PUNCTUATION PRIMER

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PUNCTUATION SAVES LIVES!

Let's eat grandma!

vs.

Let's eat, grandma!

Rachel Ray finds inspiration in cooking her family and her dog.

vs.

Rachel Ray finds inspiration in cooking, her family, and her dog.

WHY IS PUNCTUATION IMPORTANT?

- **Missing or extra punctuation can be confusing**

- **Incorrect punctuation can create embarrassing gaffes**

- **Correct punctuation ensures your meaning is clear**

TYPES OF PUNCTUATION

- **Periods**
- **Exclamation marks**
- **Question Marks**

- **Commas**

- **Semicolons**
- **Colons**

- **Parentheses**
- **Brackets**

- **Quotation Marks**
- **Italics**

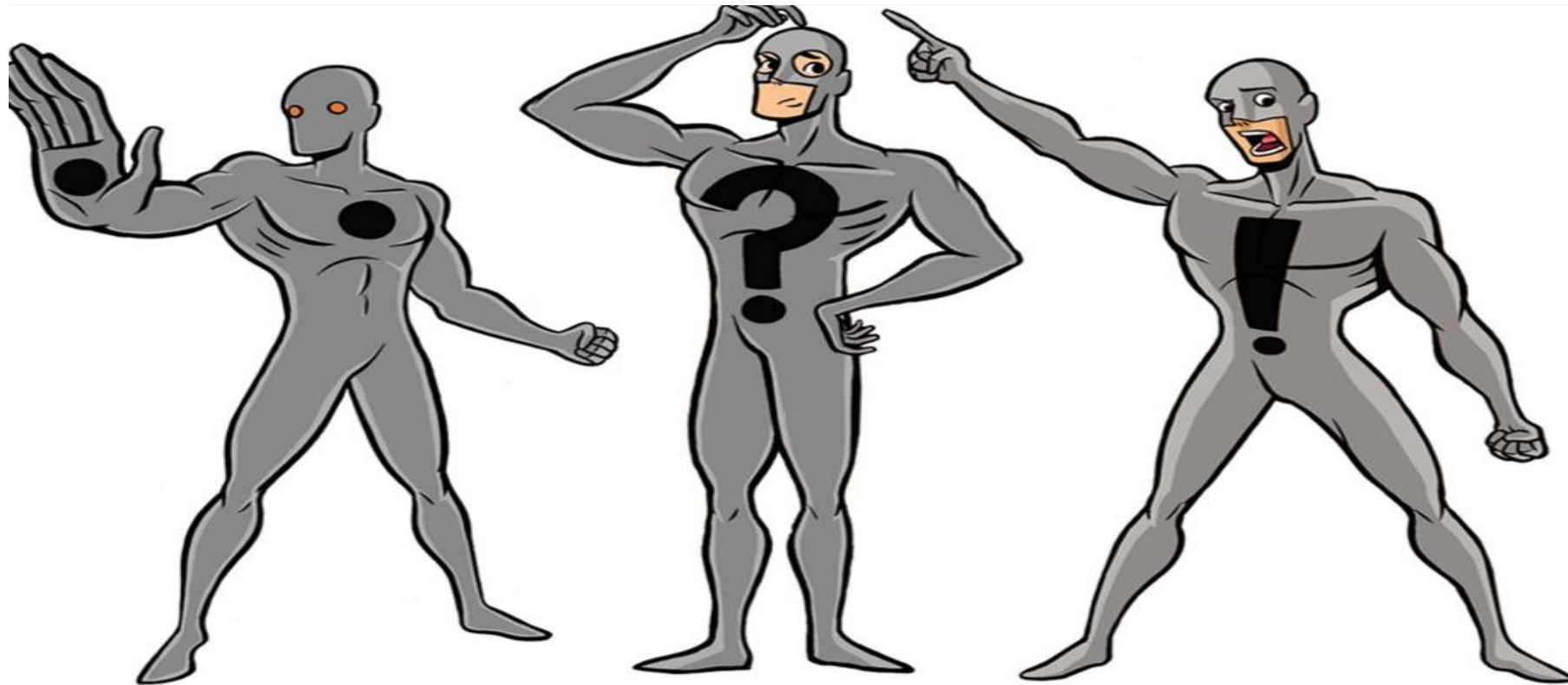# PUNCTUATION: SENTENCE ENDING . ?!

