

Handout #3

Punctuation Definitions

Here is a list of basic rules for punctuation. The dictionary definition is in the middle column and the breathing rules on the right are taken for Edith Skinner's rules for speech.

Mark Name	Dictionary Definition	Edith Skinner's "Speak with Distinction"
. <u>Period</u>	The full pause with which the utterance of a sentence closes.	Indicates a full stop and full pause. (Full Breath)
: <u>colon</u>	(old meaning) from the greek word "limb." More than a semi-colon, it indicates an independent thought that connects to the next thought.	Indicate a full stop with intent to continue. (Full Breath or half breath)
: <u>semi-colon</u>	A full thought closely connected to the following thought.	A half stop with intent to continue. (Half or Slight Breath)
, <u>comma</u>	a punctuation mark used as a mark of separation within a sentence.	A change in direction for clarity. (no breath or very quick catch breath)
! <u>Exclamation point</u>	A mark used especially after an interjection or exclamation to indicate forceful utterance of protest or complaint.	Usually indicates a full stop and full pause. (Full Breath)
? <u>Question mark</u>	<u>Question mark</u> - A mark used in writing and printing at the conclusion of a sentence to indicate a direct question.	Usually indicates a full stop and full pause. (Full Breath)
() <u>Parentheses</u> Also brackets and dashes	<u>parentheses</u> - a set of marks indicating an amplifying or explanatory phrase inserted in a passage.	Usually set apart by vocal inflection and not indicating a stop. (no breath or catch breath)
' <u>elision</u>	<u>elision</u> - 1. the use of a speech form that lacks a final or initial sound which a variant speech form has. 2. the omission of an unstressed vowel or syllable to achieve a uniform metrical pattern.	
A <u>Capitalization</u>	<u>Capitalization</u> - Indicates the beginning of a sentence, a proper noun or other important word. May personify a quality as a person (Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's claws). At the beginning of each line of verse it has no special meaning.	Vocal inflection to indicate emphasis.
<u>Variant spelling</u> -	<u>Variant spelling</u> - often indicates emphasis or variant pronunciation.	

