

Two Nouns and Two Commas

Topic Sentences

An appositive, a phrase that describes and renames a noun, can sometimes improve topic sentences by adding information.

Example

(Original topic sentence) Pumice is found throughout the region.

(Topic sentence with appositive) Pumice, **a type of volcanic rock**, is found throughout the region.

An appositive phrase does not have a verb—an action word. An appositive phrase contains only a noun and other words that describe or modify the noun. The appositive phrase is set off within the sentence by two commas.

Examples

The automobile, **a relatively new invention**,
Hector, **the greatest warrior in the Trojan army**,
Samuel Morse, **inventor of the telegraph system**,

Examples

- Colin Powell, **a retired four-star general**, served as Secretary of State under President George W. Bush.
- Pierre Curie, **husband of famed scientist Marie Curie**, was a pioneer in the scientific fields of magnetism and radioactivity.
- The brown tree snake, **a species native to Australia and Papua New Guinea**, devastated the bird species on the island of Guam.
- Adamstown, **located on Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific**, represents one of the most isolated communities in the world.
- Irish immigrants, **driven from their homeland by terrible famine**, arrived in America by the tens of thousands in the mid-1800s.
- Petroleum, **a flammable liquid consisting of complex hydrocarbons**, fuels most cars and trucks.
- Diana Ross, **former lead singer for The Supremes**, is recognized as one of the most successful female music artists in recording history.