

ENGLISH

BIG 8 REVIEW

***ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST
8TH GRADE – INTERMEDIATE LEVEL***



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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my husband Bill, our children and grandchildren,
who inspire me with faith in the future.

SPECIAL CREDITS

Thanks to my many colleagues who have contributed
their knowledge, skills, and years of experience to the making of our endeavor.
Special thanks to Sheila St.Onge for her assistance and expertise.
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in the preparation of this manuscript:

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DISCLAIMER

During the production of this book, all reasonable care was given to follow as closely as possible both the intent and the format, guidelines, frameworks, assessments, and rubric evaluations for the NYS 8th Grade English Language Arts Assessments as released by the University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Albany, NY 12234. In addition, some portions of *New York State Testing Program, English Language Arts – Test Sampler Draft* [a publication developed through a partnership between the NYS Education Department and CTB/McGraw-Hill, 20 Ryan Ranch Road, Monterey, CA 93940, and copyrighted by CTB/McGraw-Hill] was reviewed and some testing material modified for incorporation in this book. These portions of the “Test Sampler Drafts” provided examples of the types of questions, the formatting, and the scoring guides being developed by or at the direction of the New York State Education Department.

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PREFACE

MAKING A NAME FOR MYSELF

Who am I? How can I answer that? My name is one answer. I may choose to use the name that the adults in my life chose for me, or I may choose to use a name that my friends and I have agreed upon. However, those words, my name, are special to me.

Words do have something to do with identifying who I am. Words other than my name also have special meaning to me. I have a need to let people know who I am, what I think, and what I want. Language allows me to do this in an impressive and clear way.

The better I am with language, the better my chances are for influencing other people and advancing in this world. To increase my chances of becoming better with language, the New York State Regents has designed a test at the end of eighth grade. It will measure my ability to understand language and use language to convey my understanding. This test will help others to determine how much assistance I will need in order to successfully master language skills.

No matter what my present language skills are, I can begin now to make a name for myself. Just as I can practice writing my signature so that it looks the way I want it to, so I can practice my language skills until they also present me the way I want others to see me. I need not be stuck signing checks using a large crayon and printing in childish letters; I can practice and improve. So too, I need not remain at my current skill level of language. I can practice and improve. I want to make a name for myself.

I want to be somebody special. I want respect. I can start today.



Child-like



Evolving Style

sophisticated



LEARNING STANDARDS

The 8th grade testing program in New York State uses four English Language Arts Learning Standards as focal points. They help students understand the various needs for and uses of language. These standards are:

- Students will listen, speak, read, and write for **information and understanding**.
- Students will listen, speak, read, and write for **literary response and expression**.
- Students will listen, speak, read, and write for **critical analysis and evaluation**.
- Students will listen, speak, read, and write for **social interaction**.



Language is a unified whole. In reality, it cannot be separated into these neat compartments. However, these standards are a practical way to discuss the needs and value of language. By using the standards, the New York Board of Regents can focus on certain skills and create rubrics (scoring guides) by which your work is evaluated and ultimately improved.

You will begin preparing for your evaluation by studying the standards to be assessed in the main tasks of the test. You will first be introduced to a blueprint of the test, and then you will work through some practice of the skills involved. The small “road sign” icons above will remind you of the standard being assessed. As you work through the reading comprehension section, a “Skill” coding will alert you to the type of question on which you are focusing. The detailed meaning of the icons will appear as you begin working on the actual tasks of the test.



BLUEPRINT

THE 8TH GRADE TEST BLUEPRINT

The blueprint or plan of New York State English Language Arts Test for Grade 8 calls for dividing the work into two Sessions – the first is 90 minutes, and the second is 60 minutes. The chart that follows will help you understand what you can expect during the test.

