Comma Crossroads

Sort correct joins from comma splices.

12.5.W.6 "Students will write using correct comma mechanics."

NAME _____ DATE _____

CORRECT JOIN

When you join two complete thoughts in one sentence, put a comma before a joining word such as and, but, or so.

The kettle whistled, and the chef turned down the heat.

COMMA SPLICE

A comma splice joins two complete thoughts with only a comma. A comma alone cannot hold them together.

The violinist bowed, the audience fell silent.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle JOINED or SPLICE for each sentence, then choose one item from each category and explain how you knew.

1.	The gallery opened at noon, and the curator greeted the guests.	JOINED	SPLICE
2.	The telescope malfunctioned, but the team recorded the readings.	JOINED	SPLICE
3.	The debate ended, the moderator collected the ballots.	JOINED	SPLICE
4.	The river rose overnight, so the town closed the bridge.	JOINED	SPLICE
5.	The editor rejected the draft, the writer revised the opening.	JOINED	SPLICE
6.	The train stopped suddenly, the passengers held their bags.	JOINED	SPLICE
7.	The lab lost power, yet the researchers saved their data.	JOINED	SPLICE
8.	The lease expired, so the tenants moved in June.	JOINED	SPLICE

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Choose one item from each category and explain how you knew.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one original sentence with a correct comma-and-conjunction join and one original comma splice.

JOINED

SPLICE

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence with three complete thoughts, joining each pair with a comma and a joining word; underline both joining words.

ANSWER KEY # Comma Crossroads

GRADE 12 · 12.5.W.6

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The gallery opened at noon, and the curator greeted the guests.	**JOINED**	A comma and and join two independent clauses.
2	The telescope malfunctioned, but the team recorded the readings.	**JOINED**	A comma and but join two independent clauses.
3	The debate ended, the moderator collected the ballots.	**SPLICE**	A comma alone joins two independent clauses.
4	The river rose overnight, so the town closed the bridge.	**JOINED**	A comma and so join two independent clauses.
5	The editor rejected the draft, the writer revised the opening.	**SPLICE**	A comma alone joins two independent clauses.
6	The train stopped suddenly, the passengers held their bags.	**SPLICE**	A comma alone joins two independent clauses.
7	The lab lost power, yet the researchers saved their data.	**JOINED**	A comma and yet join two independent clauses.
8	The lease expired, so the tenants moved in June.	**JOINED**	A comma and so join two independent clauses.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Task: Choose one item from each category and explain how you knew.
Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **JOINED**: The siren sounded, but the crowd remained calm.
- **SPLICE**: The candle flickered, the room grew dark.

Challenge: The rehearsal ended, but the lights stayed on, so the crew checked the switches.

For Part 2, each explanation should identify two complete thoughts and note whether a joining word follows the comma. Part 3 samples are listed in the same order as the categories.