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Ellipses

Cheryl Iverson

Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: 2009
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Ellipses are 3 spaced dots (…) generally used to indicate omission of 1 or more words, lines, paragraphs, or data from quoted material (this omission being the ellipsis). Excerpts from the following paragraph will be used to demonstrate the use of ellipses. In Fruit Displayed on a Stand (cover), exhibited in 1882, Caillebotte depicts a traditional subject in a manner far removed from the traditional cornucopian flow of fruit. Instead, he shows a stark, rectangular grid lit by centers of rounded forms, brilliantly colored. Vivid oranges, reds, and purples, light greens, creamy violets, and color-flecked gold are cupped within areas

Omission Within a Sentence

Cheryl Iverson

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If the ellipsis occurs within a sentence, ellipses represent the omission.Instead, he shows a… grid lit by centers of rounded forms, brilliantly colored.In some such instances, additional punctuation may be used on either side of the ellipses if it helps the sense of the sentence or better shows the omission.Instead, he shows a stark, rectangular grid…, brilliantly colored. If the quotation itself contains ellipses, to make clear that the ellipses were part of the original a note to this effect should be included in brackets.

Omission at the End of a Sentence or Between Complete Sentences

Cheryl Iverson

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If the ellipsis occurs at the end of a complete sentence, or between 2 complete sentences, ellipses follow the final punctuation mark, the final punctuation mark being set close to the word preceding it, even when this word is not the final word in that sentence in the

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original.In Fruit Displayed on a Stand (cover), exhibited in 1882, Caillebotte depicts a traditional subject in a manner far removed from the traditional.…Instead, he shows a stark, rectangular grid lit by centers of rounded forms, brilliantly colored.

Grammatically Incomplete Expressions

Cheryl Iverson

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The sentence within which an ellipsis occurs should be a grammatically complete expression. However, ellipses and no period may be used at the end of a sentence fragment to indicate that it is purposely grammatically incomplete.Complete the sentence “When I retire, I plan to …” in 20 words or less.

Omissions in Verse

Cheryl Iverson

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Use 1 line of em-spaced dots to indicate omission of a full line or several consecutive lines of verse.Sometimes you say it’s smaller. Today. . . . . you said it was a touch larger, and would change. Marc Straus, MD, “Autumn”

Omissions Between or at the Start of Paragraphs

Cheryl Iverson

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With material in which several paragraphs are being quoted and omissions of full paragraphs occur, a period and ellipses at the end of the paragraph preceding the omitted material are sufficient to indicate this omission.Indeed, it is no more than the just desert of Dr Theodore Schott and his late brother to attribute to them the credit of having introduced and elaborated a method capable of restoring most cases of heart disease to a state of complete compensation, after the failure of other means, such as digitalis.…If the initial word(s) or the first sentence of the paragraph being quoted is

Change in Capitalization

Cheryl Iverson

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Item type: section

The first word after the end punctuation mark and the ellipses should use the original capitalization, particularly in legal and scholarly documents. This facilitates finding the material in the original source and avoids any change of meaning. If a change in the original capitalization is made, brackets should be used around the letter in question. (See also , Brackets, Insertions in Quotations, and , Quotation Marks, Quotations.)[H]e shows a stark, rectangular grid lit by centers of rounded forms, brilliantly colored. In the cover story, the artist is described as using “[v]ivid oranges, reds, and purples, light greens, creamy violets, and

Omission of Ellipses

Cheryl Iverson

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Ellipses are not necessary at the beginning and end of a quotation if the quoted material is a complete sentence from the original.In a 1985 JAMA cover story, Martha Bier wrote, “Instead, he shows a stark, rectangular grid lit by centers of rounded forms, brilliantly colored.” Omit ellipses within a quotation when the omitted words occur at the same place as a bracketed editorial insertion. (See also , Brackets, Insertions in Quotations.)“[Caillebotte] shows a stark, rectangular grid lit by centers of rounded forms, brilliantly colored.”When a quoted phrase is an incomplete sentence, readers understand that something precedes and follows; therefore,

Ellipses in Tables

Cheryl Iverson

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In tables, ellipses may be used, for example, to indicate that no data were available or that a specific category of data is not applicable. (See also , Visual Presentation of Data, Tables, Table Components.) An explanatory footnote should always be included if it is not absolutely clear from the context what the ellipses represent.aEllipses indicate no test performed.

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