Watch Your Commas!

Grammar warrior Lynne Truss takes on the comma.

When Lynne Truss spots a grammar error on a sign, she goes on the attack. Truss whips out her pen, corrects the mistake, and signs her name. "[It’s like the] mark of Zorro," she told *WR News*, comparing herself with the swordsman who carved a Z wherever he went.

Truss does more than fight grammar errors on the streets. The British author writes books about them. Three years ago, she penned a best-selling book for adults on punctuation. Now she has a children’s edition, entitled *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: Why, Commas Really DO Make a Difference!*

The book shows how forgetting or misplacing a comma completely changes the meaning of a sentence. "Punctuation gives clarity and precision to your writing," Truss says.
“Watch Your Commas!” Questions

1. Lynne Truss is best known for
   a. writing a punctuation book.
   b. acting like Zorro.
   c. correcting signs she sees.
   d. carrying lots of pens.

2. It is a fact that
   a. Lynne Truss acts like Zorro.
   b. Lynne Truss looks like Zorro.
   c. punctuation clarifies writing.
   d. forgetting a comma does not affect clarity.

3. Lynne Truss values the correct use of punctuation because
   a. she is an English teacher that grades lots of papers.
   b. punctuation makes written communication clear.
   c. she does not like the impact of television on homework.
   d. as an editor she is tired of constantly correcting people’s writing.

4. Lynne Truss compares herself to
   a. a swordsman.
   b. an author.
   c. a graffiti artist.
   d. a teacher.

5. Based on the information given about Lynne Truss, what personality characteristics would you use to describe her?

   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________
“Watch Your Commas!” Answer Sheet

1. Lynne Truss is best known for
   - writing a punctuation book.
   - acting like Zorro.
   - correcting signs she sees.
   - carrying lots of pens.

2. It is a fact that
   - Lynne Truss acts like Zorro.
   - Lynne Truss looks like Zorro.
   - punctuation clarifies writing.
   - forgetting a comma does not affect clarity.

3. Lynne Truss values the correct use of punctuation because
   - she is an English teacher that grades lots of papers.
   - punctuation makes written communication clear.
   - she does not like the impact of television on homework.
   - as an editor she is tired of constantly correcting people’s writing.

4. Lynne Truss compares herself to
   - a swordsman.
   - an author.
   - a graffiti artist.
   - a teacher.

5. Based on the information given about Lynne Truss, what personality characteristics would you use to describe her?
   
   Answers will vary but may include that she is persistent and that she cares deeply about grammar and correct writing.

Suggested Vocabulary: penned, precision