Comma catch: answers and notes

What your child practised: putting a comma straight after a fronted adverbial, and why it matters (Year 4).

Page 1 · Warm up

Yesterday, I lost my hat. · With a giggle, Mia ran off.

Page 2 · Try it together

After tea, · Under the stairs, · As fast as he could,
when · where · how

Page 2 · A. Add the comma

1. At the end of the road, the bus stopped.
2. Quietly, the spy opened the safe.
3. Before the sun came up, we set off.
4. Without looking back, Leo ran home.

Page 2 · B. Your own

Answers will vary, e.g. **At midnight,** the fireworks… · **In the corner of the shed,** a spider…

Page 3 · C. Right or wrong?

1. × Later that day, the rain stopped.
2. ✓
3. × After lunch, we played outside.
4. ✓

Page 3 · D. Tricky meanings

While the children ate, the dog sat under the table. (Without it, it reads as if the children **ate the dog**!)
As Dad was washing, the dog ran into the garden. (Without it, it reads as if Dad was **washing the dog**!)

Page 3 · Challenge

In Year 4, every fronted adverbial gets a comma, however short: **Suddenly,** the lights went out. It shows the reader where the main sentence starts.

Watch out for

- **Leaving out the comma.** Read the sentence aloud together and listen for the little pause after the opener.
- **Comma in the wrong place**, such as in the middle of the opener (Later, that day) or after the first word of the main sentence (After lunch we,). Find the main sentence first: the comma goes just before it.

Going further (5 minutes, no paper)

- **Comma clap:** say sentences with openers; your child claps where the comma goes.
- **Silly sentences:** invent sentences that sound funny without the comma, like the ones in C.
- **In the game:** Chapter 4, Writing sentences with fronted adverbials and commas, puts it all into your own writing.