Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Nonessential Phrases: Infinitive

Almost all infinitive phrases within a sentence are essential and therefore do NOT require commas. This is because most infinitive phrase are serving as essential adverbs or nouns in the sentence.

Ex: I drank a cup of espresso (WHY?) **to stay awake for Marsh’s boring class**.

Ex: I decided (WHAT?) **to stop whining** and (WHAT?) **to do my homework**.

Rule #1: Infinitive Phrases that work as adverbs answer Adverb Questions: How, When, Where, Why, To What Extent. These infinitives almost always require no commas.

Rule #2: Infinitive Phrases that works as nouns will answer a Noun Question: What, Who/Whom. These infinitives almost always require no commas.

Rule #3: Be careful of Infinitive Phrases that may be working as Appositives, meaning that they are renaming a noun by explaining what that noun means.

Ex: The incredible amount of Earth Science homework ruined Tim’s evening plans, **to put on his pajamas right after dinner and to enjoy two glorious hours of Dancing with the Stars.**

Here the infinitive phrase **renames** the noun **plans**; therefore, the infinitive phrase is not necessary or nonessential. Sometimes an appositive will rename the entire sentence.

Read the following sentences and underline the infinitive phrase. Then decide whether or not to add commas.

1. Alex affixed a goatee to his chin in order to get into the R-rated movie with his date.

2. Mr. Albanese in order to hold our attention in Spanish class rode a small burro around the room.

3. The best thing for you would be to tell the truth about your obsession with kitten posters.

4. Our class finally persuaded Mr. Cooper to show another intriguing, educational video this Friday.

5. Mr. Marsh had a reason for being so tough to be the top of our class and to not let us be crushed by the SAT.

6. Maddy tried to watch the NASCAR race on Sunday, but it led to a violent impulse to want to gouge out her eyes with a mechanical pencil.

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Nonessential Phrases: Infinitive: ANSWERS

Almost all infinitive phrases within a sentence are essential and therefore do NOT require commas. This is because most infinitive phrase are serving as essential adverbs or nouns in the sentence.

Ex: I drank a cup of espresso (WHY?) **to stay awake for Marsh’s boring class**.

Ex: I decided (WHAT?) **to stop whining** and (WHAT?) **to do my homework**.

Rule #1: Infinitive Phrases that work as adverbs answer Adverb Questions: How, When, Where, Why, To What Extent. These infinitives almost always require no commas.

Rule #2: Infinitive Phrases that works as nouns will answer a Noun Question: What, Who/Whom. These infinitives almost always require no commas.

Rule #3: Be careful of Infinitive Phrases that may be working as Appositives, meaning that they are renaming a noun by explaining what that noun means.

Ex: The incredible amount of Earth Science homework ruined Tim’s evening plans, **to put on his pajamas right after dinner and to enjoy two glorious hours of Dancing with the Stars.**

Here the infinitive phrase **renames** the noun **plans**; therefore, the infinitive phrase is not necessary or nonessential. Sometimes an appositive will rename the entire sentence.

Read the following sentences and underline the infinitive phrase. Then decide whether or not to add commas.

1. Alex affixed a goatee to his chin in order to get into the R-rated movie with his date.

NO COMMA

2. Mr. Albanese, in order to hold our attention in Spanish class, rode a small burro around the room.

3. The best thing for you would be to tell the truth about your obsession with kitten posters.

NO COMMA

4. Our class finally persuaded Mr. Cooper to show another intriguing, educational video this Friday.

NO COMMA

5. Mr. Marsh had a reason for being so tough, to be the top of our class and not to ~~not~~ let us be crushed by the SAT.

6. Maddy tried to watch the NASCAR race on Sunday, but it led to a violent impulse to want to gouge out her eyes with a mechanical pencil.