

Semicolon Signal Check

Spot the semicolons that follow the rules.

ELA.9.C.3.1 "Follow the rules of standard English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling appropriate to grade level."

NAME _____

DATE _____

CORRECT SEMICOLON USE

A semicolon can join two closely related complete sentences. Each side must be able to stand alone.

Cliffs rose sharply; hikers reached camp at dusk.

INCORRECT SEMICOLON USE

A semicolon is incorrect when one side is not a complete sentence or when it splits parts that belong together.

During festivals; musicians performed downtown.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For Part 1, circle CORRECT or INCORRECT for each sentence; for Part 2, choose two items and explain the rule that supports each choice.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. The robotics team tested the sensor; the device still failed. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |
| 2. Maya packed her sketchbook; her brother carried the paint. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |
| 3. The storm ended; a rainbow appeared above the stadium. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |
| 4. After rehearsal; the actors returned their costumes. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |
| 5. Our class planted tulips; the courtyard will bloom in spring. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |
| 6. The cafeteria served soup; and sandwiches today. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |
| 7. Because the buses were late; practice began after sunset. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |
| 8. The librarian shelved the atlas; a student borrowed a novel. | <input type="button" value="CORRECT"/> | <input type="button" value="INCORRECT"/> |

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 with a correctly used semicolon and one sentence with an incorrectly used semicolon.

CORRECT _____

INCORRECT _____

CHALLENGE

Write a sentence with an introductory phrase and two complete clauses, using a comma after the introductory phrase and a semicolon between the clauses.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The robotics team tested the sensor; the device still failed.	CORRECT	Both sides are complete sentences.
2	Maya packed her sketchbook; her brother carried the paint.	CORRECT	Both sides are complete sentences.
3	The storm ended; a rainbow appeared above the stadium.	CORRECT	Both sides are complete sentences.
4	After rehearsal; the actors returned their costumes.	INCORRECT	The semicolon incorrectly follows an introductory phrase.
5	Our class planted tulips; the courtyard will bloom in spring.	CORRECT	Both sides are complete sentences.
6	The cafeteria served soup; and sandwiches today.	INCORRECT	The words after the semicolon are not a complete sentence.
7	Because the buses were late; practice began after sunset.	INCORRECT	The semicolon incorrectly follows an introductory dependent clause.
8	The librarian shelved the atlas; a student borrowed a novel.	CORRECT	Both sides are complete sentences.

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)

- **CORRECT:** The exhibit opened early; visitors filled the gallery.
- **INCORRECT:** My cousin; plays the cello.

Challenge: At the final bell, the hallway grew quiet; students waited near the exits.

Items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 correctly join two independent clauses. In items 4 and 7, the semicolon follows an introductory element, and item 6 places one before a nonclause.