ENDING A SENTENCE

PERIOD   QUESTION MARK   EXCLAMATION MARK

THE SENTENCE ENDING TEAM!

PERIOD

- **The most common way to end a sentence**
- **Generally, the most appropriate for academic writing**
- **Also used in abbreviations (ex. Dr., Mr., et al., etc.)**

never starts
a conversation
but always finishes it

cjkeplinger.com

QUESTION MARK

- **Ends a sentence asking a question**

- **Can be used to state a research question**

- **Can also engage readers rhetorically**

CAUTION: rhetorical questions are in the second person and may be considered informal writing

EXCLAMATION MARK

- **Denote emphasis and often heightened emotional tone**

- **Infrequently used in academic writing**

- **Can raise questions about your impartiality due to emotional tone**

PUNCTUATION:
COMMAS,

COMMAS HAVE MANY JOBS!

COMMAS HAVE MANY JOBS!

- Helping to form compound sentences

- Closing out an introductory clause

- Offsetting parenthetical information

- Introducing coordinate elements at the end of a sentence

- Offsetting dates, locations, and items in list

FORMING COMPOUND SENTENCES

INDEPENDENT CLAUSES
each have a *subject* and a *predicate*. They can form *full sentences* on their own.

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

Combine independent clauses, giving equal weight to ideas

Are used to form *compound sentences* by combining *independent clauses*.

Are introduced with a comma.

15

INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

Salah scored another goal.

The audience cheered.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

Salah scored another goal **,** **so** the audience cheered.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

Salah scored another goal , and the audience cheered.

SENTENCE MATH

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

+ comma & coordinating conjunction

+ INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

= COMPOUND SENTENCE

Salah scored another goal

, so

the audience cheered.

= COMPOUND SENTENCE

SENTENCE MATH

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

**+ comma
& coordinating
conjunction**

+ INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

= COMPOUND SENTENCE

**Salah scored another
goal**

, and

the audience cheered.

= COMPOUND SENTENCE

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

SUBORDINATE CLAUSES are dependent on the main clause of the sentence.

Relate ideas that are not equal

Are used to form *complex sentences* by combining independent and subordinate clauses

Are *not* introduced with a comma.

The audience cheered

because

Salah scored another goal.

*note there is no comma before 'because'

Because Salah scored another goal,

the audience cheered.

*note that when the subordinate clause comes before the independent clause, there *is* a comma to separate the clauses.

CLOSING INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES

INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES...

Establish time and/or location

Define a source

Provide context

ESTABLISH TIME/PLACE

At 10:30, the puppy needs to go to the vet.

ESTABLISH TIME/PLACE

In Leamington, Justin bought tomatoes.

DEFINE A SOURCE

According to Swift,
the best thing to do is "shake it off."

PROVIDE CONTEXT

If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.

WHERE DOES THE COMMA GO?

TIP LOOK FOR THE SUBJECT!

The comma usually goes right before the subject.

At 10:30, the puppy needs to go to the vet.

In Leamington, Justin bought tomatoes.

According to Swift, the best thing to do is "shake it off."

If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.

PARENTHETICAL INFORMATION

My black cat, which I adopted on Friday the 13th, is named Lucky.

NON-ESSENTIAL INFORMATION for clarity or context.

TIP The sentence should still make sense if you skip what is between the commas.

COORDINATE ELEMENTS

A DEPENDENT CLAUSE that provides context or contrast to the main clause but shares the grammatical context.

Mariah Carey is generally known as a singer, not an actor.

DATES

On **November 5, 1605,** the Gunpowder Plot failed.

LOCATIONS

Ryan Gosling
was born in
London, Ontario.

LISTS

INTRODUCE EACH ITEM IN A LIST USING A COMMA!

I bought albums by Led Zeppelin, Metallica, Black Sabbath, and Justin Bieber.

LISTS

INTRODUCE EACH ITEM IN A LIST USING A COMMA!

I bought albums by Led Zeppelin, Metallica, Black Sabbath, and Justin Bieber.

