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WEEK 1

CAPITAL LETTERS

There are two completely different sets of rules for using capital letters. The first set of rules is for when we are writing down titles. The second set of rules is for when we are writing normal sentences.

First Set of Rules
When we are writing down titles, we give capital letters to the first word of the title and to any other words that we think are important.

Second Set of Rules
When we are writing normal sentences, we use only capital letters in these situations:
1. at the start of sentences (including the first word of direct speech).
2. for I.
3. when we are writing down the actual name of a specific person, place or thing (including days of the week and months of the year, but not seasons).
4. for the abbreviations B.C. and A.D.

We do not use capital letters in any other situations (except when our sentence contains a title).

When we are writing down a name, we give every word in the name a capital letter, apart from small words like the, of and and. For example:

    I visited Westminster Abbey.  We visited the Tower of London.

THE APOSTROPHE OF POSSESSION

We use a possessive apostrophe to show that something belongs to someone or something. To use it correctly, we need to look at the ending of the word to which it belongs.

- If the word ends in an s, we add an apostrophe.
- If the word does not end in an s, we add apostrophe + s.

Look at these examples.

- The blanket belongs to the dog. Dog does not end in an s, so we add an apostrophe + s to dog. It is therefore the dog’s blanket.
- It was a play that Aristophanes wrote. Aristophanes ends in an s, so we add an apostrophe to Aristophanes. It was therefore Aristophanes’ play.

ITS OR IT’S?

- Its means ‘belonging to it.’
- It’s is short for it is or it has.

Look at how these words are used.

    The dog has lost its bone.
    It’s sunny today.
    It’s been ages since I last saw you.
Day 1

Exercise A: Underline the words in the sentences below that need capital letters.

Ex. I travelled to France last summer.

1. Queen Victoria ruled the United Kingdom from June 1837 until her death.
2. After school, I am going to the library to complete my homework.
3. The name of our new teacher is Mr. Wild.
4. The athlete won two gold medals at the Olympic Games in Athens.
5. The Battle of Hastings is probably the most famous battle of the eleventh century.

Exercise B: Use the rule above to complete the gaps in these sentences.

Ex. The computer belongs to Marcus. It is Marcus’ computer.

1. The coat belongs to Ahmed. It is ________________ coat.
2. Miss Patrick had the idea. It was Miss ________________ idea.
3. Pythagoras devised the theorem. It was ________________ theorem.
4. The children wrote the musical. It was the ____________ ____ musical.
5. The field belongs to the farmers. It is the ________________ field.

Exercise C: Fill in the gaps with its or it’s.

Ex. I know that it’s important to brush your teeth carefully.

1. The society had ______ annual meeting last week.
2. Do you not realise that ______ raining?
3. The dog could not find the bone despite ______ best efforts.
4. The book is in a good condition but ______ back cover has a slight tear.
5. ______ not possible for us to meet tomorrow, I’m afraid.
Exercise A: Underline the words in the sentences below that need capital letters.

Ex. I travelled to France last summer.

1. Robert Burns, who died in the summer of 1796, is regarded as Scotland’s national poet.
2. A monster (sometimes called Nessie) is said to inhabit Loch Ness, a freshwater lake in Scotland.
3. Hyde Park was established in the sixteenth century and opened to the public in 1637.
4. He thought that I was born in May but I was actually born during the winter.
5. What is the name of your dentist?

Exercise B: Use the rule above to complete the gaps in these sentences.

Ex. The computer belongs to Marcus. It is Marcus’ computer.

1. The inhabitants built the wall. It was the ________________ wall.
2. Mr. Jones bought the coat. It was Mr. ________________ coat.
3. The Romans spoke Latin. Latin was the ________________ language.
4. Fred loves running. Running is ________________ hobby.
5. The gladiator had a shield. It was the ________________ shield.

Exercise C: Fill in the gaps with its or it’s.

Ex. I know that it’s important to brush your teeth carefully.

1. Please put the book back in _______ proper place in the library.
2. _______ always been my ambition to become an engineer.
3. Red is a beautiful colour. In fact, I would say that _______ my favourite.
4. This gallery is popular because of _______ remarkable portraits.
5. This gallery is popular with tourists but _______ hard to reach by bus.
Exercise A: Underline the words in the sentences below that need capital letters.

Ex.  I travelled to France last summer.
1.  we learned in geography that canberra is the capital city of australia.
2.  when i was eleven, my parents took my sister and me to japan.
3.  the author roald dahl wrote charlie and the chocolate factory in 1964.
4.  one of the most famous engineers of the victorian era was isambard kingdom brunel, who designed the clifton suspension bridge in bristol.
5.  the three official languages of belgium are dutch, french and german.

Exercise B: Use the rule above to complete the gaps in these sentences.

Ex.  The computer belongs to Marcus.  It is Marcus' computer.
1.  It is the hat of my brother.  It is my _______________ hat.
2.  This dog belongs to my friend.  This is my _______________ dog.
3.  This cat belongs to my sisters.  This is my _______________ cat.
4.  This was the first play Aeschylus wrote.  It was _______________ first play.
5.  Julius Caesar was assassinated in Rome.  Rome was the site of Julius _______________ assassination.

Exercise C: Fill in the gaps with its or it's.

Ex.  I know that it's important to brush your teeth carefully.
1.  Not only is the door's lock broken but ______ paint is peeling off.
2.  ______ better to be safe than sorry.
3.  ______ very kind of you to offer to help me.
4.  The elephant has a small injury on ______ back.
5.  The museum has updated ______ website.
Exercise A: Underline the words in the sentences below that need capital letters.

Ex.  I travelled to France last summer.

1. Theresa May is the second female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

2. Thanksgiving is an American Holiday that is celebrated every year at the end of November.


4. The Eiffel Tower, which I visited last autumn, is one of the most famous landmarks in Paris.

5. The name of my doctor is Dr. Jones.

Exercise B: Use the rule above to complete the gaps in these sentences.

Ex. The computer belongs to Marcus. It is Marcus’ computer.

1. This enclosure belongs to the lions. It is the ____________ enclosure.

2. The longest river in South America is the Amazon. It is South ____________ longest river.

3. The Romans invented underfloor heating. It was the ____________ invention.

4. Samuel Pepys wrote a diary. It was Samuel ____________ diary.


Exercise C: Fill in the gaps with its or it’s.

Ex. I know that it’s important to brush your teeth carefully.

1. The bus company knows that _______ timetable is inaccurate.

2. The bus company agrees that _______ time to update the timetables.

3. The bus company acknowledges that _______ been too long since the website has checked.

4. The driver of that bus thinks that _______ going to arrive on time.

5. The driver of this bus has just checked the pressure of _______ tyres.