# Understanding Full Stops

|  |
| --- |
| ***For the consultant***: this is a basic introductory lesson. The emphasis here is not to spend much time labouring the point of full stops. Instead, go over these points if you notice the students repeatedly misplace full stops in their text. |

**By the end of this lesson you should be able to:**

* Identify why and how full stops should be used.

**Introduction**

Full stops often indicate a longer pause at the end of a sentence. Once a writer has completed their thought and moves on to the next part thereof, he/she will put a full stop.

**Purposes of the full stop**:

1. The full stop shows that a **sentence has ended**.

Example: I study at the University of Cape Town.

In order to show that “I study at the University of Cape Town” is a sentence; you need to place a full stop at the end.

Many times, students aren’t sure where to put full stops when using quotations. For example:

*Smith writes that “democratic elections are not enough to consolidate democrac****y.”***

Note that in this case, the full stop comes after the last word but **before** the quotation mark.

1. The full stop is **placed at the end of certain abbreviations** (although this is **usually** optional). Here are some examples of abbreviations that have full stops at the end:

Street St.

Avenue  Ave.

Senior  Sr.

Professor  Prof.

Reverend  Rev.

There are also Latin abbreviations that receive full stops:

e.g. (for example)

i.e. (that is to say)

viz. (namely)

etc. (and so forth)

et al. (and others)

**ACTIVITY**

Abbreviate the following and place a full stop where necessary

1. Doctor
2. Road
3. The full stop shows a **decimal point**:

Example 1: R49.95

**ACTIVITY**

Place the decimal point in its correct position in the following:

Example*: I bought the milk for R1195.* (Eleven rand and ninety-five cents)

Answer: *I bought the milk for R11.95*.

1. The textbook cost R50000. (Five hundred rand)
2. Figure 210 shows the racial distribution of income in South Africa in 1985. (Figure two point ten)