

# Key Stage Two Punctuation

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This guide is intended to support you with helping your children develop their writing across Key Stage Two. Colons and Semi-colons are introduced in Year 5.

## **Paragraphing:**

We have agreed as a school that we will leave a blank line between paragraphs and indent the start of each paragraph.

## **Speech:**

- Speech should not be indented as it gets confused with paragraphing
- When starting speech, you should always use a capital letter (with the exception of split speech)
- Verbs of speech never have a capital letter
- When deciding on punctuation at the end, the punctuation should match the verb:  
“Who is that?” asked Tom.  
“Go away!” shouted Bob.  
“I wish I had a car,” sighed Sam.  
“Who is-” interrupted Pete.
- The only time you would use a full stop at the end of speech is when the speech ends the sentence, e.g. Sam sighed, “I wish I had a car.”
- A new speaker starts a new line. If there is action that leads into the speech in the same sentence, the action starts the new line, e.g.  
Pete picked up his bag and whispered, “Let’s go home.”

### Split speech:

Split speech is when the verb is placed in the middle of the speech. There are two different ways it can be split.

### One sentence split in half:

“I wonder who ate my sandwich,” whispered Mr Care.

→ “I wonder,” whispered Mr Care, “who ate my sandwich.” ( , , lower case letter )

### Two separate sentences:

“I wonder who ate my sandwich. That was my lunch,” whispered Mr Care.

→ “I wonder who ate my sandwich,” whispered Mr Care. “That was my lunch.” ( , . capital )

### **Parenthesis (using brackets, dashes and commas):**

Brackets add extra information that is generally less important than the rest of the sentence e.g. Tom (who is 12) won the chess competition.

Dashes can be used in exactly the same way as brackets, except the content is generally exaggerated more than the rest of the sentence, e.g. Tom wondered who – if anyone – would save him. You can also use a single dash at the end of a sentence to add something exciting, e.g. Yesterday, Tom ran the longest race of his life – and he won it!

Commas as parenthesis can be used in the same way as brackets and dashes in the middle of a sentence. The clause in the middle of the dashes is generally equally as important as the rest of the sentence, e.g. Mrs Ball, the teacher, arrived in the car park.

Be careful not to confuse this with commas to separate clauses, e.g. While eating her lunch, Mrs Ball marked the children’s books.

In order for all of the above to be used correctly for parenthesis, the clause in the brackets should be able to be removed leaving the rest of the sentence to make sense by itself.

## **Colons:**

When using colons, the clause before the colon must make sense by itself. Incorrect uses of colons (e.g. You will need: ...) are very common and used to be acceptable. However, if we allow this, they will be marked down on their GPS tests when they do not realise it is incorrect.

You should be able to put a full stop at the end of the clause before the colon, e.g. 'You will need several ingredients.'

This would then work with a colon, e.g. 'You will need several ingredients: butter, flour...'

## **Semi-colons**

Semi-colons can be used in a variety of ways. With the first two, the clauses must be independent either side (they must make sense by themselves).

- 1) To link closely related clauses, e.g. Mrs Ball likes chocolate; however, Mr Hogwood likes to eat savoury snacks.
- 2) To replace conjunctions, e.g. Peter cowered in the corner; he was terrified of the ghost. The easiest ones to replace are 'and' and 'but' but others are acceptable.
- 3) In a complex list, e.g. Mrs Ball invited all her friends to the party: Bob, the builder; Mickey, the mouse; and Donald, the duck. They can only be used in a complex list (when there is extra information about each item in the list). A semi-colon used in a normal list is incorrect.

Unlike when using a comma, you would use a semi-colon before the final item in the list.

## **Bullet points:**

There are lots of acceptable ways to punctuate bullet points; they most important thing is to be consistent. We are going to use the easiest way:

- Bullet points will start with a capital letter
- There is no need for punctuation at the end of any of them

## **Handwriting:**

There is an expectation that from the end of Year 4, children should be using pen and should have joined and neat handwriting. Please put interventions into place as quickly as possible if they are not. They cannot be working at Age Related Expectations at the end of KS2 unless they have joined and neat handwriting.