

Mark the Break

Sort the clues before you choose the mark.

11.LU.2.A "Use commas, semi-colons, and colons correctly in complex sentences in writing."

NAME _____

DATE _____

USE A COLON

Choose a colon when a complete sentence introduces a list or explanation. Use commas to separate items in a list.

The biologist recorded three observations: wing shape, feeding pattern, and nesting site.

USE A SEMICOLON

Choose a semicolon when it joins two closely related complete sentences. Each side of the semicolon must be able to stand alone.

The train left the station; commuters settled into their seats.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For Part 1, circle the punctuation category that correctly fills each blank; for Part 2, choose two item numbers and explain why each mark fits.

1. The town meeting addressed two concerns [_____] traffic and park maintenance. COLON SEMICOLON
2. The student council proposed two changes [_____] longer library hours and more bike racks. COLON SEMICOLON
3. The rain ended before noon [_____] the soccer field remained closed. COLON SEMICOLON
4. The field guide identifies four kinds of owls [_____] barn owl, barred owl, snowy owl, and great horned owl. COLON SEMICOLON
5. The archives were closed for repairs [_____] researchers used digital records instead. COLON SEMICOLON
6. The alarm sounded at six [_____] everyone left the building calmly. COLON SEMICOLON
7. The committee had one goal [_____] reduce food waste in the cafeteria. COLON SEMICOLON
8. The documentary ran longer than expected [_____] the discussion began after lunch. COLON SEMICOLON

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

Write one new sentence that needs a colon and one new sentence that needs a semicolon.

COLON

SEMICOLON

CHALLENGE

Write a two-sentence mini-scene that uses a colon to introduce a list and a semicolon to join two related complete sentences.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The town meeting addressed two concerns [____] traffic and park maintenance.	COLON	A complete lead-in introduces a list.
2	The student council proposed two changes [____] longer library hours and more bike racks.	COLON	A complete lead-in introduces a list.
3	The rain ended before noon [____] the soccer field remained closed.	SEMICOLON	Two related complete sentences are joined.
4	The field guide identifies four kinds of owls [____] barn owl, barred owl, snowy owl, and great horned owl.	COLON	A complete lead-in introduces a list, and list items need commas.
5	The archives were closed for repairs [____] researchers used digital records instead.	SEMICOLON	Two related complete sentences are joined.
6	The alarm sounded at six [____] everyone left the building calmly.	SEMICOLON	Two related complete sentences are joined.
7	The committee had one goal [____] reduce food waste in the cafeteria.	COLON	A complete lead-in introduces an explanation.
8	The documentary ran longer than expected [____] the discussion began after lunch.	SEMICOLON	Two related complete sentences are joined.

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)

- **COLON:** The astronomy club scheduled two activities: a telescope workshop and a night hike.
- **SEMICOLON:** The final bell rang; students streamed into the courtyard.

Challenge: Before the blackout, Maya gathered three supplies: candles, a radio, and extra batteries. The streetlights went dark; neighbors stepped onto their porches.

Accept equivalent explanations that identify a list or explanation after a complete clause for a colon, or two related complete clauses for a semicolon. In student writing, verify that a colon has a complete lead-in and that both sides of a semicolon are complete sentences.