Session	Texts	Response Format	Standards & Purposes
Session 1 (90 Min.)	3 - 5 reading passages 1 listening passage	26-28 multiple choice questions 3 short responses 1 extended response	<p>Standards 1 & 2</p> <p>To assess ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read literary and informational texts • Understand and interpret important ideas and information • Recognize literary elements and their effect • Interpret vocabulary in context <p>Standard 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to an informational text • Select and interpret important ideas and information • Demonstrate understanding of passages in detailed responses to questions • Synthesize understandings in well-developed extended response, following the conventions of standard written English
Session 2 (60 Min.)	2 linked passages (1 informational and 1 literary, or 2 literary) 1 writing prompt	3 short responses 1 extended response	<p>Standards 2 & 3</p> <p>To assess ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read 2 texts from different genres • Select important ideas and information • Understand literary elements and their effect • Demonstrate understanding of passages in detailed responses to questions • Synthesize understandings in well-developed extended response, following the conventions of standard written English • Create well-developed expressive and expository responses to a given task, using knowledge of literary elements and expository structures and following the conventions of standard written English

SCORING THE TEST

Now that you have seen the NYS Standards, you need to understand the 8th Grade English Test will focus on the first three standards. The Fourth Standard, social interaction, receives less emphasis on the 8th Grade English Test. The Board of Regents hopes that by achieving the better communications fostered by the first three standards, improved social interaction among citizens will result. You should get used to seeing the icons which represent the standards. When you see the icon for a standard, you know that this standard is the focus of the task on which you are working.

HOW THE TEST IS SCORED

As the test “Blueprint” shows, there are three types of tasks (responses) on the 8th Grade English Test: 26-28 multiple choice questions, 6 short responses (3 in each of the two sessions), and 2 extended responses (1 in each of the two sessions). To do your best on the test, you must understand how the test will be scored.

SESSION 1

Typical

Directions: In this part of the test, you are going to read an article, a story, and an essay, and answer questions about what you have read. You may look back at the reading selections as often as you like.

After reading the selections, you must answer a series of multiple choice questions about the reading passage. You must select the best answer from those given. Your choices will be scored “right” or “wrong” on these 26-28 multiple choice questions.

At the end of Session 1, you will listen to two passages and take notes. Then you will fill in a graphic organizer chart, and write responses – two short and an extended one. For the extended question, you will be given a special space to plan your writing and a lined page for writing your finished response. Your short and extended response answers for the listening questions are scored on special “qualities” which make up the New York State assessment **rubric** (set of official rules). You will be judged on your ability to:

- **show a clear understanding of the task** including making some reference to the text and/or visual part of the question
- **develop your response factually and convincingly**
- **organize your writing clearly** using proper introduction, body, and conclusion with smooth transition
- **use vocabulary appropriately**
- **apply the rules of Standard English writing**

SESSION 2

Typical

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Directions: In this part of the test, you are going to read two selections, for instance an article and a poem. First you will answer questions on what you have read. You may look back at the article and poem as often as you like. Then you will be asked to write an essay.

In Session 2, you will read two literary passages and fill in a graphic organizer chart, write two short responses, and write an extended response that compares the two passages. Finally, you must write an “independent writing” extended response generally connected to a theme related to the two passages. For the extended questions, you will be given a special space to plan your writing and a lined page for writing your finished responses.

DESCRIBING THE RUBRIC QUALITIES

To be sure your responses are properly judged, scorers use a rubric based on five qualities (see chart on opposite page). The qualities are Meaning, Development, Organization, Language Use and Conventions. You must pay attention to these qualities in each of the writing response questions in Sessions 1 and 2.

THE 5 QUALITIES OF THE NYS ENGLISH EIGHT SCORING RUBRIC	
Meaning	You will be graded in part on your ability to understand what you read in the text and visuals. (Reading is one of the things which you can do outside class to enhance your language ability. In addition to school-assigned readings, you should try to read other works of interest <u>for at least fifteen minutes a day</u> . If you do this and also do assigned reading, you will probably notice an improvement in your reading level.)
Development	You will be graded on how well you express your ideas. You must elaborate on your ideas, using specific and relevant details and examples to support your statements. You must be precise (exact) in your response to the task (question). You must make specific references to facts in the text and/or visuals of the task.
Organization	You will be graded on how you “put together” your writing so that it makes sense to the reader. Here is where your knowledge of the writing process will be of great value. The organizational procedures that you have learned include pre-writing; use of introductory, body, and conclusion elements; and proofreading and revising.
Language Use	You will be graded on how well your writing shows that you are aware of your audience (reader to whom you are writing) and the purpose of your writing. To show this quality in your writing, you will need to use words effectively, have good sentence structure, and use a variety of sentences.
Conventions	You will be graded on how well you use the rules of the language road. These include punctuation, mechanics, usage, spelling, or just the general term “grammar.”

