



Punctuation

This handout has a set of punctuation tasks and the right answers. There are no explanations here of rules as we work these out in class together. They are simple and logical and not difficult to learn.

Part 1: four tasks

Part 2: the right answers

Part 1: Tasks

Task (1) How would you punctuate these?

1. Cats which are considered less expensive to keep than dogs have become very popular pets
2. Cats which have brown eyes are very rare
3. I love cats
4. I think cats are beautiful
5. I think cats are beautiful they are also very intelligent
6. Now you have a choice a dog or a cat or a hamster
7. She decided to go to Canada which proved to be an excellent choice

Task (2)

Which of these sentences means there may have been more meetings but they couldn't all attend them?

- (a) There is only one more meeting which they can all attend.
- (b) There is only one more meeting, which they can all attend.

Task (3)

The following passage is taken from a student's writing on a book by Virginia Woolf. It is about a set of friends who gradually lose touch with each other. Can you correct the punctuation so that it makes sense:

But each of them lives his own life from then on, there is only one more meeting, which they can all attend. It is a farewell ceremony for one of them who later moves to India, where he dies at the age of 25. His death is the cause of the second and last meeting of the remaining six people.

Task (4) Punctuation in Direct Speech

Can you punctuate these passages of direct speech. They are taken from two novels.

Text (1)

I want to borrow your knife she said to the man who'd taken the fish and when he'd let her have it she said to Pantalaimon what was her name?

He understood of course and said Ratter

(.....)

What we going to do about them witches Farder Coram she said I wonder if your witch was one of them

(Philip Pullman: The Golden Compass, 1995)

The whole Trilogy "His Dark Materials" is in the library. It is prize-winning fantasy writing for young people and old.

Text (2)

You disobeyed orders he said harshly While you were in the photo booth I told you to get to hell back here the next thing I see is you riding on that kids`train

....

A bloody good job for you I did she flared up then her expression changed to one of consternation Oh my God – are you saying that woman wasn`t trying to kill you – I distinctly saw a knife in her hand ...

It wasn`t a knife – it was one of those hypodermic weapons Delta favour. You saved my life he went on in his normal blank monotone to help quieten her How the devil did you follow me I never saw you....

I wouldn`t be much good if you had done she snapped back and blew her nose Sorry if I fouled it up.

(.....)

And thank God you did Martel replied as he stood up you haven`t unpacked your case

You told me not to - so only my toilet things are in the bathroom

Pack them we`re catching the first train out of St Gallen

Why I`m exhausted she protested

(Colin Forbes: Double Jeopardy, 1982)

Colin Forbes was a very popular writer of thrillers. This one is set in the region of Lake Constance.

Part 2: Answers

Task (1)

1. Cats, which are considered less expensive to keep than dogs, have become very popular pets.
2. Cats which have brown eyes are very rare.
3. I love cats.
4. I think cats are beautiful.
5. I think cats are beautiful. They are also very intelligent.
6. Now you have a choice: a dog or a cat or a hamster.
7. She decided to go to Canada, which proved to be an excellent choice.

Task (2)

(a)

Task (3)

But each of them lives his own life from then on. There is only one more meeting which they can all attend. It is a farewell ceremony for one of them who later moves to India, where he dies at the age of 25. His death is the cause of the second and last meeting of the remaining six people.

Task (4)

Text (1)

"I want to borrow your knife," she said to the man who'd taken the fish, and when he'd let her have it, she said to Pantalaimon: "What was her name?"

He understood, of course, and said, "Ratter."

(.....)

"What we going to do about them witches, Farder Coram?" she said. "I wonder if your witch was one of them."

(Philip Pullman: The Golden Compass, 1995)

Text (2)

"You disobeyed orders," he said harshly. "While you were in the photo booth I told you to get to hell back here. The next thing I see is you riding on that kids` train"

"A bloody good job for you I did!" she flared up, then her expression changed to one of consternation. "Oh, my God – are you saying that woman wasn`t trying to kill you – I distinctly saw a knife in her hand ..."

"It wasn` t a knife – it was one of those hypodermic weapons Delta favour. You saved my life," he went on in his normal blank monotone to help quieten her.

"How the devil did you follow me I never saw you...."

"I wouldn` t be much good if you had done," she snapped back and blew her nose. "Sorry if I fouled it up."

(.....)

"And thank God you did," Martel replied as he stood up. "You haven` t unpacked your case?"

"You told me not to - so only my toilet things are in the bathroom"

"Pack them. We` re catching the first train out of St. Gallen"

"Why? I` m exhausted" she protested.

(Colin Forbes: Double Jeopardy, 1982)

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