

# Reading for Punctuation and Inflection

It is important to notice and react appropriately to punctuation. Ignoring punctuation and italics will alter the meaning of a passage. Read the following rules to refresh yourself on how to correctly observe punctuation.

*Comma (,)* - Pause slightly when there is a comma.

*Period (.)* - Pause long enough to take a breath. Your voice should go down a bit at the end.

*Dash (-)* - Pause long enough to show the emotion the author is trying to create.

*Quotation Marks (" ")* - These indicate that a character is speaking. You should read as though you are the character and use appropriate emotion.

*Italicized print* - Emphasize the word or words that are italicized.

*Question Mark (?)* - Read it as though you're asking a question. Make your voice go up at the end.

*Exclamation Point (!)* - Read it with excitement, surprise, or anger as appropriate.

*Semicolon (;)* - It connects two related sentences together as one. Pause like a comma.

*Directions: Answer the following matching questions as their meanings change because of punctuation and italicized print.*

1. ____ I wasn't going to ask if <i>I</i> could come.	A. He wasn't going to ask, he was just going to go.
2. ____ I wasn't going to <i>ask</i> if I could come.	B. He wasn't planning on going, but now he might.
3. ____ I wasn't <i>going</i> to ask if I could come.	C. He was asking about the event, but wasn't going to go himself.

4. \_\_\_\_ “How come y’all ain’t scared of us like you were Dally?”

D. Someone is asking why people were more scared of Dally than them.

5. \_\_\_\_ “How come y’all ain’t scared of us like you were, Dally?”

E. Someone is asking Dally why he isn’t scared of them.

6. \_\_\_\_ And Johnny, who was the most law-abiding of us, now carried in his back pocket a six-inch switchblade.

F. Johnny was law-abiding in the past, but now carries a blade.

7. \_\_\_\_ And Johnny, who was the most law-abiding of us now, carried in his back pocket a six inch switchblade.

G. Johnny is law-abiding, but used to carry a blade.

8. \_\_\_\_ “*You’re* starved?”

H. The speaker thinks he is hungrier than the person he is speaking to.

9. \_\_\_\_ “You’re *starved?*”

I. The speaker is shocked at how little someone has been eating.

10. \_\_\_\_ “You’re starved!”

J. The speaker doesn’t believe the person is really starved.

11. \_\_\_\_ “I wondered why - Johnny was a nervous wreck, but he was never that jumpy.”

D. Although the speaker realized Johnny was a nervous wreck, he had never been as jumpy as he was at that moment.

12. \_\_\_\_ “I wondered why Johnny was a nervous wreck, but he was never that jumpy.

E. The speaker is wondering why Johnny was a nervous wreck but never was very jumpy.

13. \_\_\_ I'd seen her before she was a cheerleader. At our school I'd always thought she was stuck-up.

14. \_\_\_ I'd seen her before; she was a cheerleader at our school. I'd always thought she was stuck up.

F. Pony knew her because she was a cheerleader at the same school he went to. He thought she was stuck up.

G. Pony knew her since before she began cheer-leading. He thought she acted stuck-up when she was at school.

*Directions: Read the quotations and write the meanings showing you understand how each is affected.*

15. K Of all of us, *Dally* was the one I liked least.

16. L Of all of us, Dally was the one *I* liked least.

17. M Of all of *us*, Dally was the one I liked least.

K. \_\_\_\_\_

L. \_\_\_\_\_

M. \_\_\_\_\_