

# Trinity College

HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Writing Center

[www.writingcenter.trincoll.edu](http://www.writingcenter.trincoll.edu)

Term	What is it?	Example
Comma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Commas are used to indicate a pause, to indicate a clause, or to separate items in a list of three or more items.</li><li>However, you don't always need a comma when there's a pause in your writing.</li></ul>	<p>"After dinner, we went to see a movie."</p> <p>"If you need help with your homework, let your teacher know."</p> <p>"That puppy is small, fluffy, and cute."</p>
Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Coordinators are words that connect clauses of equal importance.</li><li>Common coordinators: and, but, for, or, nor, yet, so.</li></ul>	<p>"It is Tuesday <b>and</b> it is raining."</p>
Subordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Subordinators are words that connect clauses of unequal importance or clauses that rely on each other.</li><li>Common coordinators are: because, although, when, since, after, before.</li></ul>	<p>"I want to go to the beach, <b>but</b> my car has a flat tire."</p>
Conjugation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A conjugation is when two words are joined together to make one word.</li></ul>	<p>don't, it's, I'm, they're, we're</p>
Quotation mark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quotation marks are used when taking a direct quote from a source.</li></ul>	<p>"Maybe ever'body in the whole damn world is scared of each other." – John Steinbeck, <i>Of Mice and Men</i></p>
Apostrophe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An apostrophe is used to indicate possession or contraction.</li></ul>	<p>"That is the teacher's apple."</p> <p>"Don't touch that."</p>
Colon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A colon is used to precede a list of items, a quote, or an explanation.</li></ul>	<p>"I bought four thin: eggs, bread, milk, and apples."</p>
Semicolon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Semicolons are used when a writer wants to show how close two ideas are, even though the ideas could exist as separate sentences.</li></ul>	<p>"The NESCAC tournament starts tomorrow; I need to go to bed early tonight."</p>

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Hyphen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ A hyphen is a symbol used to connect two words that create a new meaning when combined or that are linked in the grammar of a sentence.</li></ul>	“My long-term goal is to be a C.E.O. at a large company.”
Adjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Adjectives are words that modify nouns.</li></ul>	“The <b>warm, chewy</b> cookie.”
Adverb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Adverbs modify adjectives, verbs, or other adverbs.</li></ul>	“She ran <b>quickly</b> .” “The student typed <b>very furiously</b> .” (both “very” and “furiously” are adverbs)
Noun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Nouns are words that represent people, places, and things.</li></ul>	“The <b>cat</b> purrs.” “The <b>dog</b> chased the <b>stick</b> .”
Verb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ A verb is a word that represents an action.</li></ul>	“This book <b>is</b> dense.” “She <b>reads</b> often.”
Active Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Active voice is when the subject of a sentence acts upon the object.</li><li>○ Active voice is typically seen as a stronger grammatical form of writing than passive voice, especially in argumentative and personal essays.</li></ul>	“The dog chased the rabbit.”
Passive Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Passive voice is when the object of a subject is acted upon by the subject, which is often unknown.</li><li>○ Passive voice can be helpful in scientific writing, like when explaining methods of a study.</li></ul>	“The rabbit was chased.”
Run-on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Run-on sentences occur when two separate ideas are combined without showing that they’re separate ideas.</li><li>○ Run-on sentences can be corrected by separating the ideas with a period or semi-colon.</li></ul>	“It was raining outside I almost slipped on the steps.”

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Fragment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Fragments are collections of words that begin with a capital letter and end with a period but are not complete sentences.</li><li>○ A complete sentence must have three things: a subject, a predicate, and a complete thought. If one of these things is missing, you have a fragment.</li></ul>	<p>“Because he is allergic to peanuts.”</p> <p>“If you don’t want to go to work.”</p> <p>“After the movie.”</p>
Topic Sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Topic sentences occur at the beginning of each paragraph in a paper.</li><li>○ A successful topic sentence expresses the main idea of the paragraph in which it occurs.</li></ul>	<p>“Since he lived in the aftermath of the Revolution, Washington Irving’s retrospective view of the war shows that nothing has truly changed.”</p>
Thesis Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ A thesis statement typically occurs at the beginning of an essay.</li><li>○ A successful thesis statement clearly identifies the argument of the essay.</li></ul>	<p>“The ‘Declaration of Independence’ and ‘Rip Van Winkle’ were both calls to action for the American people, showing what the government and society should become, and how these goals were still not accomplished after the Revolution.”</p>

To create this handout, the following resources were consulted:

[www.writingcenter.unc.edu](http://www.writingcenter.unc.edu)

[www.englishgrammar.org](http://www.englishgrammar.org)

[www.grammarbook.com](http://www.grammarbook.com)

[www.owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](http://www.owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)

[www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)