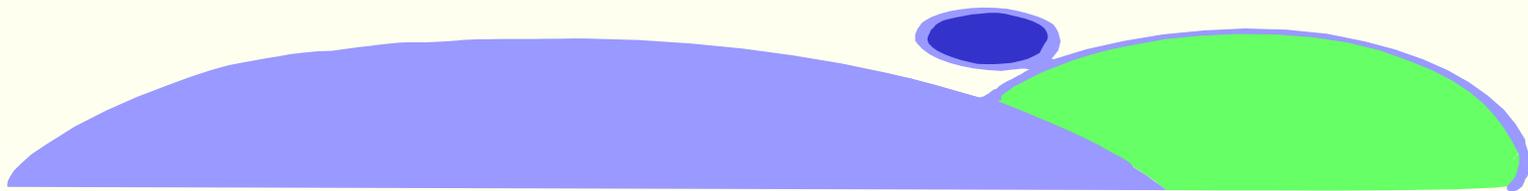
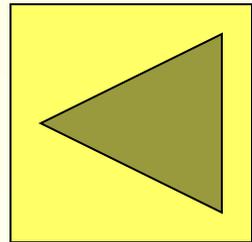
A colon can also be used between two halves of a sentence - balancing the two halves. *Time is a great teacher: unfortunately it kills all its pupils.*



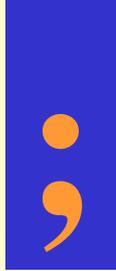


## Examples of colon use:

1. She had a clear set of demands: a new computer, a new car and more pay.
2. His intentions were clear: no one would be going anywhere.
3. The teacher demanded: 'Why are you here?'
4. The coach announced the squad: Jones, Hill, Bennett and Welsh.
5. His words were powerful: the message unforgettable.



# THE SEMI-COLON



You have chosen the **semi-colon**.

In your casebook:

1. explain the functions of the semi-colon
2. give three examples of how it might be used.

Click [here](#) for an explanation of semi-colons.

Click [here](#) for examples of semi-colon use.

Click here to go back to casebook.

# When to use semi-colons

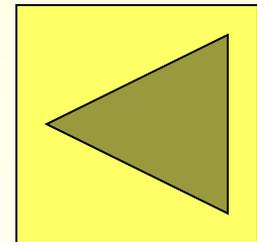


A semi-colon can be used to separate main clauses in a compound sentence. It often replaces *and* or *but*.

(The semi-colon is useful as it can:

- help to maintain the theme of a sentence
- avoid abrupt short sentences
- avoid too much use of *and* or *but*.)

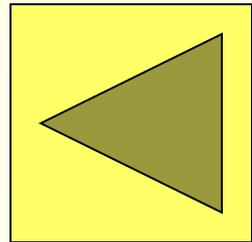
Semi-colons can also be used to punctuate lists of long items (instead of commas).





## Examples of semi-colon use:

1. Plenty of girls had signed up for the team; Jody wanted to be one of them.
2. Girling won the ball in the penalty area; he turned quickly, almost losing control; he shot and scored.
3. Her folder contained a letter to her MP; a short story about a kidnap; three poems about her holiday and a study of Macbeth.



# INVERTED COMMAS

“ ”



Punctuation



You have chosen the **inverted commas**.

In your casebook:

1. explain the different names for and functions of inverted commas
2. give three examples of how they may be used in different ways

Click [here](#) for an explanation of inverted commas.

Click [here](#) for examples of inverted commas being used.

Click here to go back to casebook.

# When to use inverted commas

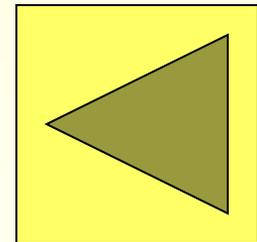


Inverted commas can be used to show words which are spoken.

They can also be used around words or quotations from a written text.

Inverted commas are sometimes used around words to show that the words are not true, or to show irony or sarcasm.

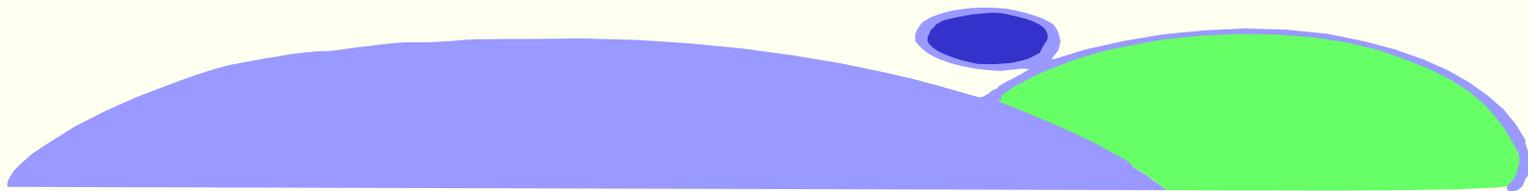
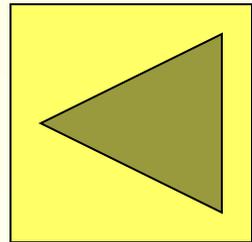
They can be used to show the title of a book, poem or story.





