

## Once upon a time

By Erin Dealey and Mrs. R's 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Class  
based on the poem *Once upon a time* (anonymous)

Amy: (takes deep breath and says) Once upon a time  
there was no such thing as transitional devices  
within and between sentences spaces between  
words and sentences did not exist and punctuation  
marks were many years in the future

*(Jeremy and Anne enter, arms linked.)*

Jeremy: hello how are you

Anne: I'm doing fine but I'm not sure about when to breathe  
when I talk because there are no ending marks are you as  
confused as I am

*(Anne runs out of breath. Amy and Jeremy keep her from fainting. They stand  
stuck together as before. Quynn enters, leaving a space between himself and the  
other 3.)*

Quynn: it came to  
pass that some scholar contrived the idea of  
separating one sentence from another with a blank  
space

*(The first 3 look at the space and gasp. But they are curious. In unison, they put  
their right hands on their chins and say:)*

Amy, Jeremy, Anne: Hm m m m m

Quynn: go ahead and try it everyone needs a little space now and then

*(The 3 look at each other and move apart cautiously. They stretch their arms, as  
if they have been in a cramped box for a long time.)*

Kenny: *(enters, takes a deep breath)*

it was not too long after this that  
another scholar hit upon the next logical  
step of separating the words within the  
sentence with blank spaces while this did  
much to end some of the confusion it was  
still a little difficult to tell where one  
sentence ended and another began to resolve  
this the period was invented.

Brandi: *(enters, makes the sign of the period.)* pttttttt!

Jessica B: (*enters with Amy B.*) closely on the heels of the period came the capital letter to begin the sentence.

Brandi: pttttttt!

(Lindsay enters and gives capital W to Amy B.)

Amy B: (*to Lindsay, who exits.*) Thank You.

Brandi: pttttttt!

Amy B.: (*Holding up W.*) We were on our way.

Brandi: pttttttt!

Loren: (*enters*) At this point in the evolution of the sentence it was up to a fiendishly clever or sadistic scholar to introduce internal punctuation marks.

Brandi: pttttttt!

Steph: (*enters with Rani*) The world,

Rani: comma , (*She makes her comma sign and sound*)

Steph: by the way,

Rani: comma , (*She makes her comma sign and sound*)

Steph: has not been the same since •

Kat: (*Enters*) Semi-colon pttttt wheettt (*She makes her semi-colon sign and sound at the same time. The others do the same when it is their turn.*)

Chris: (*enters*) colon : ptttt ptttt

Sonya: (*Dashes in with Matthew and Alyssa.*) Dash ---

Matthew: EXCLAMATION POINT ! wheee pttt!

Alyssa: ellipsis ...

Lindsay: (*enters*) What is an ellipsis.

Brandi: pttttttt!

Alyssa: If you're asking me a question you need a question mark.

Brandi: pttttttt!

(*Alyssa and Lindsay gesture to Jessica A, who enters.*)

Alyssa: Now try again.

Lindsay: (*enters*) What is an ellipsis?

Jessica A: (*makes her sound and noise*) HmMMM ptttt ?

Alyssa: You know (ptttt ptttt ptttt)... You use it when you leave words out.

Brandi: pttttttt!

Amy: We all know what happens when we leave punctuation out!

Matthew: ! wheee pttt!

Anne: And spaces!

Matthew: ! wheee pttt!



Loren: Ready class?

Jessica A: (*makes her sound and noise*) HmMMM pttt ?

All: THE END !

Matthew: ! wheee pttt!

*Once upon a time*  
anonymous

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clever or sadistic scholar to introduce internal punctuation marks;

the world, by the way, has not been the same since .

