

Commas can have a number of roles in a sentence. One important job is to ensure the reader understands the meaning of the sentence. See the example below:

Examples:

He sprang to his feet quickly, realising that someone was at the door.
(He quickly sprang to his feet)

He sprang to his feet, quickly realising that someone was at the door.
(He quickly realised someone was at the door)

Task 1: Rewrite each sentence with a comma that changes the meaning

All the time machines are growing stronger.

You should eat Sarah.

Claire walked on her head a little higher than usual.

The girl said Sarah was crazy.

Task 2:

- a. Insert a comma in the sentence below to indicate that only Sarah and her dad went to the supermarket:

After leaving Grandad Sarah and her Dad went to the supermarket.

- b. Insert a comma in the sentence below to indicate that Sarah and her dad went to the supermarket with Grandad:

After leaving Grandad Sarah and her Dad went to the supermarket.

- c. Insert a comma below to indicate that the teacher is talking about the student:

The student said the teacher was brilliant.

Task 3: Explain, for each pair of sentences, how the commas change the meaning:

1. Apples, which are grown without chemicals, are great for cooking.

2. Apples which are grown without chemicals are great for cooking.

3. Rose bushes which are found in the south are brilliant for bees.

4. Rose bushes, which are found in the south, are brilliant for bees.



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He sprang to his feet quickly, realising that someone was at the door.
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He sprang to his feet, quickly realising that someone was at the door.
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Task 1: Rewrite each sentence with a comma that changes the meaning

All the time machines are growing stronger.

All the time, machines are growing stronger.

You should eat Sarah.

You should eat, Sarah.

Claire walked on her head a little higher than usual.

Claire walked on, her head a little higher than usual.

The girl said Sarah was crazy.

The girl, said Sarah, was crazy.

Task 2:

- a. Insert a comma in the sentence below to indicate that only Sarah and her dad went to the supermarket:

After leaving Grandad, Sarah and her Dad went to the supermarket.

- b. Insert a comma in the sentence below to indicate that Sarah and her dad went to the supermarket with Grandad:

After leaving, Grandad Sarah and her Dad went to the supermarket.

- c. Insert a comma below to indicate that the teacher is talking about the student:

The student, said the teacher, was brilliant.

Task 3: Explain, for each pair of sentences, how the commas change the meaning:

1. Apples, which are grown without chemicals, are great for cooking.

2. Apples which are grown without chemicals are great for cooking.

In sentence 1 all apples are great for cooking and grown without chemicals.

In sentence 2 only apples that are grown with chemicals are great for cooking.

3. Rose bushes which are found in the south are brilliant for bees.

4. Rose bushes, which are found in the south, are brilliant for bees.

In sentence 3 all rose bushes are brilliant for bees and found in the south.

In sentence 4 only rose bushes that are found in the south are brilliant for bees.