THE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL WRITING

Here are the steps of the writing process. You must review them and use them whenever you write. These steps help you to understand and follow the process. You know that the writing process is part of the New York State Standards.

THE WRITING PROCESS

- Know your task.
- Have a clear sense of your audience.
- Be aware of what you already know about the task and what more you need to know.
- Group your ideas.
- Delete those ideas that don't seem related or valuable.
- Organize your groups and include an introduction and conclusion.
- Write a first draft.
- Proofread and edit your draft.
- Revise.
- Write your final draft.



Your teachers stress that the two most essential keys to successful writing are (1) **understanding your audience** and (2) **organizing your task** so that it will be clearly understood. The **Task-Audience Check List** is a way of doing just that.

The Task–Audience check list specifies the major points that you should consider when proofreading your short and extended responses on the English Grade 8 Test. In addition, this method will succeed in helping to make you attentive to the primary concerns in editing any piece of writing.

On the following page is The TASK–AUDIENCE check list. It has been designed to improve your proofreading. You will use it to check your short and extended responses on the English Grade 8 Test.

Task-Audience Check List



- ✓ **T**ask is the writing job on which you must focus.
- ✓ **A**udience consists of any reader other than you.
- ✓ **S**elect your best ideas to share with your audience.
- ✓ **K**eep your ideas organized by reviewing your outline.

- ✓ **A**void using contractions.
- ✓ **U**se an introduction which includes a motivator sentence (interesting kick-off), a bridge sentence (connection between the motivator and the thesis), and a thesis statement (main point).
- ✓ **D**evelop the body of your essay by explaining your thesis.
- ✓ **I**nvolve the reader by offering proof such as simple facts and quotations.

- ✓ **E**very paragraph must have a topic sentence.
- ✓ **N**ever jump from idea to idea: use transitions properly.
- ✓ **C**hoose words which are specific and alive.
- ✓ **E**nd the essay with a conclusion.

TASK – AUDIENCE REVIEW

How do you begin a writing response? The answer is closely connected to how you begin a speaking response – you think. This is also the case when communicating through email or wordprocessing a letter. Since you are dealing with written words which will be fixed in place long after the time you spent writing them, you need to be precise. Your meaning must be made unmistakable. Written communication is often more difficult than personal



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communication, such as whispering a secret to a friend. When using writing, you cannot use body language, facial expression, or the continual addition of other words to keep explaining what you said to your audience; you need to be clear.



A **process** is a method, a way in which one proceeds to attack a task. Using a process ensures that one focuses on the task. Using a writing process to complete a writing task provides the probability that writers will be as precise and clear as possible when completing the task. A process takes us from the understanding of the task through to the time when the writing is for all time permanent: published, delivered, shared, or handed in for a grade. In this text we use **TASK**, an **acronym** (a word formed by using the initial letters of various other words), to remember the steps to the writing process.

TASK

TASK – UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS REQUIRED

As a writer, you are responsible for understanding what is required. If the task is unclear, and it is assigned by a person, you must ask questions: when is it due, who will read it, how long must it be, whether it requires research, etc. If the task is only written (as on a test), you must analyze the written task as carefully as possible, breaking it into its commands, requirements, and constraints. Underlining, highlighting, circling, or color coding a task is often helpful if such a thing is permitted on the test.

AUDIENCE – UNDERSTANDING WHO THE INTENDED READER IS.

For most classroom work, the intended reader is a person who can be expected to have a full knowledge of standard English vocabulary and usage, a complete understanding of standard English grammar, and an understanding of a reasonable argument, complete with a knowledge of what constitutes worthy evidence.

SELECTING – CHOOSING THE BEST DETAILS POSSIBLE.

From these details you begin to decide your attitude or feeling about the subject. Writers often brainstorm in a variety of ways. You will also find assembling a **palette** is helpful. (A palette is a range of colors an artist uses to create a picture). A writer's palette is made of words rather than hues. This palette concept will fit right in with vocabulary building. The more ease you acquire in finding several possible synonyms for the ideas you need to express, the more likely that you will express yourself precisely. At the selecting stage, you also have to do research in order to understand the subject better, supply more details, and acquire persuasive evidence.

