

Learning together

On your Mark, Ready, Set, Punctuation!

ACTIVITY #7

SEQUENCE: SPELLING AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE
1ST CYCLE – PRIMARY

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Purpose of the activity

In the “What is a Sentence?” activity, we discussed three components to determine if a written statement is a sentence or not. In this activity, we will pay particular attention to punctuation marks in a sentence.



Relevance of the activity

At the start of primary school, children learn how to recognize the start and end of a written sentence. This is called the *graphic sentence*. A graphic sentence is recognizable thanks to punctuation marks such as capital letters, periods, exclamation marks and question marks. Punctuation marks serve as a guide for the reader: They are necessary to understand a text.



Supplies

- Your child's vocabulary words to build sentences
- Simple sentences from texts or books
- A chart (appendix) if needed



LET'S GO!

What?



Today, we will pay special attention to the punctuation marks in a sentence.

Why?



When we write, it is important to organize our ideas so that our message is clear. Punctuation plays an essential role: it helps separate ideas and organize information. Without it, our sentences can be difficult to understand.

With punctuation marks such as capital letters, periods, and commas, we can express ourselves more clearly and avoid confusion. That is why we are going to learn how to use these tools to structure our sentences effectively.

When?



Since we write in order to be read, we must therefore make sure that our message is clear. You need to pay special attention to punctuation marks every time you write: Whether it's for an assignment at school or to send a message to someone you know.

How?



In the following sentence:

my mom makes my bed every morning i eat lunch, i brush my teeth and i get dressed to go to school.

When I read this statement, I understand the general idea, but I am a little confused because there are several ideas that are presented at the same time. Let's try to unravel all this logically! We're going to ask ourselves some questions to make sure to use the right punctuation marks in the right places. I'm going to go back to the table I used in the "What Is a Sentence?" activity.

Who or what are we talking about?	What are we saying about it?	And this is happening (where, why, how)?
my mom ¹	makes my bed ³	every morning ⁷
i (me) ²	eat breakfast ⁴	
	brush my teeth ⁵	
	get dressed ⁶	to go to school ⁸

In this example, we are talking about my mom and me.^{1 and 2}

It also says that my mom makes my bed³ and that I eat breakfast⁴, brush my teeth⁵ and get dressed⁶.

I have four different ideas.^{1 and 2} I also have additional information for each of these ideas: I know when it happens⁷⁻⁸. This will help me determine where I will start each sentence and where it will end.

Here's what it looks like:

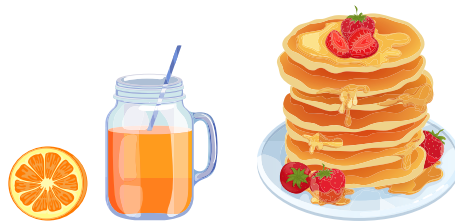
- **M**y mom makes my bed every morning.
- **I** have breakfast, I brush my teeth and I get dressed to go to school.

Now I understand better. My ideas are marked off and organized correctly.

As you can see, I used the comma after the expression *eat breakfast* to show the beginning of a list. This is another punctuation mark that you will learn to use to separate words or groups of words.

We also could have made four separate sentences:

- 1 **M**y mom makes my bed every morning.
- 2 **I** eat breakfast.
- 3 **I** brush my teeth.
- 4 **I** get dressed to go to school.



It's true that these sentences are shorter, but each of them makes sense, each of them is marked off with a capital letter and a period, and each one tells us who or what we're talking about and what we are saying about it. So, it works!

You can now practise this strategy with sentences adapted to your child's writing level.



Don't forget!

Punctuation is like pauses. A comma is a small pause, and a period is a big pause that ends your sentence.



Table that you can use at home

Who or what are we talking about?	What are we saying about it?	And this is happening (where, why, how)?