Thought Traffic

Spot where two complete thoughts meet.

6.5.W.3 "Students will recognize and correct the following: run-ons, errors in subject and verb agreement, inappropriate shifts in verb tense, and inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person."

NAME _____ DATE _____

CORRECTLY PUNCTUATED

A period separates two complete thoughts into sentences. A comma and a joining word, such as *and* or *but*, can join them in one sentence.

The owl blinked. The lantern flickered.

RUN-ON

Two complete thoughts are pushed together with no punctuation or with only a comma between them. Each thought could stand alone as a sentence.

The turtle hid, the pond froze.

1 SORT

8 items

Part 1 SORT: Read each item and circle its category; Part 2 PROVE IT: Pick one item from each category and explain the punctuation clue you used.

1. The whistle blew the runners started. CORRECT RUN-ON

2. Maya packed her bag, the bus arrived. CORRECT RUN-ON

3. The rain stopped. Our game began. CORRECT RUN-ON

4. The lights dimmed the crowd grew quiet. CORRECT RUN-ON

5. Nico waved, but his sister looked away. CORRECT RUN-ON

6. The oven beeped. Dad took out the bread. CORRECT RUN-ON

7. A key turned, the gate opened. CORRECT RUN-ON

8. The bell rang students hurried inside. CORRECT RUN-ON

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick one item from each category and explain the punctuation clue you used.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Part 3 MAKE YOUR OWN: Write one new example of each category, with two complete thoughts in each example.

CORRECT _____

RUN-ON _____

CHALLENGE

Choose a run-on from Part 1 that has no punctuation between its thoughts, and fix it with a comma and a joining word.

ANSWER KEY

Thought Traffic

GRADE 6 · 6.5.W.3

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The whistle blew the runners started.	**RUN-ON**	Two complete thoughts have no punctuation between them.
2	Maya packed her bag, the bus arrived.	**RUN-ON**	A comma alone separates two complete thoughts.
3	The rain stopped. Our game began.	**CORRECT**	A period separates the complete thoughts into sentences.
4	The lights dimmed the crowd grew quiet.	**RUN-ON**	Two complete thoughts have no punctuation between them.
5	Nico waved, but his sister looked away.	**CORRECT**	A comma and but join the complete thoughts.
6	The oven beeped. Dad took out the bread.	**CORRECT**	A period separates the complete thoughts into sentences.
7	A key turned, the gate opened.	**RUN-ON**	A comma alone separates two complete thoughts.
8	The bell rang students hurried inside.	**RUN-ON**	Two complete thoughts have no punctuation between them.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Task: Pick one item from each category and explain the punctuation clue you used.
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 clouds parted, and the sun appeared.
- **RUN-ON**: The door creaked, the baby woke.

Challenge: The whistle blew, and the runners started.

The Part 3 samples appear in category order: CORRECT, then RUN-ON. For Part 2, accept explanations that identify the period, the comma with a joining word, a comma alone, or missing punctuation.