

Using Brackets to Indicate Parenthesis

Introduction

Which of the following sentences use punctuation to show parenthesis?

- 1. On Wednesday afternoon, we are having a special picnic on the field.**
- 2. Our house, next to the post office, has a blue door.**
- 3. There are lots of games – including your favourite – in the cupboard.**
- 4. Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and Neptune are all planets in our solar system.**
- 5. My auntie, who was born in Japan, has spent many years working in foreign countries.**

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Varied Fluency 1

Insert brackets into these sentences to demarcate parenthesis.

The suspicious box marked with a warning symbol was impossible to open.

X and his heart beating like a drum took one cautious step onto the frozen waves.

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The suspicious box (marked with a warning symbol) was impossible to open.

Xand his heart beating like a drum took one cautious step onto the frozen waves.

Xand (his heart beating like a drum) took one cautious step onto the frozen waves.

Varied Fluency 3

Tick the parenthesis that could fit where the arrow is pointing.

The bones are probably forty thousand years old.



(found on the beach)	
(which are forty thousand years old)	
(ancient)	

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(found on the beach)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(which are forty thousand years old)	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ancient)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Varied Fluency 4

Add parenthesis to the sentences below and demarcate using brackets.

The environment in the Arctic Circle is harsh.

There was no guarantee that they would survive the night.

Varied Fluency 4

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The environment in the Arctic Circle is harsh.

The environment in the Arctic Circle (the name given to the region around the north pole) is harsh.

There was no guarantee that they would survive the night.

There was no guarantee that they would survive the night (the temperature had already dropped below zero).

Reasoning 1

Have the brackets been used accurately to demarcate parenthesis? Explain how you know.

The stomach which sits below the lungs (digests food using enzymes and gastric acid).

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The stomach which sits below the lungs (digests food using enzymes and gastric acid).

The brackets are incorrect because the main clause outside the brackets does not make sense on its own. They should surround 'which sits below the lungs'.

Reasoning 2

Look at the sentences below. What is the same? What is different?

The equipment (Bunsen burner, tripod and heatproof mat) for the experiment needs to be assembled following the instructions.

The equipment for the experiment (investigating friction) needs to be assembled following the instructions.

Reasoning 2

Look at the sentences below. What is the same? What is different?

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Possible answer:

The main clause and the use of brackets are the same, but...

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The equipment (Bunsen burner, tripod and heatproof mat) for the experiment needs to be assembled following the instructions.

The equipment for the experiment (investigating friction) needs to be assembled following the instructions.

Possible answer:

The main clause and the use of brackets are the same, but the parenthesis gives different additional information (about the equipment and about the experiment).

Application 1

Rewrite the sentence below to change the position of the parenthesis. If necessary, change any words so the sentence makes grammatical sense.

The restaurant had a variety of dishes on the menu (including Italian, French and English food) to suit everyone's tastes.

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The restaurant (erving Italian, French and English food) had a variety of dishes on the menu to suit everyone's tastes.