Oxford comma goes before the 'and'

THE OXFORD COMMA REDUCES CONFUSION

The most influential people in my life are my friends, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels.

three distinct items in a list:
1. *Friends*
2. *Marx*
3. *Engels*

THE OXFORD COMMA REDUCES CONFUSION

Without Oxford comma, the list is unclear. Suggests that 'friends' is just a description of two items:

1. Marx

2. Engels

The most influential people in my life are my friends, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

PUNCTUATION: COLONS: & SEMICOLONS;

WHEN DO WE USE COLONS?

Lists

Conclusions

Summations

Appositives

Lists

While on vacation in Europe, I visited several cities: London, Paris, Amsterdam, and Barcelona.

Conclusion

Based on the evidence, it was clear who committed the murder: Colonel Mustard did it in the conservatory with the candle stick!

Summation

During paint night, I got paint in my hair, on my hands, and all over my clothes: it was a messy evening.

Appositive

I was rescued by Batman: the Dark Knight.

REMEMBER!

Colons must always follow an independent clause!

We looked at: gender, nationality, and age. ❌

We looked at gender, nationality, and age. ✅

We looked at three factors: gender, nationality, and age. ✅

WHEN DO WE USE SEMI COLONS?

Linking independent clauses

Separating complex lists

DON'T PAIR SEMICOLONS & CONJUNCTIONS

✅ There is no flour in my pantry; Cookie Monster did some baking last night.

❌ There is no flour in my pantry; because Cookie Monster did some baking last night.

✅ There is no flour in my pantry because Cookie Monster did some baking last night.

SIMPLE LIST

My omelet has several ingredients: eggs, broccoli, spinach, and cheese.

COMPLEX LIST

My omelet has several ingredients: eggs, which I bought at a road-side stand; broccoli, which I bought at the farmer's market; spinach, which I grew myself; and cheese, which I stole from the supermarket.

PUNCTUATION: [BRACKETS] & (PARENTHESES)

WHEN DO WE USE PARENTHESES?

Parenthetical information
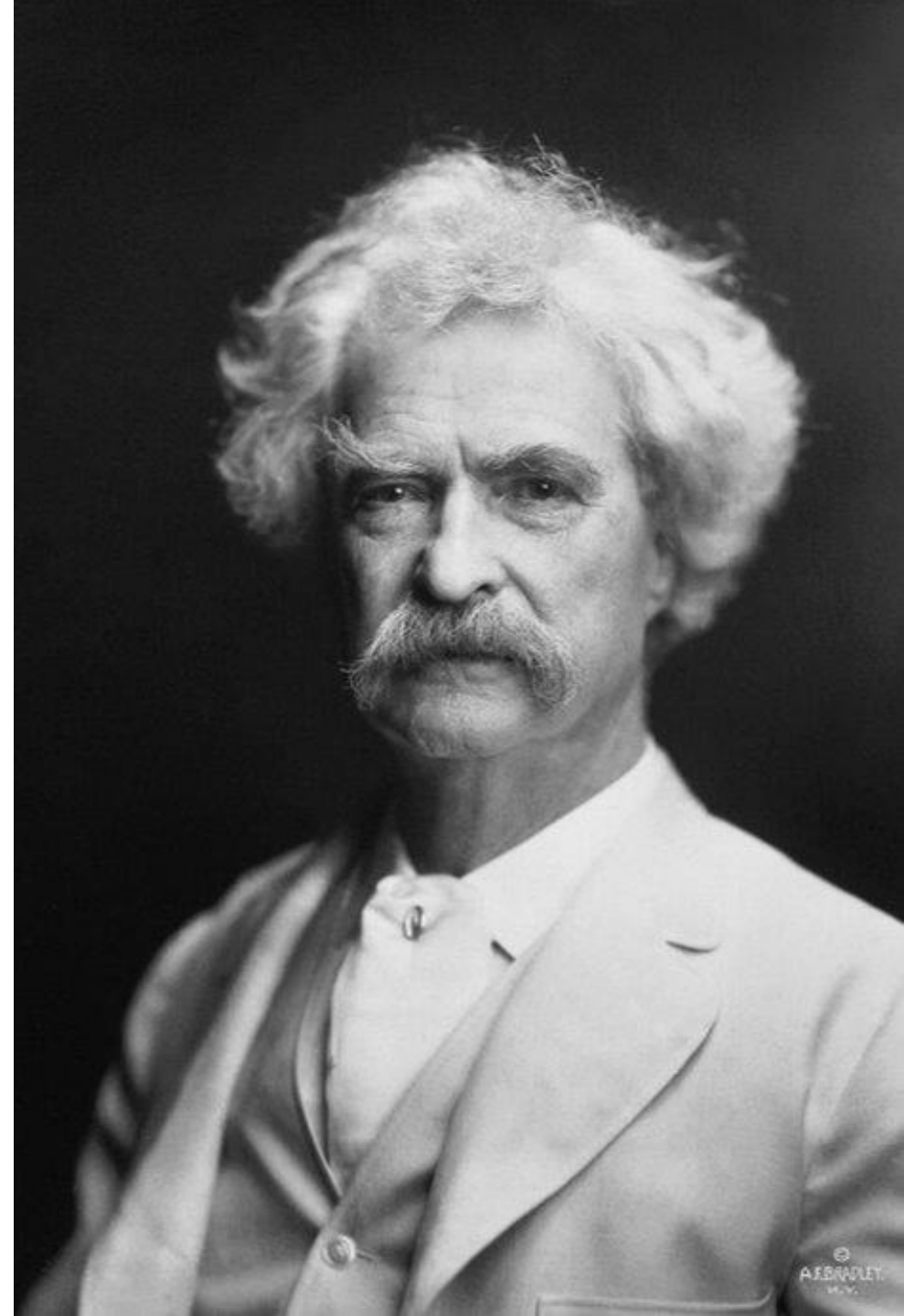
In-text citations

