Mission Control Colons

Read a model passage and trace each colon's job.

10.LU.2.A "Know and apply the rules for the use of a colon (e.g., joining independent clauses, introducing a list, introducing a quotation) when writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each colon. In the margin, write L beside a colon that introduces a list, E beside one that introduces an explanation after a complete sentence, or Q beside one that introduces a quotation.

Apollo 11: A Coordinated Journey

1 On July 16, 1969, Apollo 11 lifted off from Kennedy Space Center at 9:32 a.m. EDT. The mission carried three astronauts: Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins. Their destination demanded careful planning: the crew would travel to the Moon, attempt a landing, and return safely to Earth. At Mission Control, engineers watched screens, checked systems, and relayed instructions. The launch began a journey that required both human judgment and precise machines. Even the first minutes mattered, because a small error could affect the path of the spacecraft.

2 Four days later, the lunar module Eagle separated from Columbia, the command module orbiting the Moon. Armstrong and Aldrin guided Eagle toward a flat area in the Sea of Tranquility. As fuel decreased, Armstrong took manual control to avoid a field of boulders. After landing, he reported to Mission Control: "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." The message confirmed that the crew had reached the lunar surface. Outside, the landscape held sharp shadows, gray dust, and no air to carry sound across the plain.

3 While Armstrong and Aldrin worked on the surface, Collins remained in Columbia and circled the Moon alone. He kept the command module ready for the return trip. Apollo 11's success rested on a simple truth: crews and controllers had to share accurate information. The mission also collected evidence for scientists: photographs, rock samples, and data from experiments. On July 24, the astronauts splashed down in the Pacific Ocean, where recovery crews reached them by helicopter. Their voyage changed future exploration by showing what a coordinated team could accomplish.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Copy the three astronauts named after the colon in paragraph 1. What does that colon introduce?

2. In paragraph 1, what complete idea comes before the colon in "Their destination demanded careful planning:"? What explanation follows it?

3. Which quoted report is introduced by a colon in paragraph 2, and who says it?

4. Why is a colon, rather than a comma, used after "Apollo 11's success rested on a simple truth" in paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence mission update about an imagined exploration. Use one colon to introduce a list, one to introduce an explanation after a complete sentence, and one to introduce a quotation. Underline each colon.

ANSWER KEY

Mission Control Colons

GRADE 10 · 10.LU.2.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each colon. In the margin, write L beside a colon that introduces a list, E beside one that introduces an explanation after a complete sentence, or Q beside one that introduces a quotation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Copy the three astronauts named after the colon in paragraph 1. What does that colon introduce?	**Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins. The colon introduces a list of astronauts.**
2	In paragraph 1, what complete idea comes before the colon in "Their destination demanded careful planning:"? What explanation follows it?	**Before: "Their destination demanded careful planning." After: the crew would travel to the Moon, attempt a landing, and return safely to Earth.**
3	Which quoted report is introduced by a colon in paragraph 2, and who says it?	**"Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Neil Armstrong says it.**
4	Why is a colon, rather than a comma, used after "Apollo 11's success rested on a simple truth" in paragraph 3?	**The words before the colon form a complete sentence, and the words after it explain that truth.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At a Mars research station, the crew inspected three tools: a drill, a camera, and a weather sensor. The work had one urgent purpose: the team needed data before a dust storm arrived. Before entering the habitat, the commander said: "Bring every sample inside."

Accept accurate colon use when the words before each colon form a complete sentence. The student should include one list, one explanation, and one quotation, with three underlined colons.