Link It Right

Choose the punctuation that connects complete thoughts.

9.LU.2.A "Use commas and semicolons to distinguish and divide main and subordinate clauses to link two or more closely related independent clauses when writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMMA LINK

Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction, such as and, but, or, or so, when it joins two complete sentences.

The puppy barked, and the neighbors opened their windows.

SEMICOLON LINK

Use a semicolon to join two closely related complete sentences when no coordinating conjunction joins them.

Rain tapped the roof; everyone stayed indoors.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle COMMA or SEMICOLON for each sentence, then, in Prove It, choose two items and explain which two complete sentences are linked and why the punctuation fits.

1. The server saved the file, but the screen froze. COMMA SEMICOLON

2. The tides were high, so the ferry left early. COMMA SEMICOLON

3. The first speaker paused; the audience grew quiet. COMMA SEMICOLON

4. The lab lights flickered, and the class waited. COMMA SEMICOLON

5. The recipe needed salt; the soup tasted bland. COMMA SEMICOLON

6. The gate was locked; no one entered the courtyard. COMMA SEMICOLON

7. Mia studied the map, yet she missed the turn. COMMA SEMICOLON

8. The batteries died, so the robot stopped moving. COMMA 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 with a comma and coordinating conjunction joining two complete sentences, and one new sentence with a semicolon joining two closely related complete sentences.

COMMA

SEMICOLON

CHALLENGE

Write a three-sentence scene that includes one comma link and one semicolon link.

ANSWER KEY # Link It Right

GRADE 9 · 9.LU.2.A

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The server saved the file, but the screen froze.	**COMMA**	A comma comes before the coordinating conjunction but, and both sides are complete sentences.
2	The tides were high, so the ferry left early.	**COMMA**	A comma comes before the coordinating conjunction so, and both sides are complete sentences.
3	The first speaker paused; the audience grew quiet.	**SEMICOLON**	The semicolon joins two closely related complete sentences without a coordinating conjunction.
4	The lab lights flickered, and the class waited.	**COMMA**	A comma comes before the coordinating conjunction and, and both sides are complete sentences.
5	The recipe needed salt; the soup tasted bland.	**SEMICOLON**	The semicolon joins two closely related complete sentences without a coordinating conjunction.
6	The gate was locked; no one entered the courtyard.	**SEMICOLON**	The semicolon joins two closely related complete sentences without a coordinating conjunction.
7	Mia studied the map, yet she missed the turn.	**COMMA**	A comma comes before the coordinating conjunction yet, and both sides are complete sentences.
8	The batteries died, so the robot stopped moving.	**COMMA**	A comma comes before the coordinating conjunction so, and both sides are complete sentences.

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)

- **COMMA**: Jordan packed a jacket, and the weather turned cold.
- **SEMICOLON**: The museum closed early; the visitors changed their plans.

Challenge: The bus arrived late, so Lena checked the time again. She hurried to the door; her backpack swung behind her. The driver waved from the curb.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Items 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 are COMMA. Items 3, 5, and 6 are SEMICOLON. In Part 2, students should identify both independent clauses and name the coordinating conjunction when one is present.