

# Comma Exercises<sup>28</sup>

DePauw University Writing Center

1. Use commas to set off nonessential modifiers. A word, phrase or clause that interrupts the normal flow of the sentence without changing the meaning is nonessential or nonrestrictive. You need a comma both before and after the interrupter.

- A. Clarence, our cat, surprised us with three kittens.
- B. My father, who leads a sheltered life, took a dim view of my being arrested.
- C. My mother, however, saw the injustice involved.

Blank writing lines for exercise 1, with alternating blacked-out sections.

2. Do not use commas around essential (or restrictive) modifiers.

- A. All the students who can't swim must wear life jackets on the canoe outing.  
(restrictive)

Blank writing lines for exercise 2, with alternating blacked-out sections.

