

Dawkin's Punctuation Hierarchy

Maximum Separation (. ? !)

Example: I looked up. And there she stood.

"Seabiscuit surged forward, coming down heavily onto his left foreleg. Woolf heard a sharp CRACK!
Seabiscuit took an awkward, skipping step." Seabiscuit by Laura Hillenbrand, pg. 287

Medium Separation, Emphatic (the dash)

Example: I looked up - and there she stood.

"And when you hear silence -- it may be only a few seconds from now -- that is when you know you
have died!" -- Anthony Horowitz, Skeleton Key

Medium Separation, Anticipatory (the colon)

Example: I looked up: And there she stood.

"What Jason had been thinking, what had taken his breath away was this: He could make up
someone, someone suspicious."

-- Robert Cormier, The Rag and Bone Shop, page 91

Medium Separation (the semicolon)

Example: I looked up; and there she stood.

Looking into her eyes was like looking out of a grave from the inside; I was buried in the terror and
despair and agony of her gaze.

- Breaking Dawn

Minimal Separation (the comma)

Example: I looked up, and there she stood.

"He had Mama's straight, copper-colored hair, but I had to go and get Daddy's curly ole black hair
that I hate."

Barbara O'Connor, How to Steal a Dog (p14)

Zero Separation

Example: I looked up and there she stood.

"Fudge buttered himself a crumpet and ushered the plate toward Harry."

-- J.K. Rowling, H.P. & The Prisoner of Azkaban, p. 43