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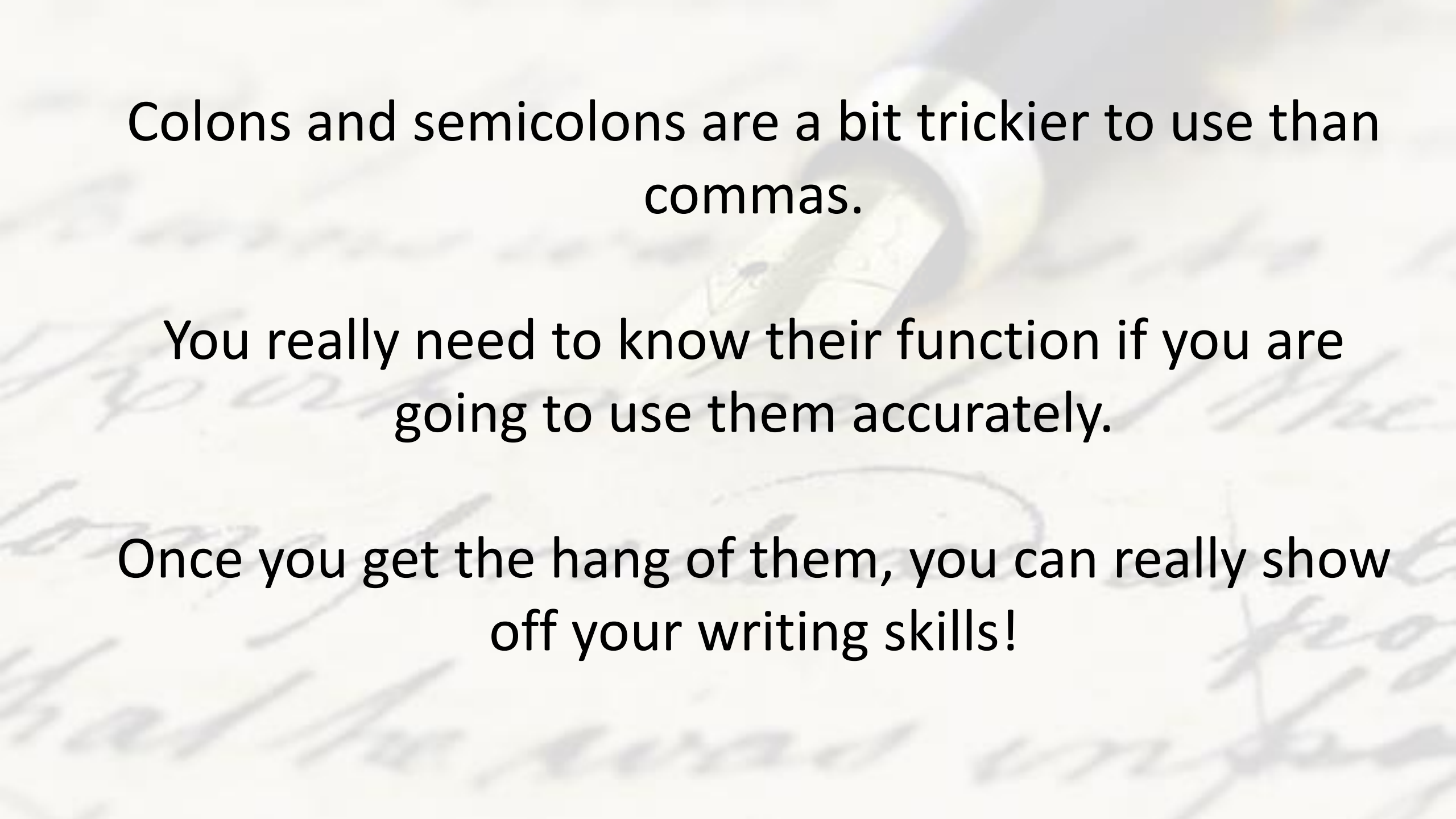
St Cuthbert's
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Punctuation Practice

Colons and Semicolons





Colons and semicolons are a bit trickier to use than commas.

You really need to know their function if you are going to use them accurately.

Once you get the hang of them, you can really show off your writing skills!

Colons

You can use colons to introduce extra information such as a list.

These are the main themes of the novel: family, friendship and love.

The colon goes here, just before the list.

Colons

You can use colons to introduce an explanation

Earthquakes can have secondary impacts: water shortages, gas leaks and landslides.

The part after the colon does not need to make sense by itself.

The colon introduces an explanation and further detail about the first part of the sentence.

Semicolons

You can use semicolons to break up lists of long phrases

When I'm older, I want to become an astronaut; go to the moon; meet extra-terrestrial lifeforms; and be the first person to play football on Mars.

The semicolons break up the longer phrases in the list (commas do this job if there are only one or two words in each part of the list - we looked at that a few weeks ago!)

Semicolons

You can use semicolons to join sentences

Romeo is from the Montague family; Juliet is a Capulet.

The semicolon introduces a sentence that is of equal importance to the first one. The two sentences are related (linked) to each other.

Colons and Semicolons are different

Colons and semicolons can affect the meaning of a sentence.

A colon introduces an explanation of the first sentence.

A semicolon links two sentences together.

Bill was delighted; Sam was furious.

The semicolon shows the sentences are linked but doesn't explain why Bill is delighted.

Bill was delighted: Sam was furious.

The colon shows that Bill is delighted because Sam is furious.



**KEEP
CALM**

AND

REMEMBER YOUR

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