

Commas between Nouns

Abigail and Spuds hid in the garden.

Abigail, and Spuds, hid in the garden.

Abigail and Orange, and Spuds, hid in the garden.

Abigail, Orange and Spuds hid in the garden.

Presuming that the pointing is well placed, what meaning is suggested in the last three sentences? What sentence logic do the commas help to convey?

Commas and word-groups

Where does the confusion arise in these sentences?

Janey and Dylan, Maggie, Pat and Bridget, Cam and Leah are sibling groups in my family.

There are several sibling groups in my extended family: Janey and Dylan, Maggie, Pat and Bridget, Cam and Leah.

Here is Partridge's fix.

Janey and Dylan, like Maggie, Pat and Bridget, and also like Cam and Leah, are sibling groups within my family.

What do you think of the following pointings?

Janey and Dylan; Maggie, Pat and Bridget; Cam and Leah are sibling groups in my family.

There are several sibling groups in my extended family: Janey and Dylan; Maggie, Pat and Bridget; Cam and Leah.

The Comma between Adjectives

The big, fat, sassy cat struck a chord with the child.

Big and fat, the sassy cat struck a chord with the child.

Big, fat, and sassy, the cat struck a chord with the child.

Compare for meaning and feeling, effect or attitude.

The fat old cat wanted rest.

The old fat cat wanted rest.

The fat, old cat wanted rest.

The old, fat cat wanted rest.

Commas between Verbs & Verbals

Standing still, she was hapless, but skipping, she was free.

Standing still, she was hapless, but skipping, free.

Standing still, she was hapless and, skipping, she was free.

Describe the purpose of the second comma in the third sentence. Partridge likes the pointings above, but not below. Why?

Standing still, she was hapless and skipping, she was free.

Standing still, she was hapless, and skipping, free.