

Starter -

When both parts of the sentence make sense by themselves, we cannot use a comma to separate them.

We call this 'comma splicing'.

Rewrite these sentences, using a correct piece of punctuation to replace the comma.

1. You'll never guess what I saw today, real life sheep!
2. Luca spent the whole time crying, the whole carriage could hear him.
3. Mr Jones says he'll take me to market with him, I can't wait to go.

WALT practise an informal writing style

Let's have a look at these examples of informal letters.

These were all written by Year 6 children who are all working at 'Greater Depth' level.

As we read this, think about what makes these pieces of writing so effective.

What have the children done to make this a 'Greater Depth' piece of work?

Dear Papa and Mama,

Wie gehst du? And how's Werner? Things aren't too great here; my stomach is empty (like my hopes). I live off of Ersatz and Wagenschmeire down in these reeking pits and, sadly, I'm Frontschwein. But, things are looking up, like on Weihnachten eve, when we sung Stille Nacht, tommies and all! Then - as usual - I fell asleep, sitting as the papery snow was falling, and all was good.

On Weihnachten, things took a turn. My commander was at it again; shouting out about a tommy coming, so I was rudely woken by him. My pikelhaube fallen off as I went to the periscope: the poor Britte was a madman! He'd walked out unarmed, which my commander (blind as a bat) failed to spot, so to save 'im a trip to the krankenhaus, I told those dim-wits he was unarmed, and walked out to see him. We said our names, shook hands and began Der besten Tag!

It was odd, seein' them an' us together - at least I thought it was. We was playin' football, dealing cards, even giving haircuts! It was just like a proper Weihnachten in the Heimat, and I was in goal! It were like we was old friends, having a kick about down the park! We were having so much fun; I was proper happy! But that ended when some moron dropped a bomb, and the fun was kaputt. Jim handed me my jacket, and slipped in some schokolade that I couldn't see, and I headed off to the dirt-pit I temporarily call home.

After I got back to my trench, I found his 'little gift' and it made me think about a proper heimat Weihnachten, about giving and caring, and rejoicing for the birth of Christ. So, how was your Weihnachten anyway? Be sure to write back soon.

From Otto (the better son)

Dear my darling love,

How are things back in Blighty? It's been ages since I saw you last! You won't believe what happened the other day. I was enjoying one of those 'delicious' crackers from our iron rations, when I was handed a package. I opened it and took out a picture of you and a note! Thanks for the chocolate; it's nothing like the bully beef we 'ave 'ere at the trenches (I saved it for later). That afternoon, we sat there for what seemed like an eternity until finally we heard something - it was the Boche singing Silent Night! Who knew so many grown men had warm hearts? I didn't; war had taken that from me.

Later, I decided that I would go to No Man's Land... crazy, right?! I had a dekko before to make sure I was safe. The funny thing is, it was Christmas day and snow was everywhere so it was hard to get around. I was sure I would be shot, but funny enough another man - roughly my age - was coming toward me too! His name was Otto. Soon, every soldier was out of the trenches and we all started socialising. Guess what? I accidentally fell into a crump hole; it was a right laugh!

Minutes later, we began to play a fantastic game of footy: we were having the time of our lives! We played cards, did each other's hair (I'll show you my hair when I get back) and even took many photos. It was the best day I'd had in the past eight months of living through iron rations and sleeping right next to many disgusting, foul and repulsive latrines! I showed Otto the lovely picture of you and he replied with 'schon', which I guess it's beautiful in German? Find out for me, will ya? Let me know. Later, we heard daisy-cutters in the distance; meaning we needed to go back into our trenches. I gave Otto my coat with the chocolate and wished him Merry Christmas.

I looked to see if anyone had frowns on their faces, but there were napoo. As I thought about Otto finding the chocolate in his pocket, I could finally enjoy the crackers we had. Please tell the kids about the real meaning of Christmas - sharing and thinkin' about others.

Love your darling husband, Jimbo.

PS See ya soon

Dear Rose,

Shaking like a leaf, here I'm writing to you 'bout the last couple of days. Sorry shoulda asked, how are ya? In case you were wondering I'm alright. Can't wait to get back to Blighty and give you a right old squeeze. I'm just sitting in this nasty trench that's half filled with water; with rats swimming around. The Boche have been blasting daisy cutters all around our trench, nearly blew me head off once! I was just finishing of my iron rations - bully beef - when your gorgeous chocolate arrived. Ta for that. It brightened up my day. Later on, when it turned to night, all the Boche were singing Silent night in German, we sang along with 'em. Who'da thought it?

CHIRP CHIRP. That was the first sound I heard the next day when I woke up. I decided to take a dekko at No Man's Land. I got up; then walked over... Rifles rose over the Boche's trench and at that moment, guess what? A German trembled into No Man's Land with me. Nervous, every soldier soon was behind us. We met in the middle - of No Man's Land - and we shook hands. He told me his name was Otto. Never 'eard of that name before, sounds strange, don't it?

Who'da thought English and German could be pals? Clearly not me. I took that stunning picture of you out of the tattered envelope and showed it to Otto. He said it was schon while pointing to his face (that means you're a beauty). Straight away, we were kicking a ball over No Man's Land like we've known each other for years. Also, English soldiers' hair was cut by the Boche. We played football; cut each other's hair; and played cards. Otto was the goalie and he only let one goal in - my goal. We won 1-0. Then, we heard an Archie drop a daisy cutter and we ran to take cover...

After that, we shook hands and said our goodbyes then ran to our trenches like headless chickens, worried that we would get shot. "Merry Christmas," I said. "Froehliche Weinachten," Otto replied as he took his coat from me. When I got back, I got out my cracker and smiled. Sorry, but I gave away the chocolate to Otto as a gift. 'e deserved a treat, after all it is Christmas. Can't wait to get back to Blighty.

Love from,

Jim

P.S: Please reply

Did you spot any effective writing features the children used within their informal letters?

- Rhetorical questions directly addressing the reader – e.g. wie gehst du?...how are things back in Blighty?
- Purposeful misuse of standard English – e.g. we was playing...it were like we were old friends...ain't
- Using apostrophes for colloquial contractions – e.g. 'im... playin'...'ave... and normal contractions – e.g. aren't...how's
- Conversational style and language – having the time of our lives... blind as a bat...it's been ages since I saw you

- Slang – e.g. tommies, archies, dekkko, Boche, Blighty, Heimat
- Use of personal pronouns throughout – I, you, we
- Question tags – would go to No Man's Land... crazy, right?!... You know how much I like my sleep, don't you?!
- Use of exclamation marks – tommies and all! Repulsive latrines!
I walloped from miles away!
- Use of parenthesis for personal commentary – (like my hopes)
(I saved it for later) (that means you're a beauty)

WALT practise an informal writing style

Today, we are going to have a go at writing the first paragraph of our letter, using some of these techniques.

- Rhetorical questions directly addressing the reader – e.g. wie gehst du?...how are things back in Blighty?
- Purposeful misuse of standard English – e.g. we was playing...it were like we were old friends...ain't
- Using apostrophes for colloquial contractions – e.g. 'im...playin'...'ave... and normal contractions – e.g. aren't...how's
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- Use of parenthesis for personal commentary – (like my hopes) (I saved it for later) (that means you're a beauty)

