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UNDERSTANDING
PUNCTUATION, MECHANICS,
AND SPELLING

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9. California's capital is Sacramento, its largest city is Los Angeles and its oldest settlement is San Diego. _____
10. Watching television, playing video games, and riding a bicycle are some of the average ten-year-old boy's favorite pastimes. _____

■ WRITING FIRST: Flashback

Look back at your response to the Writing First activity on page 515. If you have included a series of three or more words or word groups in any of your sentences, copy it here. Did you use commas correctly to separate elements in the series? If not, correct your punctuation. If no sentence includes a series, write a new sentence that does on the lines below.

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B Commas with Introductory Phrases and Transitional Words and Phrases

Use a comma to set off an **introductory phrase** from the rest of the sentence.

In the event of a fire, proceed to the nearest exit.

Walking home, Nelida decided to change her major.

To keep fit, people should try to exercise regularly.

Also use commas to set off **transitional words or phrases** whether they appear at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a sentence.

In fact, Thoreau spent only one night in jail.

He was, of course, bailed out by a friend.

He did spend more than two years at Walden Pond, however.

FOCUS Using Commas in Direct Address

Always use commas to set off the name of someone whom you are **addressing** (speaking to) directly, whether the name appears at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a sentence.

(continued on following page)

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Using Commas

(continued from previous page)

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Molly, come here and look at this.

Come here, Molly, and look at this.

Come here and look at this, Molly.

◆ PRACTICE 31-2

Edit the following sentences for the use of commas with introductory phrases. If the sentence is correct, write C in the blank.

Examples

In recent years, illegal anabolic steroids have become popular among some athletes despite their dangerous side effects. _____

In the Olympics, these steroids are banned. C

(1) In doping scandals, athletes have also tested positive for human growth hormones. _____ (2) Among track and field athletes doping has been especially common. _____ (3) Disappointing thousands of fans, two Greek sprinting stars refused to participate in a drug test at the Athens Olympics. _____ (4) Because of their refusal to take the test they were not allowed to run. _____ (5) In a recent case of steroid abuse, professional wrestler Chris Benoit killed his family and himself. _____ (6) In professional baseball the home-run record of Barry Bonds has been questioned because of his suspected steroid use. _____ (7) As a result of athletes' fame many children and young adults see them as role models. _____ (8) Because of their steroid use, young people may think that they can use these drugs, too. _____ (9) In spite of the dangers of steroids young athletes may think only of becoming stronger and faster. _____ (10) Even with the short-term benefits, young people should avoid using steroids. _____

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Visit *Exercise Central* at bedfordstmarins.com/writingfirst for more practice.

■ Culture Clue

Doping is slang for taking drugs such as steroids in order to improve one's performance in sports.

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◆ PRACTICE 31-3

Edit the following sentences for the use of commas with transitional words and phrases. If the sentence is correct, write C in the blank.

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Example: Eventually, most people build a personal credit history.

(1) Often establishing credit can be difficult. _____ (2) College students for example often have no credit history of their own, especially if their parents pay their bills. _____ (3) Similarly some married women have no personal credit history. _____ (4) In fact their credit cards may be in their husbands' names. _____. (5) As a result, they may be unable to get their own loans. _____ (6) Of course one way to establish credit is to apply for a credit card at a local department store. _____ (7) Also, it is relatively easy to get a gas credit card. _____ (8) It is important to pay these credit card bills promptly however. _____ (9) In addition having checking and savings accounts can help to establish financial reliability. _____ (10) Finally, people who want to establish a credit history can sign an apartment lease and pay the rent regularly to show that they are good credit risks. _____

■ **WRITING FIRST: Flashback**

Look back at your response to the Writing First activity on page 515. Underline any introductory phrases and transitional words and phrases. Have you set off each of these with commas where appropriate? Revise any incorrect sentences on the lines below, adding commas where needed.

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C **Commas with Appositives**

Use commas to set off an **appositive**—a word or word group that identifies, renames, or describes a noun or a pronoun.

I have visited only one country, Canada, outside the United States. (*Canada* is an appositive that identifies the noun *country*.)