

Key: Recognizing Common Errors in Punctuation

The following exercise is intended to make you sensitive to the most common grammar errors made by engineers and scientists in their writing. Explanations of these errors can be found at the following site:

<http://writing.engr.psu.edu/exercises/>

Each of the word groups below had one of the following punctuation errors: missing punctuation, unwanted punctuation, or incorrect choice of punctuation. A correction is shown.

- 1) **Missing punctuation:** The new conductor, which will be available next week, is composed of barium, copper, and oxygen.
- 2) **Missing punctuation:** As the flame front propagates, hot combustion products expand, resulting in a rapid pressure increase.
- 3) **Unwanted punctuation:** The three largest divisions are production, marketing, and research and development.
- 4) **Missing punctuation:** The fluid serves as a transmission medium for hydrodynamic energy in the torque converter, hydrostatic energy in servos and logic circuits, and sliding friction energy in clutches.
- 5) **Incorrect choice of punctuation:** The synergistic reactor contains a chamber in which the exhaust from the burning coal mixes with limestone; see Appendix A.
- 6) **Unwanted punctuation:** Every year, an earthquake of magnitude between 8.0 and 8.9 on the Richter scale will be experienced somewhere in the world.
- 7) **Incorrect choice of punctuation:** We studied five types of marsupials; opossums, bandicoots, koalas, wombats, and kangaroos.

How do you punctuate a sentence that incorporates an equation? **See pages 142-145 in *The Craft of Scientific Writing*.**

In the United States, you place end quotation marks **outside** of commas and periods?

Which of the following should be placed in italics and which should be placed in quotation marks:

Title of Book

"Title of Book Chapter"

Title of Long Report or Long Thesis

"Title of Short Report or Short Thesis"

Title of Journal

"Title of Journal Article"

Title of Newspaper

"Title of Newspaper Article"

In general, long documents are in italics and short documents are in quotation marks.