Semicolon Check

Sort sentences by how their semicolons work.

L.9-10.2 "When writing: Demonstrate appropriate use of a semicolon with and without a conjunctive adverb to link two or more closely related independent clauses. Demonstrate appropriate use of a colon to introduce a list or quotation..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

WORKS

A semicolon can link two closely related independent clauses, with or without a conjunctive adverb. If a conjunctive adverb begins the second clause, put a comma after it.

Mina checked the forecast; nevertheless, she packed a raincoat.

NEEDS REVISION

A semicolon cannot join a complete clause to a fragment or introduce a list. A colon can introduce a list after a complete clause.

The orchestra paused; before the conductor returned.

1 SORT

8 items

Read each sentence and circle WORKS if the semicolon is used correctly or REVISE if it needs to be changed.

1. The library closed early; the debate team met outside. WORKS REVISE

2. Nora revised her thesis; therefore, her argument grew clearer. WORKS REVISE

3. The bell rang; when the final round began. WORKS REVISE

4. The evidence seemed strong; however the source was unreliable. WORKS REVISE

5. The map was outdated; we took a different route. WORKS REVISE

6. We need three supplies; markers, paper, and tape. WORKS REVISE

7. The printer ran out of ink; consequently, the posters were delayed. WORKS REVISE

8. The garden needed shade; a tall fence blocked the afternoon sun. WORKS REVISE

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

PROVE IT: Choose one WORKS item and one REVISE item, and explain how you knew where each belonged. MAKE YOUR OWN: Write one new sentence in which a semicolon WORKS and one that needs REVISION because a semicolon introduces a list.

WORKS _____

REVISE _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite item 6 two ways: once with a colon to introduce the list and once with a semicolon followed by a conjunctive adverb. Keep the same supplies.

ANSWER KEY # Semicolon Check

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The library closed early; the debate team met outside.	**WORKS**	The semicolon links two related independent clauses.
2	Nora revised her thesis; therefore, her argument grew clearer.	**WORKS**	The semicolon links independent clauses, and a comma follows the conjunctive adverb.
3	The bell rang; when the final round began.	**REVISE**	The words after the semicolon form a dependent clause.
4	The evidence seemed strong; however the source was unreliable.	**REVISE**	A comma is needed after the conjunctive adverb however.
5	The map was outdated; we took a different route.	**WORKS**	The semicolon links two related independent clauses.
6	We need three supplies; markers, paper, and tape.	**REVISE**	The words after the semicolon are a list, not an independent clause; a colon can introduce the list.
7	The printer ran out of ink; consequently, the posters were delayed.	**WORKS**	The semicolon links independent clauses, and a comma follows the conjunctive adverb.
8	The garden needed shade; a tall fence blocked the afternoon sun.	**WORKS**	The semicolon links two related independent clauses.

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)

- **WORKS**: The storm passed; the ferry resumed service.
- **REVISE**: The studio ordered four colors; red, blue, green, and gold.

Challenge: We need three supplies: markers, paper, and tape. We need three supplies; specifically, we need markers, paper, and tape.

For PROVE IT, accept explanations that identify two related independent clauses in a WORKS item and the specific error in a REVISE item. For MAKE YOUR OWN, the revision example should use a semicolon where a colon belongs before a list.