**Lit and Comp**

**Commas**

## **The Three I’s**

In addition to the most common uses for the comma (separating items in a series, separating adjectives that modify the same noun, and conventional issues (dates, addresses, salutations and closings in letters, etc.), there are also three common uses for the comma that are often used incorrectly or not at all.

1. ***I*ntroductory Elements** – use a comma after introductory elements.
   1. After such as ***well, yes, no, why, etc***. when they begin a sentence

(*Well*, I never did figure out who stole the cookies from the cookie jar.)

(*Yes*, I am the one who stole the cookies from the cookie jar.)

* 1. After an **introductory participial phrase**

(*Cackling in front of the cauldron*, the witch prepared the Spaghettios.)

* 1. After an **introductory prepositional phrase**

(*Through the broken window,* we watched Thomas steal the red Fiat.)

* 1. After an **introductory dependent clause**

(*When the cow fell through the roof*, Gary laughed heartily.)

# B. *I*nterrupters – use a comma to set off expressions that interrupt a sentence.

* 1. Appositives

(Our new teacher, **Mrs. Doorknocker**, tripped over the TV cord.)

* 1. Words in direct address

(Do you know, **Little Timmy**, why it is important to exercise daily?)

* 1. Parenthetical expressions

(My insurance will, **of course**, cover the damage.)

(That clever Mr. Cleary was, **naturally**, the first to solve the puzzle.)

(The incredible Hulk could beat you up, **of course**.)

# C. *I*ndependent clauses – use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, for, nor, yet) when they join independent clauses.

1. (**I fell through the floor**, and **my girlfriend took me to the hospital**.)
2. (**Jess told Shelly not to eat the shrimp**, yet **Shelly ate the whole bag of shrimp**.)