KEEPING – ORGANIZING A PRECISE PLAN WITH CLEAR TRANSITION BETWEEN ALL OF THE PARTS.

Keeping means organizing ideas – loosely at first, and later according to some obvious logic. This is a step which has many segments. You can begin by webbing ideas loosely along the natural divisions evident in the brainstorming. Then try to group some of those ideas and to add or delete others. At this point, you will use a general outline consisting of introductory, body, and conclusion segments. Next, you will assemble a rough draft making sure to use clear transitions. Once the rough draft is put together, you can begin to revise, using some guidelines to craft a better piece of writing.

AUDIENCE

Using the acronym AUDIENCE allows you to more easily remember the revision process for most classroom writing that is not narrative.

Avoid contractions.

The exception to this rule would be any speech within quotation marks (dialogue).

Use an introduction.

This includes a motivating segment, a bridge from that attention grabber to the thesis, and the thesis, a statement which expresses both your attitude and your topic.

Develop the body of the writing.

Explain and validate the main points of the thesis. Here the you must be aware of some basic logical errors to avoid, some essential aspects of valid evidence, and some criteria for worthy sources of evidence. Evidence should be true, precise, sufficiently representative, taken from reliable sources, timely, and as objective as possible.

Involve the reader.

Offer proof in the form of simple statements of fact, quotations and/or paraphrasing of authorities, statistics, and anecdotes (short narratives of your own experience or the experience of other people).

Every paragraph must have a topic sentence.

Never jump from idea to idea.

The reader is not in your mind, so you must supply clear transitions, connections from one idea to another.

Choose words which are specific, alive, and appropriate to the task, tone, and audience.

End with a conclusion.

If possible, try to connect the conclusion to the motivating segment of the introduction.

Try to learn the TASK-AUDIENCE acronym as an easy way to remember the writing process.

Now that you have reviewed once more the process of writing, you need to review the parts of speech and how sentences are built to read and write more effectively.

WRITING

The second part of Session 1 and all of Session 2 of the test requires you to write responses of different lengths. There are three short responses and one extended response to two listening passages at the end of Session 1. In Session 2, there are three short responses to two linked literary passages and an extended response. Standards 1, 2, and 3 are evaluated by this section of the test. Your responses must show you understand the passages and the writing tasks. You must use the details of the passages to make a clear, well organized response. Your spelling, grammar, and punctuation will also count in the scoring (see rubrics, pages 174 and 175).



SENTENCE STRUCTURE

BUILDING SENTENCES FROM CLAUSES & PHRASES

Sentences express complete thoughts. When building a sentence in English, there are four structures from which to choose. Understanding these structures will help you to avoid writing run-ons and fragments. Also, if you understand how a sentence is built, you can learn when and where to place commas. All of this should really improve your performance on the test.

You need to review clauses and phrases. A **clause** is a group of words that has a subject and a predicate. A **phrase** is a group of related words that does not include both a subject and a predicate (e.g., at the movies). For any sentence of any type, there must be at least one **main clause** (a complete, independent thought: a subject and predicate that stand alone). A **subordinate clause** is an incomplete thought that must be used with a main clause to make sense.

Example: Howard goes to science fiction movies (main clause) when he has money (subordinate clause).

THE SIMPLE SENTENCE

There is *only one* main clause in a **simple sentence**. Remember that it is not possible to judge sentence type based on length alone.

Examples: She is. ("She is." – the one main clause)

In the early part of the day at the top of the hill by the barn, the rooster crowed. ("...the rooster crowed." – the one main clause)
 ("In the early part...by the barn," – series of prepositional phrases modifying the predicate)

THE COMPOUND SENTENCE

There are *at least two* main clauses in a **compound sentence**; the last *two* of these clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction preceded by a comma. Coordinating conjunctions include: and, but, or, nor, for, yet, and so.

Examples: She is, and I am too.
(“She is,” and “I am too.” – the two main clauses)

In the early part of the day at the top of the hill by the barn, the rooster crowed, and the noise awakened Adelle, our new granddaughter.

(“...the rooster crowed, ...” and “...the noise awakened Adelle, ...” – the two main clauses)

THE COMPLEX SENTENCE

A **complex sentence** includes *only one* main clause and *at least one* subordinate clause.

