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# Punctuation Guide for Parents

If you are a child of the seventies and eighties, you might have grown up in a time where grammar and punctuation was not seen as important. However, times have changed, now children are expected to not only know what all the different punctuation symbols mean, but also they have to be able to use them in their work and assessments. With this in mind, we've put together a simple guide to punctuation for parents so when your children ask you about a row of dots, you will be able to wow them with your knowledge!

**The full stop (.)** is an easy one, used at the end of a sentence.

The question mark (?) another easy one, or is it?

**Commas (,)** as I'm sure you are aware, are used to separate sentences to stop them from getting too long! They can also be used in lists; I enjoy reading, horseriding, painting and hand gliding.

**Exclamation marks (!)** are generally used in dialogue (when someone is speaking) to show that someone is shouting or angry or to really make a point. "I really, really hate peas!"

**Semi Colons (;)** are used when you are making two short similar points. He loves cooking; he can't get enough of recipes. They can also be used to separate a list from a comma (as above!)

**Colons (:)** are used to provide more information. She was a great writer: she worked so hard trying to make her characters come alive.

**Speech marks (" ")**, some children find it easier to refer to them as 66 and 99. These are used around speech when a character in a story is talking, "I hate grammar", the little boy whispered.

**Ellipses (...)** we use ellipses to build suspense. There was a noise, a loud, uncomfortable noise...

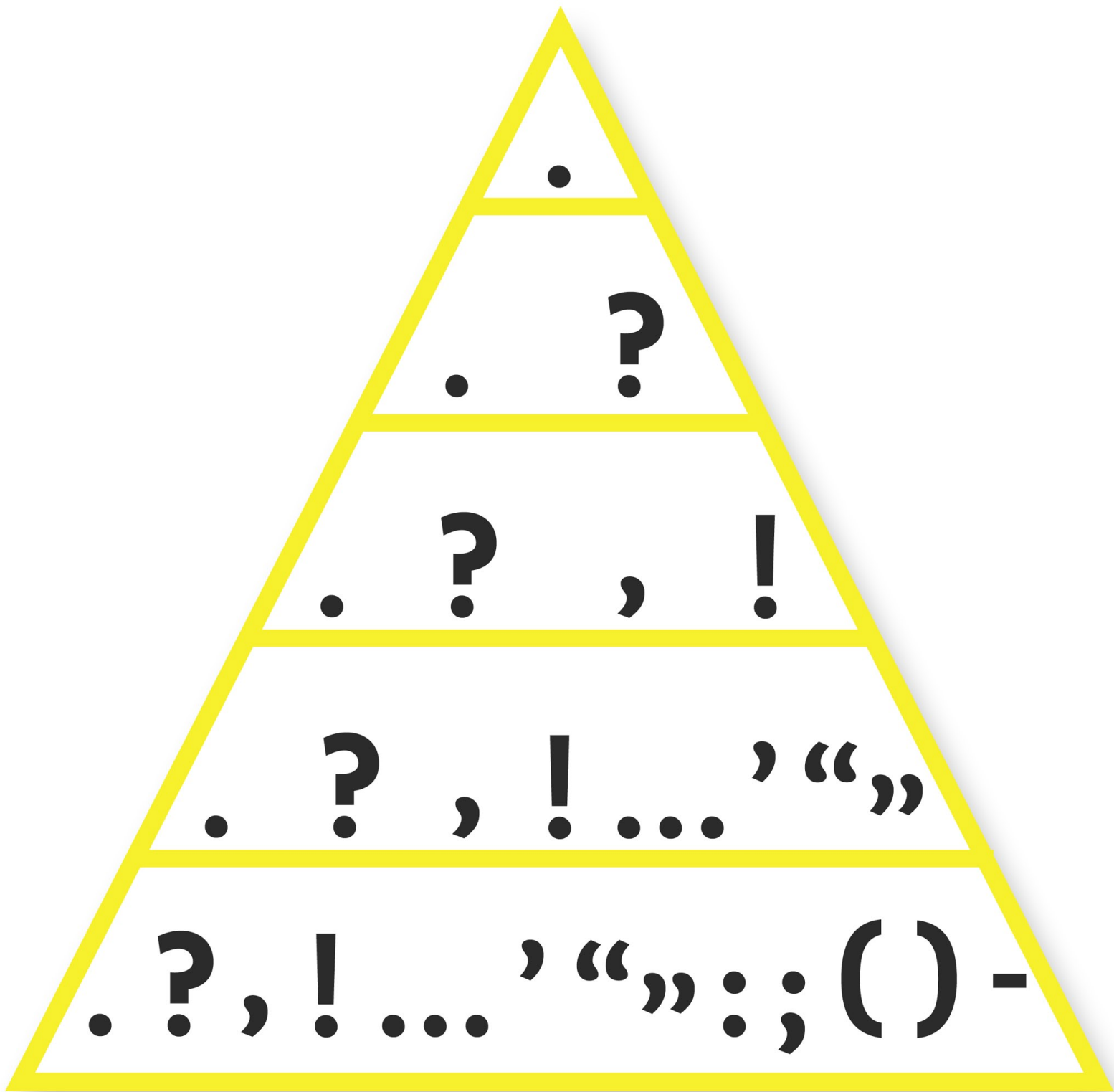
**Brackets ( )** these add extra information for the reader. She was pretty (or so she thought).

**Hyphens (-)** used to separate sentences. My mum – who is very kind – stopped to help the injured kitten.

**Apostrophes (')** there are two kinds – possession and to show a missing letter.

Possession – the girl's coat (one girl) or the girls' coats (more than one girl).

Missing letter – can't, don't, didn't.



**Have you remembered  
capital letters and finger spaces?**