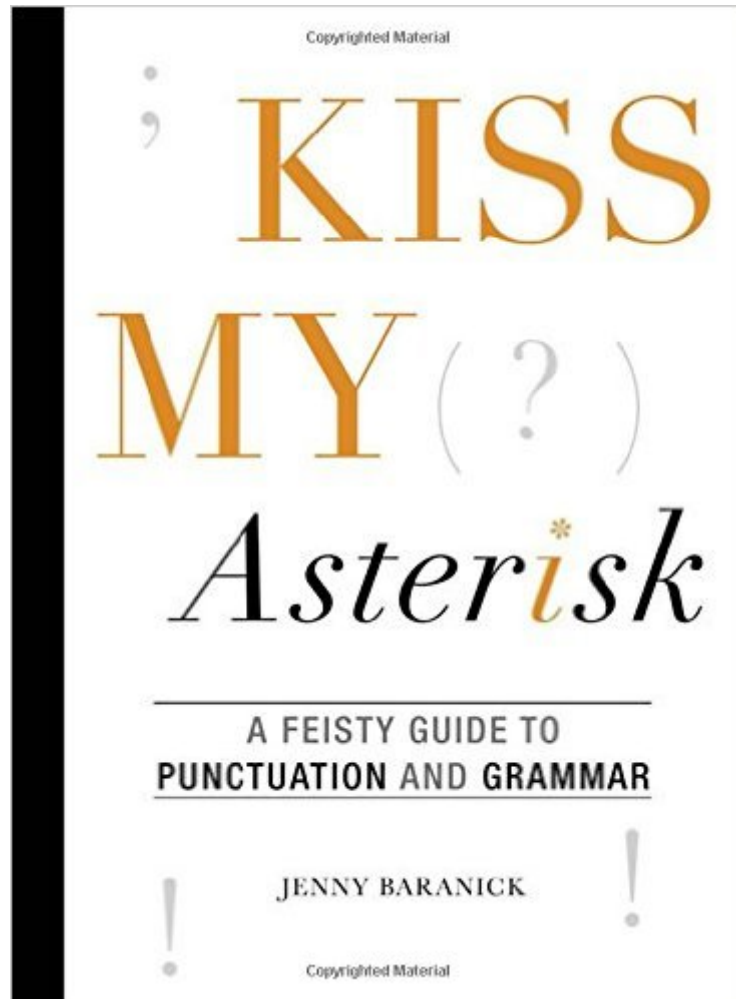


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# Kiss My Asterisk: A Feisty Guide To Punctuation And Grammar



## Synopsis

Grammar has finally let its hair down! Unlike uptight grammar books that overwhelm us with every single grammar rule, *Kiss My Asterisk* is like a bikini: it's fun, flirty, and covers only the most important bits. Its lessons, which are 100 percent free of complicated grammar jargon, have been carefully selected to include today's most common, noticeable errors; the ones that confuse our readers or make them wonder if we are, in fact, smarter than a fifth grader. What is the proper use of an apostrophe? When should an ellipsis be used instead of an em dash? Why do we capitalize President Obama but not "the president"? And why is that question mark placed outside of the end quote? Author Jenny Baranick is an English professor whose students can't believe she's actually that into grammar. Upon experiencing the joys of grammar at an early age, raising grammar awareness became Jenny's *raison d'être*. By spreading her remarkably user-friendly and hilarious approach to grammar, she hopes everyone will experience the satisfaction of a properly placed comma, a precisely used semicolon, and a correctly deployed em dash. *Kiss My Asterisk* shows grammar as it's never been seen before: uncomplicated, laugh-out-loud funny, and, dare we say, a little risqué.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*Missed Periods* is a fine read if you need a crash course in Grammar 101. If you're looking for something more advanced, though - this isn't it. Commas, arguably the most complex punctuation mark, are covered in sixteen (small) pages. As a for-instance of key information missing that I'd