Examples: Since she is, I am too.
(“Since she is, ...” – the subordinate clause; “...I am too.” – the main clause)

I woke up because the rooster crowed in the early part of the day at the top of the hill by the barn.

(“I woke up...” – the main clause; “...because the rooster crowed...,” – the subordinate clause)

THE COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE

A **compound-complex sentence** includes *at least one* subordinate clause and *at least two* main clauses, the last *two* of which are joined by a coordinating conjunction preceded by a comma.

Examples: Since she is, I am too, but neither of us is happy about the situation.
(“Since she is, ...” – the subordinate clause; “...I am too ...,” – the 1st main clause; “...but neither ...” – the 2nd main clause)

Adelle awoke because the rooster crowed in the early part of the day at the top of the hill by the barn, and she was not able to sleep through any type of noise.

(“Adelle awoke” – the 1st main clause; “because the rooster ... by the barn,” – the subordinate clause; “...she was not able to sleep...” – the 2nd main clause)

SENTENCE TYPE PRACTICE

Here are several sentences for you to identify.

Directions: Read each sentence and on the line provided identify which type of sentence it is (simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex).

- 1 In the early light, I could see the outline of the tree. _____
- 2 Because it was such a large and majestic oak, my friend Flick and I used to play under it on hot days. _____
- 3 We were young and had few responsibilities. _____
- 4 Every summer's day we played there until dark, and I really miss those days.

- 5 If I get a good education, I'll be able to really change my life, and then I can be on my own. _____

RECOGNIZING THE PREDICATE AND SUBJECT

A **simple predicate** is the main action of a group of words or a way of existing. If you are a bit shaky about finding a simple predicate, you can try these four rules:

- 1 Look for a part of the verb "to be" or an action word. Parts of the verb "to be" include am, is, are, was, were, will be, has, or have been.
Examples: He was here. (part of the verb "to be")
I often rushed through dinner in order to go out later. (action word)
- 2 Make sure that there is no "to" in front of the suspected predicate.
Example: On the way to his house to see him, I fell down. (Because there is a "to" in front of "his" and "see," I know that the predicate here is "fell" and not "his" or "see.")
- 3 In your mind, try putting one of the following pronouns in front of the suspected predicate; if it sounds right with just one of these pronouns, go on to the next step.
Pronouns to try: I, you, he, she, it, we, they
Example: The last day of school seems so near now. ("It seems" sounded right to me, and so I go to rule 4.)
- 4 Make sure that somebody or something in the sentence is performing the action of the simple predicate.
Example: The last day of school seems so near now. ("It seems" sounded correct and there is something in that group of words that "seems" [the day seems]. Good, you have found the simple predicate.)

There is another approach to finding the simple predicate that often helps. Try putting a time word such as “tomorrow” or “yesterday” in front of the sentence. The sentence takes on a new meaning, and the word (or words) that changes will be the simple predicate.

Example: He represented his client in court. Tomorrow he will represent his client in court. (“Represented” had to change, so that must be the predicate, and it is.)

Now that you know how to find the simple predicate, finding the simple subject of a group of words is easy because a subject is the “do-er” of the simple predicate.

Example: Menemsha creates beautiful patterns of knots. (Following the rules for finding the predicate and the suggestion to put a time word in front of the sentence, you discover that “creates” is the predicate. The proper noun “Menemsha” is the do-er of “creates,” so “Menemsha” is the subject.)

SUBJECT AND PREDICATE PRACTICE 1

Here is an exercise to practice picking out the subject and predicate of a group of words.

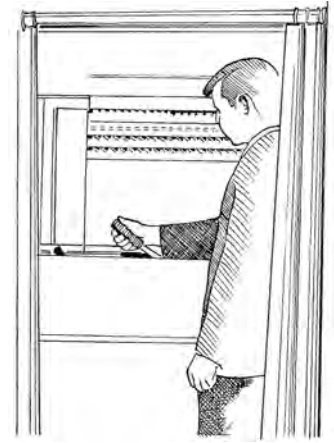
Directions: Underline the subject and put parentheses () around the (predicate) in each of the following sentences.

