

FPSC & COMPETITIVE EXAMS

PUNCTUATION

40 Solved MCQs — Complete Answer Key



40

Questions

100%

Answered

40

Explanations

Every correct option is highlighted & ticked • with a short explanation below each question

✓ **Correct Answer**

Correct options are shaded green and ticked. A short explanation follows every question.

1 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

- (a) "In June 2002; president bush said we will fight against terrorism at the end, of the last drop of our bloods"
- (b) "In June 2002, president bush said 'we will fight against terrorism at the end of the last drop of our bloods'"
- (c) In June 2002, President Bush said: "We will fight against the terrorism at the end of last drop of our bloods."** ✓
- (d) In June 2002, President Bush said: we will fight against the terrorism at the end of the last drop of our bloods.

Why: A direct quotation is introduced with a colon after the reporting verb, the speaker's name/title is capitalised (President Bush), and the exact words are enclosed in quotation marks with the first word capitalised.

2

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) “But it is in his description of high 'life below stairs' that Shamaila excels

(b) “But it is in his description of high 'life below stairs' that Shamaila excels

(c) **“But it is his descriptions of high 'life below stairs' that Shamaila excels”**



(d) “But it is his descriptions of high 'life below stairs' that Shamaila excels

Why: When a quoted phrase sits inside a larger quotation, the inner phrase takes single quotation marks ('life below stairs') and the outer sentence must open and close with double quotation marks.

3

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) John Pope is eighteen century poet..

(b) John Pope is eighteen century-poet.

(c) 'John Pope is an eighteen-century poet'



(d) 'John Pope is an eighteen-century poet?'

Why: A compound adjective placed before a noun (eighteen-century) must be hyphenated, and the sentence should end with a full stop, not a question mark.

4

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) America will leave Iraq and Afghanistan half heartedly.

(b) America, will leave Iraq and Afghanistan half heartedly.

(c) **America will leave Iraq and Afghanistan half-heartedly.**



(d) America will leave, Iraq and Afghanistan half heartedly.

Why: The adverb 'half-heartedly' is a compound word and must be hyphenated; no comma is required anywhere else in this simple sentence.

5

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Yes; sir, I will do it immediately.

(b) Yes! sir, I will do it immediately.

(c) Yes; sir; I will do it immediately.

(d) Yes, sir, I will do it immediately.



Why: 'Yes' and the term of direct address 'sir' are both set off with commas, not semicolons or exclamation marks.

6

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Alas, His father has died.

(b) Alas! His father has died.



(c) Alas his father has died.

(d) Alas; His father has died.

Why: 'Alas' is an interjection expressing grief, so it takes an exclamation mark, and the new sentence that follows starts with a capital letter.

7

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) O dear! Come to me.



(b) O dear come to me.

(c) O! dear Come to me.

(d) O dear: Come to me.

Why: 'O dear' is an interjection and takes an exclamation mark; the following independent command begins with a capital letter.

8

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Hurrah! I got first position in B.A. examination.



(b) Hurrah I got first position in B.A. examination!

(c) Hurrah: I got first position in B.A. examination.

(d) Hurrah I got first position in B.A. Examination.

Why: The interjection 'Hurrah' is immediately followed by an exclamation mark, and the sentence that follows begins with a capital 'I'.

9

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) God, save my parents!



(b) God save my parents!

(c) God; save my parents!

(d) God save my parents!

Why: 'God' is a noun of direct address (a vocative), so it is separated from the rest of the sentence with a comma.

10 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) O God, Mighty ruler!

(b) O God! Mighty ruler!



(c) O! God Mighty ruler!

(d) O God! Mighty ruler!

Why: 'O God' is an exclamatory address to God, correctly punctuated with an exclamation mark, and 'Mighty ruler' forms its own exclamatory phrase.

11

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Shakespeares Hamlet is the play of all ages.

(b) Shakespeare Hamlet is the play of all ages.

(c) Shakespeares' Hamlet is the play of all ages.

(d) Shakespeare's Hamlet is the play of all ages.



Why: Since 'Shakespeare' is singular, the possessive is formed by adding apostrophe + s: Shakespeare's.

12 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) I didn't' notice the absence of my friend Shaista.

(b) I didn't noticed the absence of my friend Shaista.

(c) I didnt notice the absence of my friend Shaista.

(d) I didn't notice the absence of my friend Shaista. 

Why: The contraction 'didn't' takes a single apostrophe between n and t, and 'did' already carries the past tense, so the base form 'notice' (not 'noticed') follows it.

13 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) President will reach at Lahore on 7 o'clock.



(b) President will reach at Lahore on 7 o clock.

(c) President will reach at Lahore on 7' o clock.

(d) President will reach at Lahore on 7' o'clock.

