**Capitalization/Punctuation Rules Study Guide**

**CAPITALIZE:**

1. The first word of every sentence
2. The first word of a direct quote.
3. The first word in the salutation and closing of a letter.
4. The title and name of a person.
5. The names and initials of people.
6. The words that show family relations when used as the person’s name.
7. The pronoun I.
8. The names of cities, counties, states, countries, continents.
9. The important words in names of clubs of organizations.
10. Brand names.
11. Days of the week, months, holidays.
12. Important words in all titles.
13. Names of ethnic groups.

**Ending Punctuation (. ? !):**

1. Use a period at the end of a declarative or imperative sentence.
2. Use a questions mark at the end of an interrogative sentence.
3. Use an exclamation point at the end of an exclamatory sentence or an interjection.

**Comma (,):**

1. To separate three or more items in a series.
2. To pause after an introductory word
3. To pause.
4. To set off names used in direct address.
5. Before and, but, or when joining two sentences.
6. After the salutation and closing of a friendly letter.
7. In a date.
8. Before a title following a person’s name.
9. To set off a direct quote.

**Quotations (“)/*Italics*:**

1. Surround a direct quote.
2. Around each part of an interrupted quote.
3. Closing punctuation marks placed inside quotes.
4. Surround titles of: short stories, essays, poems, songs, articles, book chapters.
5. Use italics, or underlining, for titles of books, plays, films, TV programs, magazines, newspapers.

**Apostrophes (‘):**

1. To form singular and plural possessive nouns.
2. In contractions.

**Hyphens (-):**

1. Hyphens are used to divide a word at the end of a line.
2. Use in compound numbers.
3. Use in some compound nouns.

**Colons (:)/Semicolons (;):**

1. Semicolon joins parts of a compound sentence when a conjunction is not used.
2. Colon is used to introduce a list of items. However, do not use a colon after a verb or preposition.
3. Use a colon after the salutation of a business letter.