- 1 Adelle threw the ball to Molly.
- 2 Kim questioned the victim about the accident.
- 3 After losing the game, Fyodor left the park and decided not to go out that night.
- 4 Wishing won't make things happen.
- 5 The seriousness of the injury became clear later that day.
- 6 Her desire to become famous motivated her to try very hard.
- 7 At the first sight of him, they began to run away.
- 8 To begin with, the teacher never seemed to notice him.
- 9 This test requires focus and practice on the part of the student.
- 10 Madeline and Bill carefully approached the growling dog.

Knowing how to find predicates and subjects helps to focus on the key ideas in a piece of reading. On the next page is another paragraph to read.

SUBJECT AND PREDICATE PRACTICE 2

Directions: Underline the simple subjects and put parentheses () around the (simple predicates) in this paragraph. Notice the nouns and pronouns which are similar and are repeated: voter, he, voting booth, voting, and voting booth.



The new voter nervously approached the voting booth. He had used the machine in social studies class, but that was not the real thing. This time he would be pulling the levers, and the electronic systems would record his vote. As the curtain of the booth closed behind him, he felt suddenly truly mature and very important. Unlike smoking or other pseudo-adult activities, voting was something that no child could do. The voting booth really did separate the men from the boys and the women from the girls.

GOOD WRITING BECOMES GOOD READING

Good reading skills give you the ability to find the simple subjects and simple predicates and notice repeat nouns and pronouns. These give clues as to the focus of the paragraph. What is the control sentence or the **topic sentence** of the paragraph about the new voter? Since the paragraph is about how the first time voter is nervous but feels special because voting is a truly adult activity, the topic sentence is the last sentence.

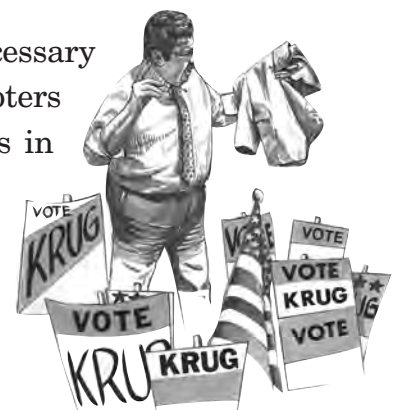
When you read, repeated nouns and your knowledge of simple predicates and simple subjects helps you to unlock the key idea in a paragraph. When you write, this knowledge helps you communicate clearly. Since any essay is built paragraph by paragraph, you now have a key to help unlock the meaning of the entire essay, paragraph by paragraph.

As you read paragraph by paragraph, it is good for you to get into the habit of jotting down the key idea next to the paragraph or at least underlining the topic sentence. This will help you to answer questions about the paragraph.

TOPIC SENTENCE PRACTICE

Directions: Underline the topic sentence in the paragraph. Make a list of repeated nouns and pronouns and repeated subjects and their predicates to focus on the basic idea and choose the correct topic sentence.

In order to pick the best people for political offices, it is necessary for the voters to understand the issues and the candidates. Voters should read newspapers, magazines, and political brochures in order to inform themselves. In addition, the electorate, the people eligible to vote, should listen to debates on the radio and television. Further, voters should attend meetings at which candidates appear. At those meetings, voters should attempt to question candidates about important issues.



REVIEW OF PUNCTUATION CONVENTIONS

Your writing responses on the test will be scored on writing mechanics (or conventions) such as punctuation, grammar, and spelling (see rubric page 174 and 175). You must use punctuation marks as road signs to help others understand what you mean when you write.

MARKS AT THE END OF A SENTENCE

- 1 **Periods** (.) must be placed at the end of all declarative sentences (e.g., *We are going on an ocean voyage.*), and they should be placed at the end of those imperative sentences that do not express strong emotion (e.g., *Please keep moving in the hallway.*). Periods must also be used with most abbreviations.
- 2 **Exclamation points** (!) are used to end sentences that show emotion (e.g., *The Titanic is sinking!*).
- 3 **Question marks** (?) end interrogative sentences (direct questions) (e.g., *Were there any survivors?*).

COMMA (,) RULES

Learning to use commas properly makes a world of difference in writing. The two sentences below use the same words, but you can see that the placement of commas changes the meaning.

Examples: Let's forget Bill and still be friends.

Let's forget, Bill, and still be friends.

It is important for me to review some very basic comma rules starting with the rule that makes such a difference in the example sentences.

