

### Teaching ideas

This pyramid can be cut out and displayed on desks (ideally printed on card and enlarged), as a visual at-a-glance reminder of the range of punctuation marks students can use in their work.

As a punctuation starter, plenary or five minute focus, challenge students to use as many types of punctuation as they can (in a meaningful, accurate way). Use the numbers 1-5 as a scoring system, and encourage students to peer mark each other's work and award points as appropriate. Alternatively, change the numbers to match relevant assessment objectives or levels.

Try one of the following short writing tasks:

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- ❖ You're on the first passenger flight to the moon. Write a postcard home.
  - ❖ Write a recipe for a meal you'd cook for an enemy, in no more than 100 words.
  - ❖ Explain how you send an email in five steps, for older adults who have never used a computer.
  - ❖ Write a review of your favourite book/song/film/app/game in 75 words.
  - ❖ Argue in favour (or against) a ban on mobile phones in schools, in 50 words or less.
  - ❖ Write a sentence about chocolate in 15 words, using as many forms of punctuation as you can. (It must make sense!)
  - ❖ Write a microfiction story in 50 words, starting with, 'It had the weirdest ... ', or try any of the writing prompts on [www.storybutter.com](http://www.storybutter.com).
  - ❖ Take an idiom ('barking up the wrong tree', 'an arm and a leg', 'crack someone up', 'excuse my French' etc.) and explain it for a foreign learner.
  - ❖ Finish the following sentence: 'If I had the power to change something, I would change ... '
  - ❖ Write about the biggest lie you've ever told.
  - ❖ Write a complex sentence, including the following objects: washing up liquid, a snail, New York and a sausage.
  - ❖ Summarise a news report from today's news in 30 words.
  - ❖ Imagine someone has written your autobiography. In 75 words, write the back cover blurb.
  - ❖ *'You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood up for something, sometime in your life.'* Winston Churchill
- Do you agree or disagree?

