

## Commas in Argumentative Writing I (with scaffolding)

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In the following table blocks, you can see sentences containing one or more commas. The sentences, or so-called concordance lines, have been collected using British National Corpus. This means that these sentences stem from a range of different academic texts that present authentic language use.

### Tasks:

1. a) Examine the concordance lines and identify patterns of comma placement in academic writing. In each sentence, the comma in question is highlighted. You can find one pattern in the sentences in each block.  
  
b) Deduce comma rules from the sentences in each block. (Hint: Are there specific words or constructions that require a comma? Where exactly is the comma placed?)

### **Block A**

However , this leaves open the possibility that the Earth, Venus and Mars acquired most of their volatiles from volatile-rich bodies by post-accretional veneering.
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Moreover , this possibility is strengthened by the neglect of surface repositories, because regardless of how the various volatiles were acquired it is likely that a smaller fraction of the inert gases are retained in such reservoirs than are carbon and nitrogen.
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Furthermore , Rossi and Rosadini (1967), who also used the Amytal technique, reported that only one patient out of 74 right handers , all of whom received injections on both sides, did not have exclusively left hemisphere speech dominance.
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Pattern/rule:

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### **Block B**

It is not surprising , therefore , that the Law Commission has recommended no reform of the parol evidence rule, declaring that the " rule" is not as extensive as traditionally expounded (see Law of ContractThe Parol Evidence Rule, Law Commission No 154 (1986)).
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This defence of Marxism carries over , however , to a critique of Modernism itself: not merely for the fact that Nietzsche attaches 'importance' to art but for the further claim ascribed to him, and therefore to Modernism itself , that 'the nature of aesthetic experience contains in nuce the form of understanding proper to the world itself (p. 66).
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Pattern/rule:

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### **Block C**

Of course , these pathological tendencies are still with us today and are widely recognized in individual mental illness; but what is not generally appreciated is their extent in cultural forms, not all of which are limited to ancient societies.
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On the other hand, stretches of Creole embedded in a London English turn often correspond to the most salient parts of the utterance, those which the other parties to the conversation respond to.

In that case, the opportunity to earn remuneration arose when the appellant obtained the grant of a tenancy of a public house owned by and tied to a large brewery company.

Pattern/rule:

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### Block D

Remember that in the production of texts for non-examined purposes (e.g. committee reports, novels, paintings, films), rough versions, sketches and drafts are the norm.

Scientific discoveries and inventions, art and music, and so on can also be "nested" on the time-line.

Countless examples can be studied in living creatures, seaboard harbours, great castles and manor houses, pots, bottles, soccer goalposts and pinball machines.

Pattern/rule:

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### Block E

In the words of Sallis again, "If we know that the head's motive is to protect the school, and especially the more needy in it, from questions which are ill-informed, destructive or selfish, we have a clear objective, which is to make sure we don't deserve or unwittingly attract such accusation (1988:17).

So things such as ourselves, which perceive and have conscious awareness, do so because they are (or have) minds.

Richards holds that in poetry the function of "feeling" tends to dominate that of "sense", while Jakobson identifies a special "poetic" function, which can be found in many uses of language, but which dominates over other functions in poetry.

Pattern/rule:

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### Block F

This indicates an acceptance of the state structures, or a recognition of a need for the separation of Northern Ireland from the remaining state structure of Ireland, but at the same time a continuing opposition to protestant - loyalist dominance.

The original position seems to presuppose not just a neutral theory of the good, but a liberal, individualistic conception according to which the best that can be wished for someone is the unimpeded pursuit of his own path, provided it does not interfere with the rights of others.

This was evident not only in its mass organization, but also in the efforts to address working-class audiences and write them into the discourse of moral reform.

Pattern/rule:

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### Block G

This , the court said, was an irrelevant consideration which rendered his decision unlawful.

The gap between them , according to Althusser, is mediated by art.

Pattern/rule:

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### Block H

Now if the prediction that follows from this maze of premises turns out to be false (in our example, if the planet does not appear at the predicted location) , then all that the logic of the situation permits us to conclude is that at least one of the premises must be false.

If there are exclusively private events, in the sense that they are in principle, and not just empirically, inaccessible to more than one observer, it might be argued that such events could not be intelligibly claimed , let alone shown to be, subject to any laws, and this means that no rational explanatory model could be constructed for them.

Pattern/rule:

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