## Examples of inverted commas:

1. Josh said, 'You have no right to be here.'
2. 'What,' he asked, 'is the meaning of this?'
3. My favourite story is 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'.
4. 'When shall we three meet again?' are the opening words to the play.
5. My dad thinks he's so 'cool' when he dances, but really he's an embarrassment.



# COMMAS

,



Punctuation



You have chosen **commas**.

In your casebook:

1. explain the different uses for commas
2. give three examples of how they may be used in different ways

Click [here](#) for an explanation of commas.

Click [here](#) for examples of commas being used.

Click here to go back to casebook.



Commas can be used after an adverb or adverbial phrase or clause which opens a sentence. *Slowly, the door opened.*

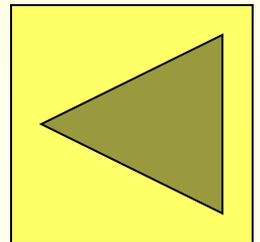
They are used after a non-finite clause at the start of a sentence. *Having finished, she left the table.*

Commas are often used when addressing someone. *Keep going, Joe.*

Commas can be used around additional information. *The film, a classic, was enjoyed by everyone.*

Commas can divide items in a list. *The rock was cold, rough, scarred and mossy.*

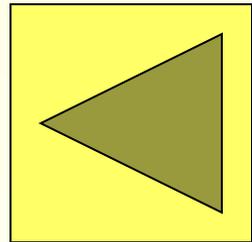
Commas are used to help punctuate speech. *She muttered, 'See you.'*





## Examples of commas:

1. Above, the clouds drifted.
2. Swelling with pride, he walked away.
3. How nice to see you, Kay.
4. She turned the key and, smiling to herself, walked in.
5. He thought about the lies, the insults, the meanness and the hurt he'd suffered.
6. 'Come here,' she said, 'and tell me again.'



# APOSTROPHES

,



Punctuation



You have chosen **apostrophes**.

In your casebook:

1. explain the different uses for apostrophes
2. give examples of how they may be used in different ways

Click [here](#) for an explanation of apostrophes.

Click [here](#) for examples of apostrophes being used.

Click here to go back to casebook.

# When to use apostrophes



Apostrophes can be used in the place of missing letters. They help us to translate spoken words into writing.

E.g.

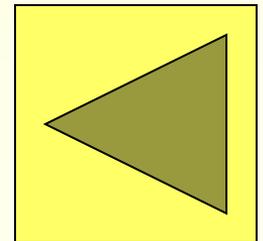
don't, isn't, he's, wouldn't

Apostrophes are also used to show possession. They show if something belongs to a noun e.g.

the baby's rattle, the dog's eyes

When the noun is plural, the apostrophe comes after the plural form, e.g.

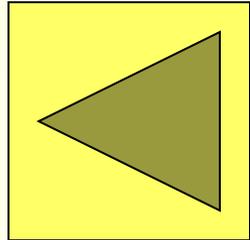
The boys' bicycles, the children's teacher





## Examples of apostrophe use:

1. There's Kris at the door.
2. She couldn't stomach any more lies.
3. He's got a nerve.
4. It's coming for us!
5. He met Milly's gaze.
6. They looked like actors' clothes.
7. He listened to his father's reply.
8. It was a women's meeting.





# The effects of punctuation

Read the sentence, then choose the correct option before the answer appears.

Identify the effects of some uses of punctuation.

We knew: he was dead.

1. The colon introduces a list.
2. The colon is not really needed.
3. The colon introduces an idea with a dramatic pause.

Jus' get goin'.

1. Apostrophes help to show how the words are spoken.
2. Apostrophes are used to show possession.
3. Apostrophes make the words simpler.



I told her (I could not lie) that she was not welcome.

1. Brackets help us to understand why she was not welcome.
2. Brackets reveal the narrator's thoughts.
3. Brackets give essential information.

Oh, yes. She was 'friendly' all right.

1. Inverted commas are used to quote words.
2. Inverted commas suggest she was very friendly.
3. Inverted commas suggest she was not friendly at all.



## Look at how this writer uses punctuation for effect.

An 'explosive' exclamation mark after the short 'Oh' expresses outrage. The writer is almost lost for words.

Oh! but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster.

Another exclamation mark, in the middle of a sentence, draws attention to name of the outrageous character.

A long list punctuated by commas, expresses the depth of his greed.

A semi-colon is used to separate out and balance out descriptions about two sides of him.



Now see if you can comment on the effects of any of the punctuation in this passage.

What is the effect of the dashes? Think about how smoothly the passage reads. How would it affect the text if they were not there?

True! – nervous - very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am! but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses - not destroyed - not dulled them.

What is the effect of the exclamation marks? Where do they come in the sentence? Why? How do they affect the **tone** of the text?



# Course complete

Well done. You have completed the course.

You are ready to:

- Cut out punctuation crime
- Make punctuation marks work harder

There are other punctuation marks to look out for. Make sure you make them work for you.

