Semicolon Check

Peer-edit a student newsletter draft.

8.LL.17.a "Correct improper usage of commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, colons, semicolons, hyphens, and dashes through peer editing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

CORRECT

A semicolon is correct when the words on each side could stand alone as a complete sentence.

The kettle whistled; steam filled the kitchen.

NEEDS A FIX

A semicolon needs a fix when the words on either side could not stand alone as a complete sentence.

A bright comet; crossed the sky.

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle RIGHT or FIX for each sentence; for Part 2, choose two numbered items and explain how you knew where each belonged.

1.	The library opened early; students lined up outside.	RIGHT FIX
2.	Maya checked the microphones; Omar adjusted the lights.	RIGHT FIX
3.	The robotics club; tested its new design.	RIGHT FIX
4.	The debate ended; both teams shook hands.	RIGHT FIX
5.	The cafeteria served soup; and fresh bread.	RIGHT FIX
6.	The mural was finished; before the festival began.	RIGHT FIX
7.	The buses arrived late; the concert began on time.	RIGHT FIX
8.	The principal; announced the winners.	RIGHT FIX

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

For Part 3, write one new sentence that belongs in RIGHT and one that belongs in FIX; use a semicolon in both.

RIGHT _____

FIX _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one FIX item, correct its punctuation, and explain your change in one sentence.

ANSWER KEY

Semicolon Check

GRADE 8 · 8.LL.17.a

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The library opened early; students lined up outside.	**RIGHT**	Both sides are complete sentences.
2	Maya checked the microphones; Omar adjusted the lights.	**RIGHT**	Both sides are complete sentences.
3	The robotics club; tested its new design.	**FIX**	The semicolon separates the subject from its verb.
4	The debate ended; both teams shook hands.	**RIGHT**	Both sides are complete sentences.
5	The cafeteria served soup; and fresh bread.	**FIX**	The words after the semicolon are not a complete sentence.
6	The mural was finished; before the festival began.	**FIX**	The words after the semicolon are a dependent clause.
7	The buses arrived late; the concert began on time.	**RIGHT**	Both sides are complete sentences.
8	The principal; announced the winners.	**FIX**	The semicolon separates the subject from its verb.

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)

- **RIGHT**: The snow melted; the creek rose.
- **FIX**: A small fox; darted into the brush.

Challenge: The robotics club tested its new design. I removed the semicolon because it split the subject from its verb.

For Part 2, accept explanations that test whether both sides can stand alone, such as item 2, where both sides can, and item 6, where the second side cannot.