

USING COMMAS—AN EXERCISE ANSWER KEY

In the following composition, insert commas where they are needed, and delete commas where they are inappropriate. Some of the commas are properly placed. *Unnecessary commas have been removed, and added commas are in red.*

Getting a summer job takes a good bit of planning that must not be overlooked. First, you must consider for what kinds of jobs you are qualified. For example, if you cannot type, you can rule out not only a secretarial position but also a receptionist position, which almost always involves some typing. Or if you are under twenty-one, you cannot expect to land a job that requires you to handle alcoholic drinks. In other words, you must realistically assess your possibilities.

After this assessment, you should consider whether there are any jobs you are simply unwilling to undertake. For example, if you are not willing to work late at night, on weekends, and on the Fourth of July, you should not apply at fast-food restaurants. No, a better job for you would be with a local government, which would ensure you regular hours and vacations on holidays.

When you have your abilities and preferences in mind, the next step is to get yourself ready to accept responsibility, come to terms with the fact that you cannot miss work because of late-night partying, and you cannot expect other employees to do the work that you have been hired to do. You must act, in other words, like a mature, responsible adult.

Once you are ready, psychologically ready, to work you can begin your search. First, you should check all want ads, bulletin boards, and radio programs that list jobs. Also, you should register with the local state employment agency, for this service will not charge a fee for a job search. In addition, if you can afford the cost, you should apply with private employment agencies, which usually charge a percentage of the first month's salary.

The next step is to contact people in your community who might act as references and recommend you to prospective employers. Everyone has heard that old expression, "It isn't what you know that counts; it's whom you know." It does matter, of course, what you know, but it also matters whom you know. A phone call or letter from someone a prospective employer knows can help you land the job you want.

With luck and effort, you can obtain some job interviews. When you do, be sure to take plenty of time to prepare for each interview: anticipate possible questions, practice answering them, learn all you can about the job and the company or agency, and arrive neatly groomed, in an attractive no-nonsense outfit.

Finally, take Winston Churchill's advice and, "never, never, never, never give up." You may search for several weeks before getting a job, or you may not find one at all. The experience you gain and the contacts you make, however, will teach you a great deal, and you will probably have better luck the next summer.