Why: 'o'clock' is a contraction of 'of the clock' and always takes a single apostrophe in that one place only.

14 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Aslam was at 6s and 7s while choosing subject in B.A.

(b) Aslam was at 6s and 7's while choosing subjects in B.A.

(c) Aslam was at 6's and 7's while choosing subjects in B.A.



(d) Aslam was at 6's and 7's while choosing subjects in B.A.

Why: The plural of a numeral is traditionally formed with an apostrophe + s (6's and 7's), applied consistently to both numbers.

15 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) This jewellery belongs to 13A.C.



(b) This jewellery belongs to 13AC.

(c) This jewellery belongs to 13AC.

(d) This jewellery belongs to 13.A.C.

Why: Letters used as an abbreviated class/section label take full stops after each letter (A.C.), giving 13A.C.

16 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) He admitted at last; "Honesty is the best Policy."

(b) He admitted at last Honesty is the best policy.

(c) He admitted at last - "Honesty is the best Policy."

(d) He admitted at last, "Honesty is the best policy."



Why: A direct quotation following a reporting verb is introduced with a comma, and the quoted saying is enclosed in quotation marks.

17 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) He has learnt from his hasty works that; "Haste makes waste.

(b) He has learnt from his hasty works that "Haste makes waste.

(c) He has learnt from his hasty works; "Haste makes waste.

(d) He has learnt from his hasty works that "Haste makes waste."



Why: When 'that' introduces a quotation, no extra comma or semicolon is needed before it, but the quoted saying must be fully closed with quotation marks and a final full stop.

18 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) In fact: he is not aproprated for this job.

(b) In fact, he is not appropriated for this job.



(c) In fact he is not appropriated for this job.

(d) In fact he is not appropriate for this job.

Why: The introductory phrase 'In fact' is always followed by a comma before the main clause.

19 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Spain is a beautiful country, the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.

(b) Spain is a beautiful country the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.

(c) Spain is a beautiful country; the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.



(d) Spain is a beautiful country: the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean.

Why: Two independent clauses that are closely related in meaning but not joined by a conjunction are correctly linked with a semicolon.

20

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) She was, as a matter of fact, mainly interested in showing off her vocabulary. ✓

(b) She was as a matter of fact mainly interested in showing off her vocabulary.

(c) She was, as a matter of fact mainly interested in showing off her vocabulary

(d) She was: as a matter of fact mainly interested in showing off her vocabulary.

Why: The parenthetical phrase 'as a matter of fact' is an interrupter and must be enclosed by a comma on both sides.

21 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) I often go to the seashore and collect rocks there.



(b) 'I often go to the seashore, and collect rocks there.

(c) I often go to the. seashore and collect rocks there.

(d) I often go to the seashore, and, collect rocks there.

Why: When 'and' simply joins two verbs sharing the same subject (a compound predicate), no comma is required before it.

22

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Did you know that Agha Gul the novelist and poet, was also a film critic?

(b) Did you know that, Agha Gul the novelist and poet, was also a film critic?

(c) Did you know that Agha Gul, the novelist and poet, was also a film critic?



(d) Did you know that Agha Gul, the novelist and poet; was also a film critic?

Why: 'The novelist and poet' is an appositive describing Agha Gul and must be set off with a comma on both sides.

23

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) :When Javaid asked, “will you return: my book?”

(b) “When,” Javaid asked “will you return my book?”

(c) “When,” Javaid asked, “will you return my book?”



(d) “When Javaid asked “will you return my book?”

Why: When a quoted question is split by the reporting clause, each fragment of the quotation keeps its own quotation marks, and a comma follows the interrupting reporting clause ('Javid asked,').

24

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Sana; Faiza; Rashida: Salma and Huma have reached to Lahore.

(b) Sana; Faiza; Rashida; Salma and Huma have reached to Lahore.

(c) **Sana, Faiza, Rashida, Salma and Huma have reached to Lahore.**



(d) Sana Faiza Rashida Salma and Huma, have reached to Lahore.

Why: A simple list of names in a series is separated by commas, not semicolons or colons.

25

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) In fact he is not appropriate for this job.

(b) In fact, he is not appropriated for this job.



(c) In fact: he is not appropriated for; this job.

(d) In fact he is not appropriated for' this job.

Why: As in Q18, the introductory phrase 'In fact' always requires a comma before the main clause.

26

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Oil which is lighter than water rises to the surface.

(b) Oil; which is lighter than water; rises to the surface.

(c) Oil, which is lighter than water, rises to the surface.



(d) Oil, which is lighter than water; rises to the surface.

Why: 'Which is lighter than water' is a non-restrictive (extra) clause and must be enclosed with a comma on each side.

