Without some convention for showing the groupings and relationships of words, for suggesting pace and intonation, the written sentence becomes a puzzle to the modern reader, and the writer, with freedom to do anything in the way of charting his reader's course through lines of words, must set about doing something, selecting some kind of systematic spacing or marking arrangement that will clarify his meaning.

-- Mina Shaughnessy, Errors and Expectations

**PUNCTUATION PATTERNS:**

1. independent clause.
2. independent clause; independent clause.
3. therefore, however, nevertheless, consequently, furthermore, moreover, (etc.)
4. independent clause, and independent clause.
   but for or nor so yet
5. Clause, phrase, or word nonessential clause, clause, phrase, or word.
6. If dependent clause, independent clause.
   Because
   Since
   When
   While
   Although
   After
7. independent clause, if dependent clause.
   because
   since
   when
   while
   although
   after
   (etc.)
8. independent clause; A, B, and C.
9. "______________", she said.
   He said, "______________"
   "_______", she said, "_______"

(Adapted from Muriel Harris, Prentice Hall Reference Guide to Grammar & Usage)
[Punctuation] scores the music in our minds, gets our thoughts moving to the rhythm of our hearts. Punctuation is the notation in the sheet music of our words, telling us when to rest, or when to raise our voices; it acknowledges that the meaning of our discourse, as of any symphonic composition, lies not in the units but in the pauses, the pacing and the phrasing.

-- Pico Iyer, "In Praise of the Humble Comma"