

Teaching Notes

The goal of L.6.2.A is for students to learn how to use commas, parentheses, and dashes to set off nonrestrictive phrases and clauses or parenthetical elements. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classroom as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activities

1. Have small groups of students work together. Ask students to look at a print or online science or social studies textbook. Have them find examples of commas, parentheses, and dashes. Then, have students determine whether each type of punctuation is used to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements.
2. On the board, write five sentences with nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements. Omit commas, parentheses, and dashes. Then, call on volunteers to come to the board and punctuate each sentence correctly.
3. Have pairs of students share a piece of writing they have recently finished for class. Then, ask them to act as peer reviewers, looking for errors in their partners' use of commas, parentheses, and dashes to set off nonrestrictive or parenthetical elements.

Writing Prompt

Ask students to write a paragraph explaining how to use punctuation to set off nonessential information in a sentence. How do they use commas? How do they use parentheses? How do they use dashes?

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching L.6.2.A:

- **“Use Commas Around Nonrestrictive Parenthetical Elements”**: This resource provides more examples and information about the use of commas:
<http://writingcommons.org/index.php/open-text/collaboration/96-common-comments/punctuation-/commas/360-use-commas-around-nonrestrictive-parenthetical-elements>
- **“Dashes and Parentheses”**: This resource provides more examples and information about dashes and parentheses:
<http://writingcommons.org/index.php/open-text/writing-processes/edit/punctuation/92-dashes-and-parentheses>
- **“Review Dash Usage”**: This resource provides more examples and information about the use of dashes:
<http://writingcommons.org/index.php/open-text/collaboration/142-common-comments/punctuation-/532-review-dash-usage>