Use commas to set off the explanatory words of a direct quotation. Explanatory words are such brief statements as *Pat said, Lee asked, Sandra replied.*

The forecaster said, "It's not my fault."

"It's not my fault," the forecaster said. (If the explanatory words come *after* the quotation, place a comma within the quotation marks after the last word of a quotation.)

In a **divided quotation**, a comma is used after the last word of the first part. Another comma is used after the last explanatory word.

"Last year," said Jean, "the picnic was canceled."

Indirect quotations are *not* set off from the rest of the sentence by commas:

The forecaster said that it wasn't his fault.

Use a comma before the conjunction that joins the two main clauses in a compound sentence.

Pat baked some bread, and Ron took it to the bake sale.

Sometimes very short compound sentences have clauses joined by **and**. It is not necessary to use a comma if there is no change in the thought. Always use a comma, however, before **or** or **but**. These words do change the direction of the thought.

The show ended and the audience cheered.

The show ended, but no one applauded.

Do not use a comma before the **and** that joins a compound subject or a compound predicate with only two parts.

Randy checked the bike's spokes *and* oiled the gears.

Use commas correctly. Add a comma wherever one is necessary. Some of the sentences will not need commas.

1. I shouted and Serena stopped.

2. I shouted but no one heard me.

3. "I'm afraid" said Jeff "that the storm has gotten worse."

4. Marcy asked "Have you ever navigated this river before?"

5. Simon looked through the book and found the photograph.

6. Gayle grabbed the handle but it came off in her hand.

7. Gabriel said that nobody came to the show Thursday night.

8. Has anyone seen Will lately or is he still on vacation?

9. Syd asked "Does anyone know what causes allergies?"

10. "The lightning struck the oak tree" said Barry.   **Score: _____ / 10**

THE COMMA IV