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

Nonessential Phrases: Prepositional

A prepositional phrase within a sentence may or may not require commas. It depends on whether the prepositional phrase is **essential (restrictive)** or **nonessential (nonrestrictive)**.

Look at the difference between these two prepositional phrases

Ex: Josh’s relationship with his girlfriend, according to his Facebook page, is complicated.

The sentence needs “with his girlfriend” to define which “relationship.” It **restricts** the relationship to only “with his girlfriend” – not with his dad, mom, brother, pastor, coach, etc.

But, the sentence does NOT need “according to his Facebook page” to understand which “relationship” is the topic. It doesn’t help to restrict the relationship; it only adds an unimportant detail.

Rule #1: If the prepositional phrase is essential, or restrictive, then **no commas** are necessary.

The chef **without the oven mitt** burned his hand on the skillet.

Rule #2: If the prepositional phrase is nonessential, or nonrestrictive, then commas should separate it from the sentence.

The chef, **without thinking**, placed his hand onto the hot skillet.

Read the following sentences and then add commas (if necessary) around the nonrestrictive prepositional phrases.

1. Our first literature test much to our delight was surprisingly easy with a thorough evening of studying and reviewing notes.

2. Mr. Hudson thanks to therapy with Dr. Oz has been able to overcome his fear of Democrats and Kraft American cheese slices.

3. The cafeteria’s popular “Taco Boat Thursdays” because of budgetary cuts have been replaced with “Spamloaf Special.”

4. Creepiness among other reasons was the main cause for Mr. Spencer’s firing Mr. Marsh.

5. Courtney was able to complete with no one’s help the arduous Central American map coloring assignment in Spanish I.

6. The ferret with the blue ribbon at the fairground was Momo’s prized pet, Sky.

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

Nonessential Phrases: Prepositional: ANSWERS

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