

Commas between Adverbs

Graciously, yet not unconditionally, the cat thanked the dog.

The cat thanked the dog graciously yet not unconditionally.

The cat thanked the dog graciously, yet not unconditionally.

Graciously and with a purr, the cat thanked the dog.

Graciously, and with a purr, the cat thanked the dog.

Presuming that the points are well placed, what different emphases are suggested in these sentences?

Commas between Word-Groups

A flock of sheep, a herd of cattle, a gaggle of geese, a flight of birds, a fortuitous heap of stones, would, by many Australians, especially in country districts, be called a *mob*.

*Note the comma after **stones**. Why is it there? How about the sentences below?*

A flock of sheep, a herd of cattle, a gaggle of geese, a flight of birds, a fortuitous heap of stones would, by many Australians, especially in country districts, be called a *mob*.

A flock of sheep, a herd of cattle, a gaggle of geese, a flight of birds, a fortuitous heap of stones would by many Australians, especially in country districts, be called a *mob*.

Commas between Single Words and Phrases; between Word-Groups and Phrases; and between Phrases and Phrases

Here are two of Partridge's sentences and one of mine. Consider the sentence-parts cut out by the commas.

By fits and starts, sometimes unexpectedly and sometimes expectedly, yet never for any apparently good reason, he would get up, sit down, then fidget like a cat on hot bricks or stare like a madman.

In these circumstances he felt that he must, now or never, act daringly, without excessive punctuation and with the utmost decisiveness.

In mourning for the pool, but enthralled by the half-built gallery, the scholar, accepting reality, headed for the lake.

from *Paradise Lost*

He called so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. "Princes, potentates,
Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once yours,
now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n?"

Book I, 314-21