# Writing Centre

# Introductory Phrases

An introductory phrase is **‘a group of words that cannot stand alone and are found at the beginning of a sentence’.** They set the stage for the main action of the sentence but are not complete clauses. Phrases do not have both a subject and a verb that are separate from the subject and verb in the main clause of the sentence. **As a rule, a ‘comma’ should follow an introductory phrase.**

**Example:** To stay in shape for the competition, athletes must exercise everyday.

Introductory Phrase – **To stay in shape for the competition,**

**Example:** Under the pile of clothes, we found his wallet.

Introductory Phrase – **Under the pile of clothes,**

**Example:** Even though I don’t feel well, I will go to school and take the test.

Introductory Phrase – **Even though I don’t feel well,**

**Example:** The wind blowing violently, the townspeople began to seek shelter.

Introductory Phrase – **The wind blowing violently,**

Introductory phrases are also used to introduce quotations or paraphrased information.

**Example:** **According to Jones (2002***)*, the inability to read was found to …

**Example:** **To quote Prime Minister Stephen Harper,** “Our common goal must lie in improving the prosperity and quality of life of Canadians throughout the country”.

**Example:** **Finance Minister Jim Flaherty went on the record saying,** “Canadians still pay too much tax in this country”.

**Sources:**

Introductory Phrases. (n.d.) retrieved November 17, 2007 from

http://www.kevinschoepp.ca/APAtutorial/intro\_phrase.htm

Commas After Introductions. (n.d.) retrieved December 4, 2007 from

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_commaint.html>

Introductory Phrases. (n.d.) retrieved December 4, 2007 from

<http://www.delmar.edu/engl/wrtctr/handouts/introphrases.pdf>

Krugel, L. (2008, January 16) Canada must attract, retain skilled labour: Flaherty. *The Hamilton Spectator.*

Prime Minister highlights goal of improving Canadian prosperity and quality of life. (n.d) retrieved March 12, 2008 from http://pm.gc.ca/eng/default.asp