DISRUPTIVE COMMAS

The comma is a useful guide for readers. It tells readers when to pause and clarifies the meaning of a sentence. For example, the sentence "Later, survival past infancy became the norm." is ambiguous without the comma. However, commas in the wrong place are disruptive because they break the flow of ideas.

Do not use a comma between a subject and its verb.

incorrect comma placement

All the habitable parts of the earth , **were believed** to be parts of a single land mass, *Orbis Terrarum*.

incorrect comma placement

Profound **differences** in early training, crucially **affect** the entire societies involved.

Do not use a comma between a verb and its object(s)

incorrect comma placement

The second crucial point **was** the United States' **insistence** on inspections to ensure compliance of the disarmament pact.

incorrect comma placement

The Affirmative Action policy **required submission** of hiring procedures that were non-discriminatory, advertisement of positions under specified guidelines, non-sexist interview questions, and completion by job applicants of an Affirmative Action form.

Do not use a comma between two words, phrases, or dependent (subordinate) clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (*and, or, but, for, nor, so, yet*).

verbs

incorrect comma placement

Society must **reassign** the "pseudo-biological" role of child rearing, and **establish** it as an acceptable role for men.

incorrect comma placement

In art, the thing that we cannot **measure,** or **use** for comparison is what we call "style."

nouns

incorrect comma placement

As a result of a fluctuating economy, more and more **women**, as well as **men** are entering the work force and attaining high-paying, prestigious careers.

prepositional phrases

Therefore, it seems important to assess objectively the prospects for modifying the pattern **of genes, of a human being, by various means.**

incorrect comma placement

clauses

incorrect comma placement

To understand **what Columbus's problem was**, and **why he sought refuge in his Terrestrial Paradise**, we must remind ourselves of the Ptolemaic-Christian view of the lands of the earth.