Semicolon Signal Sort

Sort each sentence, prove two choices, then create your own.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.2a "Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses."

NAME _____ DATE _____

SEMICOLON WORKS

The semicolon correctly joins two closely related independent clauses. Each side can stand as a complete sentence.

The lantern dimmed; nevertheless, the hikers continued along the ridge.

SEMICOLON NEEDS REPAIR

The semicolon does not correctly link two independent clauses. One side may be a phrase or dependent clause, or a coordinating conjunction may follow the semicolon.

Across the frozen pond; a fox crossed quietly.

1 SORT

8 items

For each sentence, circle LINKED or REPAIR, then choose two items and explain how the semicolon correctly links, or fails to link, two independent clauses.

1. The river rose overnight; volunteers filled sandbags. LINKED REPAIR

2. Maya finished the design; she emailed it to the team. LINKED REPAIR

3. Because the forecast changed; we moved the picnic indoors. LINKED REPAIR

4. The lab was closed; therefore, we met in the library. LINKED REPAIR

5. The scratched helmet; on the garage shelf. LINKED REPAIR

6. The debate lasted an hour; both teams presented strong evidence. LINKED REPAIR

7. Our train left at dawn; we reached the coast before noon. LINKED REPAIR

8. I packed an extra jacket; but the weather stayed warm. LINKED REPAIR

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new sentence for LINKED and one new sentence for REPAIR. Do not copy a sentence from this page.

LINKED _____

REPAIR _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence with three closely related independent clauses, using two semicolons and a conjunctive adverb correctly.

ANSWER KEY

Semicolon Signal Sort

HIGH SCHOOL · L.9-10.2a

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The river rose overnight; volunteers filled sandbags.	**LINKED**	Both sides are closely related independent clauses.
2	Maya finished the design; she emailed it to the team.	**LINKED**	Both sides are closely related independent clauses.
3	Because the forecast changed; we moved the picnic indoors.	**REPAIR**	The first side is a dependent clause beginning with Because.
4	The lab was closed; therefore, we met in the library.	**LINKED**	Both sides are independent clauses, and therefore is followed by a comma.
5	The scratched helmet; on the garage shelf.	**REPAIR**	Neither side is an independent clause.
6	The debate lasted an hour; both teams presented strong evidence.	**LINKED**	Both sides are closely related independent clauses.
7	Our train left at dawn; we reached the coast before noon.	**LINKED**	Both sides are closely related independent clauses.
8	I packed an extra jacket; but the weather stayed warm.	**REPAIR**	A semicolon should not be followed by the coordinating conjunction but.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **LINKED**: The museum was crowded; we returned on a weekday.
- **REPAIR**: During the noisy parade; our dog hid under the table.

Challenge: The first bus was full; therefore, I waited for the next one; it arrived ten minutes later.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, acceptable explanations identify whether each side of the semicolon is an independent clause and note any punctuation issue, such as a dependent clause, phrase, or coordinating conjunction. In the challenge sample, all three sections can stand alone as complete sentences.