Colon Checkpoint

Sort sentences by how they use a colon.

8.L.GC.1.56 "Mechanics: Use colons to introduce lists, examples, and explanations. (Master)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

CORRECT COLON USE

A colon can follow a complete sentence. Use it to introduce a list, examples, or an explanation.

The glacier moved faster than expected: warm rain weakened its edges.

INCORRECT COLON USE

The colon is in the wrong place. It may split a subject from its verb or a verb from what receives the action.

The captain: greeted the passengers.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle CORRECT or INCORRECT for each sentence, then choose two items and explain in writing why each colon is correct or incorrect.

1.	The orchestra needed two more instruments: a cello and a trumpet.	CORRECT	INCORRECT
2.	The festival acts: dancers, jugglers, and drummers performed all afternoon.	CORRECT	INCORRECT
3.	The key to the cabinet: was hidden under a rug.	CORRECT	INCORRECT
4.	The pilot made a quick decision: she returned to the airport.	CORRECT	INCORRECT
5.	The garden had a surprise: purple carrots grew beside the tomatoes.	CORRECT	INCORRECT
6.	Please bring: your permission slip tomorrow.	CORRECT	INCORRECT
7.	The librarian had one request: return the atlas by Friday.	CORRECT	INCORRECT
8.	The players carried three things: helmets, gloves, and water bottles.	CORRECT	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 colon and one new sentence with an incorrectly used colon.

CORRECT _____

INCORRECT _____

CHALLENGE

Write a two-sentence mini-paragraph that uses one colon to introduce a list and one colon to introduce an explanation.

ANSWER KEY

Colon Checkpoint

GRADE 8 · 8.L.GC.1.56

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The orchestra needed two more instruments: a cello and a trumpet.	**CORRECT**	The complete sentence introduces a list.
2	The festival acts: dancers, jugglers, and drummers performed all afternoon.	**INCORRECT**	The colon splits the subject, "The festival acts," from its verb, "performed."
3	The key to the cabinet: was hidden under a rug.	**INCORRECT**	The colon splits the subject from the verb.
4	The pilot made a quick decision: she returned to the airport.	**CORRECT**	The complete sentence before the colon introduces an explanation.
5	The garden had a surprise: purple carrots grew beside the tomatoes.	**CORRECT**	The complete sentence before the colon introduces an explanation.
6	Please bring: your permission slip tomorrow.	**INCORRECT**	The colon splits the verb, "bring," from its object.
7	The librarian had one request: return the atlas by Friday.	**CORRECT**	The complete sentence before the colon introduces an explanation or instruction.
8	The players carried three things: helmets, gloves, and water bottles.	**CORRECT**	The complete sentence introduces a list.

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 chef revealed the secret ingredient: smoked paprika.
- **INCORRECT**: The secret ingredient: was smoked paprika.

Challenge: Our science team brought three materials: a thermometer, a stopwatch, and a notebook. We repeated the trial for one reason: the first reading seemed unusual.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Correct items are 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8. Incorrect items are 2, 3, and 6 because each colon separates words that should stay together.