PARENTHETICAL INFORMATION

My black cat **(which I adopted on Friday the 13th)** is named Lucky.

- Parentheses are sometimes considered informal for this use
- They can also be confusing alongside in-text citations
- Commas are generally preferred for this purpose

IN-TEXT CITATIONS

Twain **(1887)** suggests that all one needs is "ignorance and confidence, and then success is sure" **(p. 4)**.

WHEN DO WE USE BRACKETS?

Perspective shift

Unclear pronouns

Expletives

PERSPECTIVE SHIFT

Kanye West said that "rap is the new ballet and [he is] the greatest ballet dancer of them all."

*West said "I am," so the brackets show it is replaced with "he is."

UNCLEAR PRONOUN

Coach Brown said that, "aside from missing practice, [Iverson] hasn't been a problem."

*Brown said "he," so the brackets show it has been replaced with "Iverson" for clarity.

EXPLETIVES

Former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau once told a member of parliament to "go [fuddle duddle]."

*He didn't actually say "fuddle duddle."

PUNCTUATION: "QUOTATION MARKS" & *ITALICS*

WHEN DO WE USE DOUBLE QUOTATION MARKS?

Direct quotes

Titles of short works

DIRECT QUOTES

As Groucho Marx says, "I don't want to belong to any club that will accept people like me as a member."

TITLES OF SHORT WORKS

Grande's (2018) song "No Tears Left to Cry" is an examination of compassion fatigue.

WHEN DO WE USE SINGLE QUOTATION MARKS?