- 1 Use a comma to set off the name of the audience to which the sentence is directed.

Example: Let's forget, Bill, and still be friends. (Here we are speaking to Bill, not about him. The use of the commas before and after the word ", Bill," allows the reader to know that Bill is the audience to whom the sentence is directed.)

- 2 Use a comma after every item in a series (three or more items) except for the last.

Example: We ate popcorn, peanuts, apples, and chocolate.

- 3 Use a comma after an introductory prepositional or participle phrase. A preposition is one of those fairly short words which ties a noun or a pronoun to the rest of the sentence in what is called a prepositional phrase (example: in the morning). A participle is a verb ending in -ing or -ed (examples: excited by the cheering or exciting the crowd).

Examples: In the morning, I was awakened by the rooster. (introductory prepositional phrase)

Excited by the rooster's crowing, the old man removed his shoes and danced. (introductory participial phrase)

Exciting the crowd, the rooster seemed to imitate popular rock stars. (introductory participial phrase)

- 4 Use a comma to separate the tag of a quotation from the rest of the sentence. The tag is the "she said" part.

Examples: "I am," he said, "the best baseball player in the city."

He said, "I am the best baseball player in the city."

"I am the best baseball player in the city," he said.

- 5 Use a comma before the coordinating conjunction used to join the two independent clauses in a compound or compound-complex sentence.

Examples: Elias swims, and Marisa does too. (Two main clauses joined by ", and" in a compound sentence.)

Elias swims, and Marisa does too when she has the time. (Two main clauses joined by ", and" in a compound-complex sentence.)

- 6 Use a comma following an introductory dependent clause.

Example: Because T.J. likes to fish, Sundeep bought a rod for T.J. as a birthday present. ("Because T.J. likes to fish" is an introductory subordinate clause.)

- 7 Use a comma to set off interruptions in the sentence. These interrupters might be words, phrases, or entire subordinate clauses.

Examples: Mr. Kim, principal, attended the meeting of the PTA last night.

Janelle, the captain of the squad, led the cheer.

My sister, who is younger than I, lives next to Mr. Smith.

USING THE APOSTROPHE (')

The **apostrophe sign** (') is used to indicate three things in a sentence: (1) the possessive case, (2) plurals of numbers, letters, and abbreviations, and (3) the omission of a letter or letters from a word.

Examples: John's dog Spot caught the Frisbee in the air. Then, Spot ran away with the Frisbee. Now the Frisbee is Spot's. (singular possessive)

At the party, the girls' coats were hung neatly in the closet, but the boys' coats were thrown in a pile. (plural possessive)

Examples: In the late 1800's, steam engines were used by the railroads. (plurals of numbers)

I received all A's on my last report card. (plurals of letters)

My mother is a psychiatrist, and my father is a surgeon. I'm lucky to have two M.D.'s in my family. (plurals of abbreviations)

Example: The contraction (omission of letters) form of the word cannot is can't.

CAPITALIZATION

- Capitalize the first word of every sentence, line of poetry, and quotation.
- Capitalize all proper nouns (names of persons, persons' titles, specific places, titles of books, plays, motion pictures, and news media).

Example: During a job interview, Mr. Arkwright, Manager of Smythe's Department Store, asked Jordan, "Do you read the Wall Street Journal?"

PUNCTUATION CONVENTIONS PRACTICE

Here are several sentences for you to practice your punctuation skills.

Directions: For each of the following sentences, (1) underline each word that should have been Capitalized and (2) place the proper punctuation in each of the blank boxes.

- 1 since tyler arrived early he needs to ask you to move your car so that he can leave and pick up his brother

- 2 i want to ask her to the concert but i don't have the money right now because I haven't been paid yet
- 3 yes jung shoo can play football well but he also is an excellent student
- 4 after putting the dog inside moe forgot to close the gate and the dog ran right after him
- 5 josh and koreen agreed with me and voted for my candidate but ali chose to vote for his friend
- 6 what is wrong with yolanda today
- 7 wow that was an exciting ride
- 8 mr mccarthy the conductor said "i don't recall the girls names but i know they were wearing central high jackets
- 9 if you can't trust your own judgement what is the point of running a business
- 10 oh no you don't you keep your hands off that pie it is jenny s entry for the chenango county fair