Elementary Education
Language Arts
Grades 4-5

Overview

Students will learn how to properly use commas with the help of http://www.howcast.com/videos/346270-How-To-Use-a-Comma

Student Objectives

• Explore the use of commas and periods.
• Compose a friendly letter.
• Apply rules of punctuation for commas and periods.
• Revise a composition.

Materials

• Paper
• Pencils
• United States atlases

Procedures

1. Encourage students to pretend that all the commas and periods in the class are missing. However, each student knows where some of the periods and commas are and will share clues to help others recover the lost punctuation marks.

2. To find all of the class's commas and periods, each student will write a friendly letter to a partner. The letter will contain at least three clues to the mark's location. But since all the commas and periods are now gone, the students' letters cannot contain any of these punctuation marks.

3. Begin the activity by having students select a state using a United States atlas. Their chosen state is where their commas and periods are located. Students need to note at least three features of the state to use as clues. Ask students to keep their state a secret. Their partners will have to determine the location based on the clues in their letters.

4. Next, assign partners. Have students write a friendly letter to their partner. These informal letters must contain the following:
   • Salutation or greeting
   • Three clues about the state; clues can include its climate, relative location, important geographic features such as mountains, rivers, and lakes, major cities, and famous buildings or bridges
   • One list of three or more items
• One command
• Closing
5. Remind students again that the letters cannot include any commas or periods.
6. Then have partners exchange letters. Ask student volunteers to read their letters aloud. Remind students to read without pausing or stopping.
7. Have students apply their knowledge of the use of commas and periods by revising their partners' letters. Ask students to add the missing commas and periods.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on how well they understand comma and period placement through the revision of another students letter and also through the participation of all the activities prior.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)
McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp.
This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

• Language Arts: Viewing - Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media
• Language Arts: Writing - Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions
• Language Arts: Reading - Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
The National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association have developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching the English language arts. To view the standards online, go to http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/110846.htm.
This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

• Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
• Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).