**MASTERY SERIES: PUNCTUATION ANSWER KEY**

**Test drive your punctuation knowledge:**

“I can see by my watch, without taking my hand from the left grip of the cycle, that it is eight-thirty in the morning. The wind, even at sixty miles an hour, is warm and humid. When it’s this hot and muggy at eight-thirty, I’m wondering what it's going to be like in the afternoon.

In the wind [there] are pungent odors from the marshes by the road. We are in an area of the Central Plains, filled with thousands of duck hunting sloughs, heading northwest from Minneapolis toward the Dakotas. This highway is an old concrete two-laner that hasn't had much traffic since a four-laner went in parallel to it several years ago. When we pass a marsh, the air suddenly becomes cooler. Then, when we are past, it suddenly warms up again.”

- Robert M. Pirsig

1. **False** Every long sentence can be termed a run-on sentence.
2. **False** Writers should take mental guillotines to every long sentence.
3. **Correct** I love the rain; I also really appreciate the sunshine.

**Coordinating Conjunction (FANBOY) commas:**

1. Needing a break from writing, I walk to the store and buy coffee. **CORRECT**
2. I run to the store and they are totally sold out of coffee. **INCORRECT** – add FANBOY comma between store and and: I run to the store, and they are totally sold out of coffee,
3. I am forced, instead, to buy wine, and I also purchase a newspaper. **CORRECT**
4. Luckily, I enjoy wine and also enjoy reading. A friend of mine once said that much of writing is thinking. That’s great but I have a deadline. **INCORRECT** Third sentence needs a FANBOY comma between great and but: That’s great, but I have a deadline.

**Introductory (INTRO.) commas:**

1. Conversely I wondered if a break wasn’t actually good for writing. **INCORRECT** add intro. comma after conversely: Conversely, I…
2. Later in the day, I realized that I could plan breaks. **CORRECT**
3. I also realize that making coaching appointments could serve as deadlines. **CORRECT**
4. When I realize all of that and start making appointments I suddenly feel better about this whole writing thing. **INCORRECT** add intro. comma after appointments: start making appointments, I

**Oxford commas (remember, consistency; whether you choose to use them or no):**

1. After working with the writing coaches, it was suddenly much easier to write, to read and to spot typos on twitter. **INCORRECT** – add oxford comma after read
2. At the store, George bought scotch, oranges, and two steaks. **CORRECT**
3. The coaches welcome students to work with one of us, two of us, every single one of us or anything in between. Whatever works for you makes us happy. **INCORRECT** – add oxford comma after us
4. Sometimes, I have a harder time than you would think coming up with new comma exercise examples, whether on the FANBOY commas, the INTRO. commas, or the Oxford commas. Examples of the 10th comma rule always come easily, though. **CORRECT**
Non-essential element (NE) commas:
1. Jane, who has just started studying at NPS likes the coast. INCORRECT – add NE comma after NPS
2. The fact that a majority of UN countries including the United States and China agreed helped the peace process. INCORRECT – add NE comma after countries and after China
3. We all wondered, however, how long peace would last. CORRECT
4. Fortunately, in 2022 a group of children came together and decided they also wanted peace. Amazingly, with the help of their parents, they really helped change things. INCORRECT – add NE comma after 2022

Commas, mixed:
1. The soldier was happy to see his parents, his teacher, and his mentor. CORRECT if using Oxford comma
2. The soldier was happy to see his parents, his teacher and his mentor. INCORRECT if using Oxford comma
3. Toward the end of the conflict economic growth had become stagnant. INCORRECT – add intro. comma after conflict
4. Since its inception, the Department of Homeland Security has faced funding challenges. CORRECT
5. Food that is gray makes me nervous. CORRECT
6. Gray foods, which are completely unnatural, make me nervous. CORRECT
7. The officer pressed on knowing that it was futile. CORRECT
8. The officer pressed on, knowing that it was futile. CORRECT (I’d probably do it this way.)

Semi-colons:
1. Most people prefer Coke over Pepsi; even the PepsiCo offices have Coke machines hidden away. CORRECT
2. She handed him the summons; he was crushed. CORRECT
3. He was crushed; when she handed him the summons. INCORRECT – remove semi-colon
4. Chapter VI presents my conclusion; and areas for future research. INCORRECT – remove semi-colon
5. NPS has students from all over the world, including Istanbul, Turkey; Manama, Bahrain; and Toronto, Canada. CORRECT

Apostrophes:
1. He could not stop eating pancake’s. INCORRECT Save the puppy by using pancakes instead.
2. A puppy’s love is forever. So, too, is its incredible ability to shed. CORRECT
3. The CIA’s policy is to exclude all weapons from the building. CORRECT
4. Have you learned your ABCs? CORRECT
5. The girls’ from Queens flaunted their ’80s hairstyles. INCORRECT Save the puppy by using girls instead.
6. Jesus’ followers went on to live. INCORRECT Save the puppy by using Jesus’s instead.

Quotations and their cohorts:
1. Among other long-standing news sources, Huffington Post recently clarified that Hawaii is not, in fact, in Africa. (paraphrase) CORRECT
2. Do you think, my boyfriend asked, that you would like to go to Hawaii for your birthday? INCORRECT Needs quotation marks around all dialogue: “Do you think,” my boyfriend asked, “that you would like to go to Hawaii for your birthday?”