have liked to have seen covered: while she talks about placing a comma after an introductory clause (If we're going clubbing, I need to bring my ID.) she makes no mention of the fact that the clause would not be offset by commas if it came at the end of the sentence (I need to bring my ID if we're going clubbing.) and that is one of the most frequent issues I come across when I'm editing or proofreading. I was also bugged by the fact that, regarding adding apostrophe-s when making nouns ending in "s" possessive, she takes the stance that it's the reader's choice. Chicago Manual of Style would not agree. Of small annoyance but amusing: the author lambasts her former students for not spelling her name correctly in e-mails requesting grade revisions, assignment extensions, etc., and yet in a sample fictional résumé, she misspells the name of the applicant (Edward Cullens as opposed to Edward Cullen). The height of irony... though perhaps she meant it as a cautionary note about proofreading: make sure you spell your own name correctly on assignments, letters, applications, etc. Finally, while her gimmick of linking grammar to sex and relationships starts out on a humorous note, it starts to sag before you're halfway through the book. My opinion - look for a better grammar primer. This one is like using the rhythm method - totally hit or miss.

I found this book to be tiresome and quite often wrong. From Chapter 15: "None of us really want to be that person." "None" takes a singular verb; the sentence should be "None ... wants to be ...." I find the word "actually" to be very popularly overused. It appears 30 times in this book. I disagreed with many uses of semi-colons. I didn't find the style to be funny. Maybe I'm just too old to be amused by the repeated use of the word "penis."

It's the same book in two different covers. I bought them together, so it became obvious pretty quickly. There may be small differences, but so small that one can choose any page number and see the same print on both. Odd, though, that when they reprinted, they didn't bother to fix the incredibly stupid error in her examples of the lie/lay problem at the bottom of page eight.

Most people would rank reading a book on grammar right up there with getting a root canal or a colonoscopy. Might be necessary, but we probably wouldn't do it for the pleasure. Using celebrities like Johnny Depp, celebrity break-ups like Brad and Jennifer, and sexy examples, Baranick presents grammar in a hilarious way that just may help it stick in our over-caffeinated, YouTubed, smartphoned, chasing-the-next-shiny-thing brains. She makes the point that if we use "whorable spelling," our meaning may be vastly misconstrued. She suggests that choosing "the perfect email title is like the perfect first date outfit. It reveals just enough without giving too much away." She

asks: "Have you ever been in the middle of something and you're so excited that you don't want to stop because you're afraid that you will lose your mojo, so you just keep on going and going and going and the next thing you know you miss your period? That, my friends, is how must run-on sentences happen." Her punctuation marks all have personalities. Commas are small and cute and curvy. Colons deserve a drumroll. Exclamation points and question marks are like Mary Ann and Ginger from Gilligan's Island. "Sometimes a period provides too much pause between these two sentences, but the comma doesn't provide quite enough. Luckily the period and the comma had a drunken one-night stand and produced this adorable little spawn they named the semicolon." I'm pretty sure I still won't remember all the grammar spelling and punctuation rules here, but I won't mind looking them up again. Belongs on the bookshelf of all writers (and really, all PEOPLE who ever need to write a resume or email in the course of business).

from Margaret Yang of the "Writing Slices" blog There are numerous books that try to make English grammar interesting. They usually have cute titles and crazy examples in hopes of making a dry subject a little more juicy. The books range from boring to irritating. I have read *And Immediately Forgotten* too many of them to count. Then along came *MISSED PERIODS AND OTHER GRAMMAR SCARES* with its cheeky attitude and laugh-out-loud examples. Baranick is a college professor and knows how to speak to young adults. She also has a wealth of examples from her own students' papers and emails. She's seen first-hand what can go wrong in writing, and she wants to help students make it right. I found myself flipping pages as fast as I could, eager to see what Baranick would say next. She compares spelling to the female orgasm, shows why comma usage is like dating, and illustrates capitalization rules by asking "What would Paris Hilton do?" She describes words like *already/all ready* and *everyday/every day* as having relationship drama because these are words that are constantly breaking up and getting back together. Baranick's examples are hilarious, a bit naughty, and unforgettable. Readers will be having so much fun, they won't realize they are absorbing grammar rules. *MISSED PERIODS AND OTHER GRAMMAR SCARES* is not as thorough as some grammar books, but that hardly matters if you're devouring every word. Just as the best exercise is one you'll actually do, the best grammar book is the one you'll actually read. I'd love to recommend it to teens I know, because Baranick could get them to pay attention. However, it's a bit too risqué for younger readers. But for grown ups who can handle it, it's a fun romp between the sheets (of paper).

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