Question perspectives

Introduce terms

Discuss signifiers

Frame idioms

*These usages are not set standards, so always check your instructor's preference.
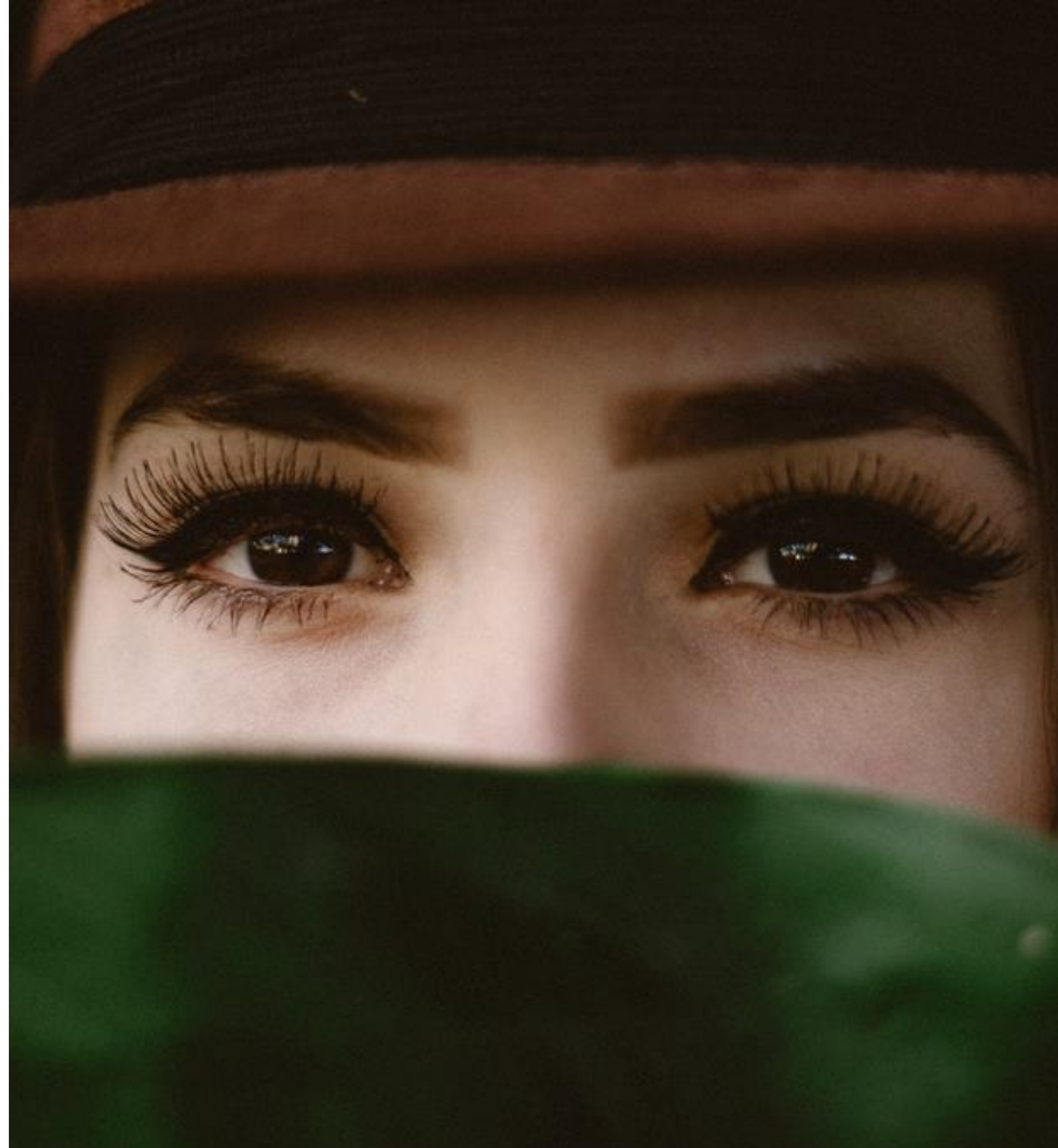
QUESTION PERSPECTIVE

According to research, I'm not 'normal.'

INTRODUCE TERMS

Having eyebrows 'on fleek' means they must be impeccably groomed.

WORDS AS SIGNIFIERS

What is a word made up of 4 letters, yet is made up of three. Although is written with 8 letters, then is with 4. Rarely consists of 6 letters, and never is written with 5.

WORDS AS SIGNIFIERS

What is a word made up of 4 letters, yet is made up of three. Although is written with 8 letters, then is with 4. Rarely consists of 6 letters, and never is written with 5.

'What' is a word made up of 4 letters, 'yet' is made up of three. 'Although' is written with 8 letters, 'then' is with 4. 'Rarely' consists of 6 letters, and 'never' is written with 5.

FRAMING IDIOMS

As the saying goes, you should never 'look a gift horse in the mouth.'

*Using double quotes might make the reader expect a citation

WHEN DO WE USE ITALICS?

