

Alums

Punctuation: History & Craft

Name _____

1ST EXAMINATION -- SPRING 2012

Please read this test carefully and answer the questions to the best of your ability. It is always wise to glance through a test before beginning to answer questions.

The Widow

I. Sentence Parts

Find the simple subject and underline it once; just identify the main word that acts as subject, but it's okay to underline the subject plus associated modifiers. Find the main verb and underline it twice (not the entire predicate, but the verb); remember that main verbs may have helping verbs that should be underlined as well. 2 pt. each.

1) The ^{Adj} bereaved ^S widow ^{AV} stood ^{Adv} contemplatively ^{prepositional phrase} (by the open door.)

2) ^S (Over the past several weeks) she ^{Verb} had quietly watched ^{DO} the dwindling supply (of food) (in her larder.)

3) ^S Two children (of indeterminate age) ^V ran (past their mother) (into the street.)

Identify the underlined word or words as subject, verb, direct object, modifier (adjective or adverb), phrase, or clause. 2 pt. each.

4) ^S The woman ^{A dependent clause} [whose husband was now gone] ^V would need ^{DO} work soon, or a handout.
Subject

Direct object

5) ^S Alms ^{prep phrase} from her neighbors or churchwardens ^{verb} had never been appealing.
prepositional phrase

Verb or verb phrase

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Independent clause^{1ST EXAMINATION -- SPRING 2012}

A 2nd independent clause

6) The dead husband had bound books for a living (and the widow thought upon the possibility) of such work.)

Action VerbSubject

7) She had helped (about the shop) and knew the trade well enough.

Prepositional phrase

8) Perhaps she would ask the reverend (for a bit) of work that he might need one along those lines.

Direct ObjectClause

9) The Reverend Muhlenberg often hired poor tradesmen and tradeswomen (as a form) (of charity.)

AdverbDirect objects

10) Aware (of the pride) (of his churchgoers) the Reverend would not give handouts (without good cause.)

Subjectprepositional phrase

II. Simple Punctuation

Punctuate the following sentence appropriately. 2 pt. each.

Both or neither; I would use both

11) The widow, with winter on the way, walked across town to the Lutheran church.

12. Hearing a murmuring as soon as she opened the church door the widow, despite misgivings, walked toward the minister.

Both or neither

13) He was praying with another congregant by a small fireplace, near the back of the church. optional, if you use it would be rhetorical

14) He looked at her the widow of the dead bookbinder.

DASH works, so would a colon, and arguably even a comma.

15) Did sadness about her eyes rouse pity in the aged cleric? It's a question.

Correct the punctuation in the following sentences. If you delete punctuation, strike out the punctuation and write "del" above it. 2 pt. each.

16) As he closed his psalm book and ~~del~~ looked up at ~~del~~ her, Muhlenberg knew ~~del~~ that she would ask for work.

17) The Widow Ottin cleared her throat and gave the Reverend a curtsy. OK

← A comma here is optional

18) "Reverend Sir I offer you my services^{del} as a bookbinder."

19) Before Muhlenberg had buried her husband, a drunk[^] he had made a promise to assist the family.

20) Accordingly, he smiled with peaceful benevolence and placed a small order with the woman^{del} for stitching of pamphlets^{del} and the rebinding of some small books.

Briefly, explain why punctuation in the following sentences is incorrect. There may be one error, or more, or none. 2 pt. each.

21) The widow was happier when, she left the church.

Comma should be deleted - "when" is a subordinate conjunction and should not be separated from the rest of the clause "she left the church."

22) The air smelled clean as she walked toward home and thought about the future.

This is okay - You might place a rhetorical comma after "home."

23) Once at home, the widow cleaned her husband's work bench, and assembled binding tools and supplies.

Delete both commas as unnecessary. The 1st "might" remain to function rhetorically, but that would be heavy punctuation.

24) She held a piece of sheepskin in her hand, it felt soft and supple.