27

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Madame Noor Jehan was an attractive gracious lady.

(b) Madame, Noor Jehan, was an attractive gracious lady.

(c) Madame Noor Jehan was an attractive gracious lady

(d) Madame Noor Jehan was an attractive, gracious lady.



Why: 'Attractive' and 'gracious' are coordinate adjectives modifying 'lady' equally, so they must be separated by a comma.

28

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

- (a) Nice is a word with many meanings: and some of them are contradictory.
- (b) Nice is a word with many meanings; and some of them are: contradictory.
- (c) Nice is a word with many meanings and some of them are contradictory.
- (d) Nice is a word with many meanings, and some of them are contradictory.** 

Why: Two independent clauses joined by the coordinating conjunction 'and' require a comma before it.

29

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Taxicabs, that are dirty are illegal in some cities.

(b) Taxicabs that are dirty, are illegal in some cities.

(c) Taxicabs that are dirty are illegal in some cities. ✓

(d) Taxicabs, that are dirty, are illegal in some cities.

Why: 'That are dirty' is a restrictive clause telling us which taxicabs are meant, so it takes no commas at all.

30

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) The closet contained worn clothes, old shoes, and dirty hats. 

(b) The closet contained worn: clothes; and shoes; hats.

(c) The closet contained worn clothes old shoes and dirty hats.

(d) The closet contained, worn clothes, old shoes, and dirty hats.

Why: Each item in a series of three or more is separated by a comma, including the one before 'and' (the serial/Oxford comma).

31 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) The uninvited guest wore a dark brown, tweed, suit.

(b) The uninvited guest wore a dark brown tweed suit. 

(c) The uninvited guest, wore a dark brown tweed suit.

(d) The uninvited guest wore; a dark brown tweed suit.

Why: 'Dark brown tweed' are cumulative adjectives that build on one another rather than modifying the noun independently, so no commas are used between them.

32

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) After surviving this ordeal the trapper felt relieved.

(b) After surviving this ordeal, the trapper felt relieved.



(c) After surviving this ordeal, the trapper, felt relieved.

(d) After surviving this ordeal' the trapper felt relieved.

Why: An introductory participial phrase ('After surviving this ordeal') is set off from the main clause with a comma.

33

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) Mark Twain's early novels: I believe stand the test of time.

(b) Mark Twain's early novels, I believe, stand the test of time.



(c) Mark Twain's early novels, I believe stand the test of time.

(d) Mark Twain's early novels; I believe stand the test of time.

Why: 'I believe' interrupts the sentence as a parenthetical remark and needs a comma both before and after it.

34 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) September 9 2001 will never be forgotten.

(b) September 9, 2001, will never be forgotten.



(c) September 9: 2001 will never be forgotten.

(d) September 9; 2001 will never be forgotten.

Why: In the month-day-year date format, a comma separates the day from the year, and a second comma follows the year when the sentence continues.

35

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) The field was safe enough: wasn't it?

(b) The field was safe enough; wasn't it?



(c) The field was safe enough' wasn't it?

(d) The field was safe enough; wasn't it

Why: A tag question added to a statement is separated from it by a comma or semicolon, and the whole sentence ends with a question mark.

36

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) He replied "I have no idea what you mean."

(b) He replied I have no idea what you mean.

(c) He replied, "I have no idea what you mean."



(d) He replied 'I have no idea what you mean.'

Why: A comma follows the reporting verb 'replied' before the direct quotation, which is enclosed correctly in matching double quotation marks.

37

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) After a good washing and grooming; the pup looked like a new dog.

(b) After a good washing and grooming: the pup looked like a new dog.

(c) **After a good washing and grooming, the pup looked like a new dog.**



(d) After a good washing and grooming the pup looked, like a new dog.

Why: The introductory phrase 'After a good washing and grooming' is separated from the main clause with a comma.

38

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) The potion contained fruit, biscuits and glue.



(b) The potion contained fruit; biscuits and glue.

(c) The potion contained fruit: biscuits and glue.

(d) The potion contained fruit' biscuits and glue.

Why: Items in a simple list are separated by commas, not semicolons or colons.

39 Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) I hope that someday he will learn how to be polite.



(b) I hope, that someday he will learn how to be polite.

(c) I hope that someday; he will learn how to be polite.

(d) I hope that someday he will learn' how to be polite.

Why: This is a simple, direct sentence with a 'that'-clause that needs no internal punctuation at all.

40

Choose the correctly punctuated sentence:

(a) He wanted to know when you will be here?

(b) He wanted to know, when you will be here.

(c) He wanted to know when you will be here.



(d) He wanted to know; when you will be here?

Why: This is an indirect (reported) question, so it ends with a full stop, not a question mark, and needs no comma before 'when'.