Punctuation Partners

Sort sentences by what their punctuation does.

6.W.7.a.II "Using semicolons to connect main clauses and colons to introduce a list or quotation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

SEMICOLON

A semicolon joins two closely related main clauses. Each side could be a sentence on its own.

Moonlight faded; crickets grew quiet.

COLON

A colon comes after a complete thought and introduces a list or a quotation.

Pack these tools: tweezers, glue, and string.

1 SORT

8 items

For each sentence, circle SEMICOLON or COLON; then choose two numbered sentences and explain how you knew.

1.	Our exhibit includes three fossils: a shell, a tooth, a leaf.	SEMICOLON COLON
2.	Rain tapped the roof; Maya closed the window.	SEMICOLON COLON
3.	The timer rang; our experiment ended.	SEMICOLON COLON
4.	The note held one warning: “Keep off the ice.”	SEMICOLON COLON
5.	Jules opened the gate; the goats rushed outside.	SEMICOLON COLON
6.	The lights dimmed; everyone found a seat.	SEMICOLON COLON
7.	I checked the mailbox; no letter had arrived.	SEMICOLON COLON
8.	A camper needs four basics: a tent, a flashlight, a blanket, a bottle of water.	SEMICOLON COLON

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 two new sentences: one with a semicolon joining two main clauses and one with a colon introducing a list or quotation.

SEMICOLON _____

COLON _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence that uses a colon to introduce a list and a semicolon to join two main clauses.

ANSWER KEY

Punctuation Partners

GRADE 6 · 6.W.7.a.II

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Our exhibit includes three fossils: a shell, a tooth, a leaf.	**COLON**	The colon introduces a list after a complete thought.
2	Rain tapped the roof; Maya closed the window.	**SEMICOLON**	The semicolon joins two main clauses.
3	The timer rang; our experiment ended.	**SEMICOLON**	Both sides of the semicolon are main clauses.
4	The note held one warning: "Keep off the ice."	**COLON**	The colon introduces a quotation after a complete thought.
5	Jules opened the gate; the goats rushed outside.	**SEMICOLON**	The semicolon joins two main clauses.
6	The lights dimmed; everyone found a seat.	**SEMICOLON**	Both sides of the semicolon are main clauses.
7	I checked the mailbox; no letter had arrived.	**SEMICOLON**	The semicolon joins two main clauses.
8	A camper needs four basics: a tent, a flashlight, a blanket, a bottle of water.	**COLON**	The colon introduces a list after a complete thought.

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)

- **SEMICOLON**: Nina studied the map; her brother watched the road.
- **COLON**: The recipe calls for three spices: cumin, paprika, and ginger.

Challenge: I packed three supplies: paper, crayons, and tape; my bag was ready.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify two main clauses for a semicolon or a list or quotation following a complete thought for a colon. For the challenge, check that both sides of the semicolon can stand alone as sentences.