

Varied Fluency

Step 2: Recognising Commas to Avoid Ambiguity

National Curriculum Objectives:

English Year 5: (5G5.6a) [Using commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity in writing](#)

Differentiation:

Developing Questions to support recognising commas to avoid ambiguity within single clause sentences with commas used for the same purpose within a sentence (e.g. commas in a list).

Expected Questions to support recognising commas to avoid ambiguity within single and multi-clause sentences with more than one comma.

Greater Depth Questions to support recognising commas to avoid ambiguity within multi-clause sentences which include additional parenthesis.

[More resources](#) from our Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling scheme of work.

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Recognising Commas to Avoid Ambiguity

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1a. Tick the things that Katie likes, according to this sentence.

Katie likes knitting children, and her dog.

knitting

knitting children

children

her dog



VF

1b. Tick Hugo's favourite drinks, according to this sentence.

Hugo's favourite drinks are orange, squash and cola.

squash

orange

orange squash

cola



VF

2a. True or false? According to this sentence, Dad has been told to draw.

We've been told to draw Dad.



VF

2b. True or false? According to this sentence, mum needs to leave.

Hurry up and leave, mum.



VF

3a. Add a comma to show that Suzie was covered with glitter.

Suzie looked at the painting covered with glitter.



VF

3b. Add a comma to show Pete was dripping with water.

Pete walked past a tree dripping with water.



VF

4a. Which comma could be removed to change the meaning of the sentence?

My favourite flavours are milk,
chocolate, toffee and strawberry.

A
↓
↑
B



VF

4b. Which comma could be removed to change the meaning of the sentence?

Mary doesn't really like tomatoes,
orange, sprinkles or bread.

A
↓
↑
B



VF

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5a. Tick the things that Michelle likes, according to this sentence.

A world-renowned author, Michelle, likes cooking, giraffes, reading and mountain climbing.

Cooking

Giraffes

Cooking giraffes



VF

5b. Tick Lucy's favourite foods, according to this sentence.

Having a sweet tooth, Lucy's favourite foods are chocolate sandwiches and French toast.

Chocolate sandwiches

Chocolate

Sandwiches



VF

6a. True or false? According to this sentence, my brother is called Harry.

In answer to your question, I love my brother, Harry Potter and playing scrabble in the afternoons.



VF

6b. True or false? According to this sentence, Chris needs to hurry up.

If you want to have to some pudding, you'll have to hurry up and eat, Chris.



VF

7a. Add a comma to change the meaning of this sentence.

Last week, the dog buried a doll wearing a red ribbon.



VF

7b. Add a comma to change the meaning of this sentence.

Yesterday, Julie rode a bicycle covered in paint for charity.



VF

8a. Which comma could be removed to change the meaning of the sentence?

A ↓
Today, once we all settle down, we
will learn to cut and paste, kids.
↑ C



VF

8b. Which comma could be removed to change the meaning of the sentence?

A ↓
Later, you need to buy caramel,
ice-cream and sprinkles, Ewan.
↑ C



VF

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9a. Tick the things that Susan likes, according to this sentence.

Alongside writing her thrilling debut novel – A Moment in Time – Susan likes cooking snails, and her cat, Sadie, who is usually found sleeping peacefully under Katie’s writing desk.

Cooking snails

Cooking

Her cat



VF

9b. Tick the things that Kyle loves, according to this sentence.

Kyle (an art fanatic) loves painting, portraits and photography, particularly action shots of his favourite musicians, The Tall Steves.

Painting portraits

Painting

Portraits



VF

10a. True or false? According to the sentence below, I don’t like silver bowls.

Unlike Sierra (my best friend), I really dislike ornate figurines, silver plates and bowls, especially in the living room.



VF

10b. True or false? According to the sentence below, Roo was waving a flag.

On her way home from school, Roo (my sister) walked past a woman waving a huge multicoloured flag above her head.



VF

11a. Add a comma to change the meaning of this sentence.

Unlike his dad, Frank (an amateur mechanic) loves fixing cars and bikes.



VF

11b. Add a comma to change the meaning of this sentence.

On his way home from work, Jason drove past a little old lady wearing an orange hat (with a blue peak).



VF

12a. Which comma could be removed to change the meaning of the sentence?

A
↓

“Please buy coffee, ice-cream

B C
↓ ↓

and doughnuts, Katie,” said mum (a

D
↓

small woman), smoothing her dress.



VF

12b. Which comma could be removed to change the meaning of the sentence?

A B C
↓ ↓ ↓

“We don’t hit, Luke,” snapped the tall,

thin scout leader (for the tenth time that

D
↓

night), attempting to end the game.



VF

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Ambiguity

Developing

- 1a. **knitting children; her dog**
- 2a. **False; they've been told to draw Dad.**
- 3a. **Between painting and covered**
- 4a. **A**

Expected

- 5a. **Cooking; giraffes**
- 6a. **False; Harry Potter is one of the things he loves.**
- 7a. **Between doll and wearing**
- 8a. **C**

Greater Depth

- 9a. **Cooking snails; her cat**
- 10a. **True**
- 11a. **Between cars and and**
- 12a. **A**

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Developing

- 1b. **squash; orange; cola**
- 2b. **True**
- 3b. **Between tree and dripping**
- 4b. **B**

Expected

- 5b. **Chocolate sandwiches**
- 6b. **True**
- 7b. **Between bicycle and covered**
- 8b. **B**

Greater Depth

- 9b. **Painting; portraits**
- 10b. **False; the woman was waving the flag.**
- 11b. **Between lady and wearing**
- 12b. **A**