

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #72

FOCUS Parentheses / Dashes

Use **parentheses or dashes** before and after words or ideas to identify, explain, or define.

CONNECT TO WRITING

Words, phrases, or sentences within a set of parentheses or dashes provides information, but are not needed to understand the sentence. Avoid using too many parentheses or dashes in your writing. Parentheses must be used in pairs (); dashes may be used in pairs if the word or phrase is in the middle of the sentence or a dash may be used on its own if the word or phrase ends the sentence. A dash, also known as an em dash, is longer (—) than a hyphen (-).

Examples: Explanation The colors (green and blue) seemed perfect.
 Definition The protocol—rules to be followed—was to be strictly followed.

Ending punctuation is placed outside of words or phrases within parentheses, but inside when the parenthetical remark stands on its own as a complete sentence.

Examples: I want that that dark crayon (the navy one). It happened on the weekend. (I think it was Sunday.)

PRACTICE

Place parentheses in the appropriate places in the following sentences.

1. Jackie Smith 1845–1910 worked in the women’s rights movement. You should read some of her descriptive letters the ones to Charlene.
2. That new Bed and Breakfast it was once a barn is a popular rental with out-of-town visitors.
3. The Nile River the longest river in the world flows 4,000 miles through Egypt and the Sudan.
4. The common daisy *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* can make a beautiful spring bouquet.
5. Thomas Jefferson the author of the Declaration of Independence seemed confused: he spoke out against the evils of slavery, but he himself owned slaves.
6. As you turn right, you will notice a large yellow house the one with a white picket fence and its remarkable front porch.

WRITE

Write your own sentence with parentheses in the middle.

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet Answers

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #72 Practice Answers

1. Jackie Smith (1845–1910) worked in the women’s rights movement. You should read some of her descriptive letters (the ones to Charlene).
2. That new Bed and Breakfast (it was once a barn) is a popular rental with out-of-town visitors.
3. The Nile River (the longest river in the world) flows 4,000 miles through Egypt and the Sudan.
4. The common daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*) can make a beautiful spring bouquet.
5. Thomas Jefferson (the author of the Declaration of Independence) seemed confused: he spoke out against the evils of slavery, but he himself owned slaves.
6. As you turn right, you will notice a large yellow house (the one with a white picket fence) and its remarkable front porch.

Note: Dashes (em dashes) or commas may be used instead of parentheses.

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #73 Practice Answers

child’s, horse’s London’s, rose’s, Mom’s Nature’s, Life’s

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #74 Practice Answers

1. Will the Firemen’s Ball be held on the same weekend as last year?
2. The Smiths’ house is perfect for our graduation party.
3. Will the puppies’ food change over the next month?
4. I think that the women’s group meets every other Tuesday at the clubhouse.
5. The Children’s Crusade was led by Nicholas in response to a dream.
6. Let’s watch the girls’ basketball game before we go miniature golfing.
7. Have the boys asked to borrow their parents’ cars for the night?
8. The county restaurants’ plans to offer any left-over food to the homeless were ambitious.
9. There is no doubt that workers’ rights to health have not been fulfilled.
10. That Thompsons’ front yard needs some major clean-up, if you ask me.

Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics Worksheet #75 Practice Answers

1. I need the following items: toothpaste, a toothbrush, a comb, and soap.
2. The magician performed a trick: It was more of a miracle.
3. The philosopher Santayana commented upon the value of history: Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.
4. Please play these pieces: “Aria and Fugue,” “Suite in D Major,” and “The 3rd Symphony.”
5. Only one fact remains true: Things never happen as planned.
6. She knew the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
7. The principal’s rules were posted: Be Kind, Share with Others, Don’t Touch.