GRAMMAR & PUNCTUATION · YEAR 8

Semicolons and Colons Practice

Choose the right mark, punctuate passages and try writing your own examples.

Name _____ **Date** _____

COLON :
Use a colon after a complete clause to introduce a list, explanation or example.

SEMICOLON ;
Use a semicolon to join two closely related complete sentences. Each side could stand alone.

1 Complete the sentences

Write a colon or semicolon in each gap.

1. The notice gave one important instruction _____ keep the gate closed.
2. The train was delayed _____ the platform grew crowded.
3. I could hear only one thing _____ the steady tapping of rain.
4. Sam had revised thoroughly _____ he still felt nervous before the exam.
5. We visited three coastal towns _____ Whitby, Scarborough and Filey.
6. The lights went out _____ everyone reached for a phone.

2 Punctuate the passages

Add a colon or semicolon in each gap.

Our team had one aim _____ to reach the summit before midday. The climb was steep _____ the path was covered with loose stones. We packed the essentials _____ water, snacks and a first-aid kit.

The school concert was nearly ready _____ the choir had rehearsed for weeks. There was one final check _____ every microphone had to work. The stage was set _____ the audience began to arrive.

3 Write your own

Create a sentence for each instruction.

Write a sentence in which a colon introduces a list.

Write a sentence in which a semicolon joins two closely related complete sentences.

Final check: Does each colon follow a complete clause? Can both sides of each semicolon stand as complete sentences?