

# Punctuation for Pauses and Breaks: Comma, Ellipsis, Dash

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / 10



## Quick Review

Focus on using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks. Strong test answers are precise, purposeful, and supported by the wording of the task.

## PRACTICE

Answer each question. Choose the best answer for multiple-choice items and write complete short responses.

- Which choice BEST demonstrates using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks?
  - The answer surprisingly was hidden, in the first paragraph.
  - The answer, surprisingly, was hidden in the first paragraph.
  - The answer surprisingly was hidden in, the first paragraph.
  - The answer surprisingly, was hidden in the first paragraph.
- Which revision best applies using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks? Original: The plan was simple we thought until the budget arrived.
  - The plan was simple - we thought - until the budget arrived.
  - The plan was simple we thought until the budget arrived.
  - The answer surprisingly was hidden, in the first paragraph.
  - The answer surprisingly was hidden in, the first paragraph.
- A student is working on this task: A writer wants to show an abrupt break in thought. Which choice would be MOST effective?
  - The answer surprisingly was hidden, in the first paragraph.
  - The answer surprisingly was hidden in, the first paragraph.
  - Use a dash to mark the interruption clearly.
  - The answer surprisingly, was hidden in the first paragraph.
- Which explanation best describes why the stronger choice works?
  - It is longer than the other choices, so it must be better.
  - It uses complicated words even if they do not fit.
  - It avoids evidence so the reader can decide alone.
  - It is specific, relevant to the task, and controlled by using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks.



- 5. Which next step would most strengthen the student's work?
  - A. Add an unrelated personal story.
  - B. Choose punctuation based on the strength and purpose of the pause.
  - C. Replace precise words with vague ones.
  - D. Remove the clearest evidence.
- 6. Which mistake should the student avoid?
  - A. Sprinkling commas wherever a reader might breathe.
  - B. Checking that each choice fits the audience.
  - C. Using evidence that directly supports the point.
  - D. Rereading the sentence after revising it.
- 7. Which answer is too vague to earn full credit?
  - A. It works because it applies using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks to the exact task.
  - B. It is stronger because the evidence is relevant and sufficient.
  - C. It is better because it sounds good.
  - D. It improves clarity without changing the meaning.
- 8. Which habit best supports accuracy on this type of question?
  - A. Choose the first familiar word.
  - B. Ignore the audience and purpose.
  - C. Pick the longest answer every time.
  - D. Read the whole sentence or task before choosing an answer.
- 9. Write one sentence that uses a dash to show an interruption.

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- 10. Explain how an ellipsis differs from a comma.

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## Answer Keys

- 1  A  B  C  D
- 2  A  B  C  D
- 3  A  B  C  D
- 4  A  B  C  D
- 5  A  B  C  D

- 6  A  B  C  D
- 7  A  B  C  D
- 8  A  B  C  D
- 9
- 10

### Explanations

1. B	The correct choice demonstrates using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks clearly and precisely.
2. A	The revision improves the original while preserving its intended meaning.
3. C	The correct choice fits the task and gives the writer or speaker a concrete move to make.
4. D	Length and difficult vocabulary do not make an answer strong; relevance and control do.
5. B	The best next step improves clarity, support, or control of the skill.
6. A	The correct answer names a common error that weakens this skill.
7. C	A test response must explain the reason, not merely praise the answer.
8. D	Careful reading prevents attractive but wrong choices.
9.	<b>Answer:</b> Strong answers should explicitly use using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks, stay specific, and explain the reason for the choice. Use exact wording from the text or task, then explain your reasoning.
10.	<b>Answer:</b> Strong answers should include a corrected example or explanation that preserves meaning while improving using punctuation to signal pauses and breaks. Use exact wording from the text or task, then explain your reasoning.



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