These are two independent clauses. A semicolon is called for, not a comma. Alternatively, it could be made into two sentences.

25) She called for her daughter a tall gawky girl and gave instructions for dinner.

"A tall gawky girl" ought to be separated with paired commas.

III. Ways to think about Punctuation

In the space provided (on this page and the next), discuss the difference between grammatical and rhetorical punctuation. 20 pt.

BE Ready for a similar question.

Explain the way punctuation means in the following sentences. Also suggest whether the punctuation is primarily "grammatical" or "rhetorical." 2 pt. each.

26) Susannah ^(a lovely young woman) smiled at her mother, and walked into the back of the house.

The 1st paired commas seem grammatical enough - they are parenthetical I believe. But the comma after "mother" is not necessary and wholly dramatic. On balance I would call this Rhetorical.

27) Other children now arrived home; the two young ones were joined by two older siblings.

The semicolon joins two independent clauses with no further meaning added. GRAMMATICAL

28) Each gave their mother a surprising, quizzical look as they saw a small book - a hymnal - in her hands.

As we said in class, it is the heavy use of dashes that reveal this as Rhetorical. ~~uses~~ Commas might also have been used and been grammatical. Parentheses might also have been used.

29) All of them, every single one, had seen their mother in their father's shop; but none of them knew that she could bind books.

The style of the sentence is dramatic, but that doesn't necessarily mean rhetorical. The heavy use of a semicolon, when a comma would normally be used, does point toward rhetorical.

30) The widow removed damaged portions of the hymnal: scraps of its former binding; all of the former sewing, which would not be needed; and even a few loose pages at the back.

This is careful, correct punctuation. I would call it grammatical.

Correct the punctuation in the following sentences. If you delete punctuation, strike out the punctuation and write "del" above it. 2 pt. each.

31) She shaped the sheepskin carefully and called her daughter Susannah for glue. *Okay as is*

32) Susannah, who was the oldest child, often helped her mother with household chores.

33) Tall and gawky as she might be, she was almost a second mother to the other children, and they loved her profoundly.

Diagram: "Tall and gawky as she might be" is bracketed as a clause. "she was almost a second mother to the other children" is bracketed as a clause. "and they loved her profoundly" is bracketed as a clause.

34) She helped them with their studies: and their chores, she talked about them incessantly to whoever would listen.

Diagram: "She helped them with their studies: and their chores" is bracketed as a clause. "she talked about them incessantly to whoever would listen" is bracketed as a clause.

Punctuate the following sentences in two different but acceptable ways. 2 pt. each.

35 a) In a year or two she would likely marry and move from the house .

35 b) In a year or two she would likely marry and move from the house .

36. a) For now she helped her mother her siblings and close-by neighbors .

36. b) For now she helped her mother her siblings and close-by neighbors .

✓ your choice to use a comma or NOT

Punctuate the following sentence in three different but acceptable ways. 2 pt.

37. a) Sitting at her bench the widow smiled for the first time in weeks when her eldest daughter stooped to pick a feather from the floor .

37. b) Sitting at her bench the widow smiled for the first time in weeks when her eldest daughter stooped to pick a feather from the floor .

37. c) Sitting at her bench the widow smiled for the first time in weeks when her eldest daughter stooped to pick a feather from the floor .

Why are the following sentences poorly punctuated? How would you punctuate or rewrite them? 2 pt. each.

38. Luckily, the integrity and fortitude ^{that enabled her to move forward} also helped her to enjoy the lighter side of life.

The ~~clause~~ clause sandwiched by commas is necessary to the overall meaning of the sentence it should be punctuated restrictively — that is without commas.

39. She finished her work ^(there wasn't much to do) and then moved to the dining area.

If the comma is retained, it needs to follow the parentheses. But I don't think it is needed. delete.

40. The children with bright clean faces smiling at a tune their sister was singing looked up as their mother entered the room!

This doesn't make sense without further punctuation. I used dashes. You might have used commas or even parentheses.