

# HOW THE BOOK IS ORGANIZED

## DESCRIBING THE BOOK

This book is a story of punctuation. Read in its entirety along with the exercises that parallel the chapters, this is an advanced course in punctuation for the court reporter, the court reporting student, or anyone who wants to truly understand punctuation.

## USING THE BOOK

It is my hope that, rather than taking a quick look at a rule or example, you will take time to read the rule and the explanation and maybe the entire section in an effort to better understand how the rule works and how it fits together with other rules. I believe that, if you use the book in this fashion over a period of time, you will have a better understanding of this beautiful language and will be better at the core of your job -- punctuating your transcript.

It is absolutely not possible to understand punctuation without a working knowledge of the basics of grammar. The opening four chapters are crucial to understanding the overall structure of the language and what the language elements are and how they interact and how these elements form sentences -- all vital issues to punctuation. Chapter 30 adds more.

Much of the terminology that is used in the book is covered in these chapters. Study the terminology; learn it; remember it; use it. Make it part of your everyday understanding. Your job will be easier.

If your knowledge of grammar is not up to snuff and you have trouble with the rules because of the terminology, look at the multiple examples. Study in reverse. Study the examples, and understand the rule because you are studying the examples.

## CHOOSING THE CONTENT

After years of researching and studying and teaching how to punctuate the transcript, I developed a curriculum that I followed in my classes and have chosen from that curriculum when I have taught seminars. I have basically transferred that curriculum into this book.

## DIVIDING THE CONTENT

As I thought about an overall plan for the book, it seemed obvious that there had to be grammar sections, particularly on sentence structure; that each mark of punctuation needed to have its own chapter; that some elements like parentheticals and appositives needed to be discussed in detail; and that number forms, capitalization, hyphens, and apostrophes deserved their own sections.

The content is divided into chapters of related material: chapters dedicated to specific marks of punctuation and those that discuss a concept or idea related to punctuation. Each chapter has subsections that are designated so that it is easier for you to find the specific topic.

At the back of the book, in the order that they appear in the chapters, there is a list of the rules and their examples with no accompanying discussion nor reference to court reporting issues. If you want to just quickly look up a rule, you want to use this glossary. In addition, there is a glossary of terms at the end with a page number on which the term appears.

## **ORGANIZING THE CHAPTERS**

The content of each chapter centers on the rules. In addition to the rule itself, there may be definitions; a general discussion; and/or, where appropriate, a discussion of reporting issues. At the end of most chapters, there are examples from transcripts.

These, then, are the sections that appear, each labeled with a graphic and an identification of the section as you see it in the book:



### **DEFINITION**

A definition appears in the chapter/chapters where it is applicable to the content and also in the glossary in the back.



### **RULE**

Each rule is illustrated with specific examples that pertain to the rule. There was an effort to use sentences that remind you of those in transcripts. Because some of the rules overlap into different sections, you will find some rules in more than one chapter. The rules are numbered consecutively within each chapter but are in no particular order within the chapter.



### **DISCUSSION**

A discussion section generally follows a rule and offers explanation, enhancement, further examples, exceptions, et cetera. In some cases, the discussion applies to more than one of the rules that it follows.



### **REPORTING**

This section deals with issues peculiar to reporting, issues that fall outside the scope of standard English, issues about punctuating the spoken word. If there is no special court reporting aspect to a given rule, the reporting section does not appear.



### **FROM TRANSCRIPTS**

These examples appear at the end of most chapters. These examples have been taken directly from reporter transcripts as general sentences and/or specific sentences to illustrate the rules in a given chapter and are intended to be examples of good punctuation.