Terminology

gerund: a present participle acting like a noun (**Running** is good for you.  Hand me your **writing**.)

present participle: a verb ending in *ing*

participial phrase: a phrase beginning with a participle   The girl, ***running* through the door**, tripped and fell.

preposition: in, on, over, above, with, without, etc. – anything an airplane can do to a cloud, plus other things

prepositional phrase: a phrase beginning with a preposition   ***Without paying attention***, she ran into the door.

infinitive: a non-conjugated verb; a verb that includes the word *to*: **to go, to eat, to learn, to live**

independent clause: has a subject and a predicate (which can be just a verb) and can stand alone as a sentence

**I go out to eat.  I go.  Go!**

dependent clause: has a subject and a predicate (which can be just a verb) and sets up a condition

            Use a comma when the *dependent clause* precedes the independent clause

*When I go out to eat*, I like to bring friends.  The word *when* sets up the condition

Do not use a comma when the *dependent clause* follows the independent clause.

            I like to bring friends *when I go out to eat*.

absolute: a noun and a participle

**Hands trembling**, Jamie opened the letter and began to read the news.

            She needed to go again to see the **film’s ending** because she missed it.

adjectives out of order: adjectives are after the noun, which is not common

            The wild girl, **cunning, crazy**, lunged for his throat.

coordinating conjunction: **and, or, nor, for, so, but, yet** (the most common)

            I would like to go, **so** I will. She arrived, but I had left already. He came over, and she did, too.

conjunctive adverb: an adverb that unites two independent clauses: however, thus, inasmuch, similarly,

            hence, thus, surprisingly, nonetheless, therefore, etc.

            She was a nice person with the adults; **however**, she was not at all kind to the children.

tag: a question attached to what is otherwise a complete statement: Doing your homework is important, **right?**

appositive: a clarification of the preceding noun   My aunt, **Sheila**, is nice.  Sheila, **my aunt**, is nice.

compound subject: two subjects sharing a predicate.   **Joan** and **Bob** will enjoy this movie.

            The word ***or*** sets up two or more singular subjects.  Note the verb choice in the following example:

**John *or* Bob** is going to the mall today.

            If you have the word ***or*** between a singular and a plural subject, the verb agrees with the last subject.

**John *or* Bob’s sisters** are going to the mall today.

compound predicate: two predicates sharing a subject

            Joan **enjoyed the film** but **hated the ending**.   Note that there is no comma before *but*.  You do not use

a comma between two equal things.

imperative: a command, telling someone to do something – the subject is the implied you singular or plural

            Sit down.    Please be seated.

**Between two independent clauses**: use either a semicolon, a period, or a comma with a coordinating conjunction.  Mnemonic: Period Man, Semi Colon Man or Comma Boy

colon: What’s on the right of the colon is a clarification of what came before it.  It can be a list, a single word, a phrase or a complete sentence.  In an essay, you must have an independent clause on the left side of a colon. You may capitalize the first word of an a full sentence that follows a colon, but you don’t have to.

***QUOTATION MARKS:***

commas and periods – usually placed *inside* the quotation marks

            “The guardians refused to give up the fight,” but they hesitated to confront the abusers (327).

semicolons and colons –  usually placed *outside* the quotation marks

“The guardians refused to give up the fight”; they love their wards dearly (327).

exclamation point and question mark – placement is based upon context

            Did she say “I will”?     She asked, “Am I going?”

            I hate that she whispered “I’m not going”!     She shouted, “No, I won’t!”