

Join It Clearly

Spot the punctuation that joins ideas clearly.

7.L.GC.2 "Syntax: Apply understanding of syntax to comprehend, analyze, condense, and combine ideas and information, enhancing clarity, style, and meaning."

NAME _____

DATE _____

CLEAR JOIN

A clear join connects two complete ideas with a period, a semicolon, or a comma plus a coordinating conjunction, such as and, but, or so.

Dawn arrived; the orchard filled with birdsong.

COMMA SPLICE

A comma splice puts only a comma between two complete ideas. A comma alone cannot do the whole job of joining them.

The volcano rumbled, nearby windows shook.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle CLEAR or SPLICE for each sentence, then choose two items, one from each category, and explain which punctuation or joining word helped you decide.

1. The bell rang, the students packed their bags.

CLEAR

SPLICE

2. The trail was muddy, we wore waterproof boots.

CLEAR

SPLICE

3. Maya finished the poster, and she carried it to class.

CLEAR

SPLICE

4. I wanted to call you, my phone battery died.

CLEAR

SPLICE

5. Our team practiced after school, but the gym closed early.

CLEAR

SPLICE

6. The recipe looked simple, so we baked the cookies.

CLEAR

SPLICE

7. The wind picked up, the sailboat returned to shore.

CLEAR

SPLICE

8. Leon reviewed his notes, he felt ready for the quiz.

CLEAR

SPLICE

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 two-idea sentence with a CLEAR join and one new two-idea sentence with a SPLICE.

CLEAR _____

SPLICE _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one SPLICE sentence from Part 1. Rewrite it as a CLEAR join, then name the word or punctuation you added or changed.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The bell rang, the students packed their bags.	SPLICE	Two complete ideas are joined only by a comma.
2	The trail was muddy, we wore waterproof boots.	SPLICE	Two complete ideas are joined only by a comma.
3	Maya finished the poster, and she carried it to class.	CLEAR	A comma plus and joins the two complete ideas.
4	I wanted to call you, my phone battery died.	SPLICE	Two complete ideas are joined only by a comma.
5	Our team practiced after school, but the gym closed early.	CLEAR	A comma plus but joins the two complete ideas.
6	The recipe looked simple, so we baked the cookies.	CLEAR	A comma plus so joins the two complete ideas.
7	The wind picked up, the sailboat returned to shore.	SPLICE	Two complete ideas are joined only by a comma.
8	Leon reviewed his notes, he felt ready for the quiz.	SPLICE	Two complete ideas are joined only by a comma.

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)

- **CLEAR:** Rina watered the herbs, and they grew quickly.
- **SPLICE:** The museum opened late, we waited outside.

Challenge: The bell rang, and the students packed their bags. I added the coordinating conjunction and.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify two complete ideas and explain whether a comma alone or a comma plus a coordinating conjunction joins them. Part 3 and challenge responses may vary if they fit the named category.