

# Syntax

## Consider:

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds, and though he who excels in one might have been with opportunities and application equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method and more laboured beauties which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study, may be without that readiness of conception and affluence of language, always necessary to colloquial entertainment.

— Samuel Johnson, “An Author’s Writing and Conversation Contrasted”

## Discuss:

1. The main idea of this sentence is stated in the first ten words. What purpose does the rest of the sentence serve?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is the purpose of the semicolon? How does the use of a semicolon reinforce the meaning of this sentence?

## Apply:

Rewrite this sentence in modern English, retaining its meaning and basic structure. Your sentence may be shorter than Johnson’s! Share your sentence with a partner.