Museum Care Code

Notice how punctuation keeps precise information clear.

ELA.8.C.3 "Following Conventions"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each semicolon and colon. Underline the complete clause before and after each semicolon, then box each word with an apostrophe.

Protecting History

1 Before dawn, staff members at the National Museum of American History begin checking the building's climate controls. Paper documents, wooden tools, and textile flags can change when air becomes too damp or dry. In storage rooms, sensors send temperature and humidity readings to a central computer. The system cannot protect every object by itself; conservators study the reports and inspect items closely. When they find a problem, they may move an artifact into a sealed case or adjust the room's airflow.

2 At the worktable, conservators use small, careful tools: soft brushes, bamboo picks, and low-suction vacuums. These tools remove loose dust without scraping a fragile surface. A conservator's notes record each step, including the materials used and the object's condition. For example, a faded poster might be photographed before treatment, cleaned under magnification, and placed in a protective folder. The goal is not to make an old object look new; the goal is to keep it stable so future visitors can study it.

3 Because the museum cares for more than 1.8 million objects, its work depends on planning and teamwork. Curators, educators, and security staff work together to protect the galleries. Each group shares information, so a change in one area can affect another. During a renovation, for instance, workers may cover nearby cases, label every crate, and map each object's location. The museum's collection belongs to the public, and careful conventions in records help staff communicate accurately about every piece.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why is a semicolon used between “itself” and “conservators” in paragraph 1?

2. What does the colon after “tools” in paragraph 2 introduce?

3. In the phrase “A conservator's notes,” what does the apostrophe show?

4. In paragraph 3, what do the commas separate in the sentence beginning “Curators”?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write three connected sentences about protecting a valuable object. Include a comma after an introductory word or phrase, a colon before a list, a semicolon joining two complete sentences, and a possessive noun with an apostrophe.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · ELA.8.C.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each semicolon and colon. Underline the complete clause before and after each semicolon, then box each word with an apostrophe. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is a semicolon used between “itself” and “conservators” in paragraph 1?	**It joins two closely related independent clauses.**
2	What does the colon after “tools” in paragraph 2 introduce?	**A list of tools: soft brushes, bamboo picks, and low-suction vacuums.**
3	In the phrase “A conservator's notes,” what does the apostrophe show?	**The notes belong to one conservator.**
4	In paragraph 3, what do the commas separate in the sentence beginning “Curators”?	**They separate the items in a series: curators, educators, and security staff.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before the exhibit opens, Maya checks the display case. She inspects three features: the lock, the glass, and the light; each part protects the painting's surface. Her report helps the curator plan repairs.

Accept equivalent explanations that correctly identify each punctuation mark's function. For Part 3, require three connected sentences that use all four requested conventions correctly, including a semicolon between independent clauses.