Emphasis

Foreign languages

Titles of major works

ITALICS FOR EMPHASIS

I never said she stole my money.   = Someone else said it

I *never* said she stole my money.   = Emphatic denial

I never *said* she stole my money.   = They implied it

I never said *she* stole my money.   = Someone else stole it

I never said she *stole* my money.   = Took but didn't steal

I never said she stole *my* money.   = Someone else's money
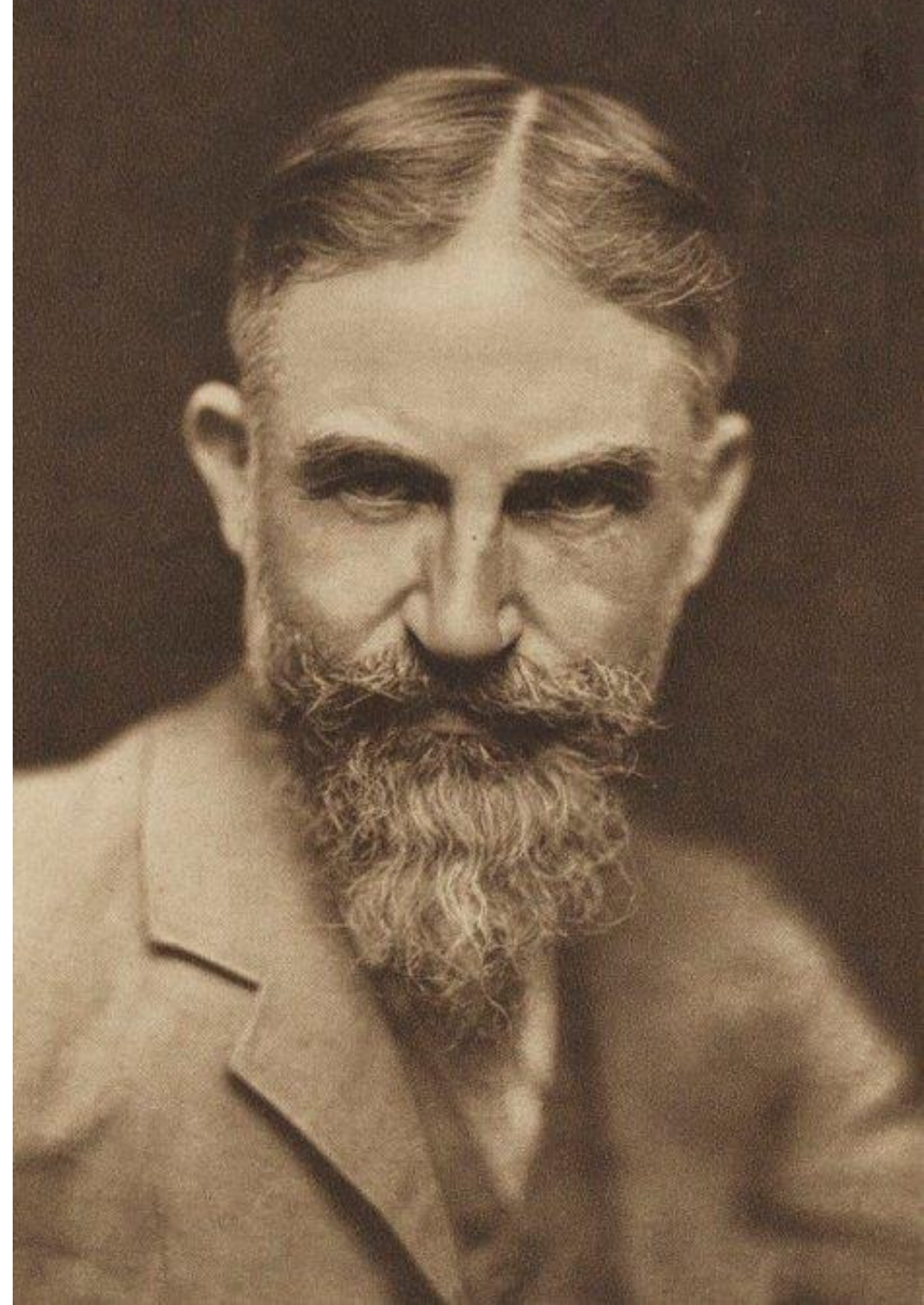
I never said she stole my *money*.   = Stole something else

Using italics for emphasis can be seen as informal.

EMPHASIZING A WORD IN A QUOTE

"Life isn't about *finding* yourself. Life is about *creating* yourself" (Shaw, n.d., p. 1, emphasis added).

*Italicizing to emphasize words in a quote you are analyzing is an exception.
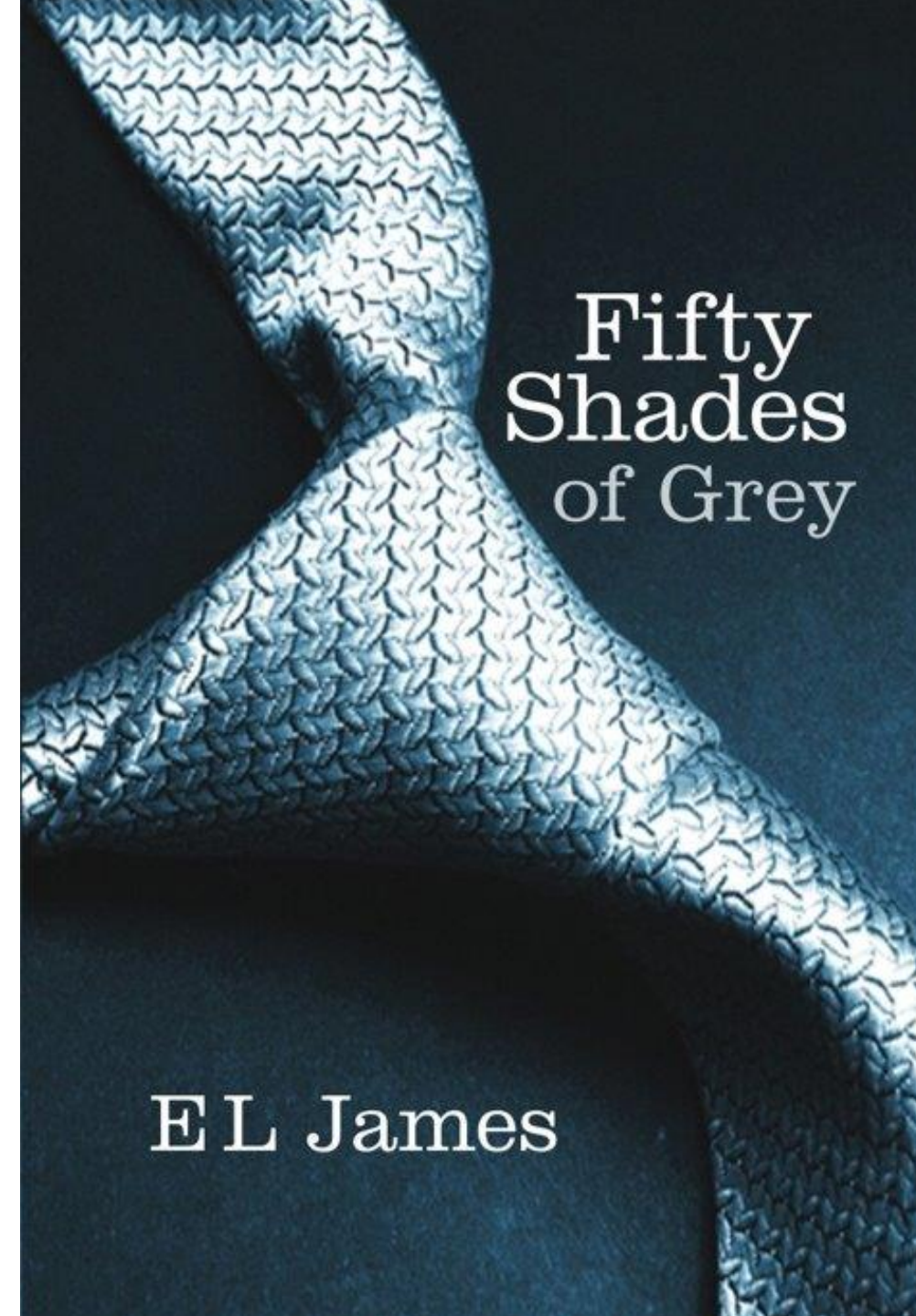
FOREIGN LANGUAGE

"Quid pro quo. I tell you things; you tell me things." - Dr. Lecter

TITLES OF LONG WORKS

The cover of the novel *50 Shades of Grey* is actually many shades of blue.

*Long works include books, movies, television series, journal titles, etc.

QUESTIONS?

Remember, this slideshow and many others are available to download via the Writing Support Blackboard page.

Email writingsupport@uwindsor.ca if you require access.