

Y6 Semicolons Colons Dashes

KS2 Y6 English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Join with a semicolon: 'The library was closed. We went to the park instead.'

Step 1 · Cover test: are both independent?

Yes: both are full sentences.

Step 2 · Are they closely related?

Yes: the second follows from the first.

Step 3 · Replace the full stop and remove the capital

closed; we went

Answer: The library was closed; we went to the park instead.

Check: No capital letter after the semicolon.

2. Now try one with the steps

Colon or semicolon? 'Priya was thrilled ____ she had won the art prize.'

Step 1 · Does the second clause explain the first?

Step 2 · So choose

Answer:

3. Practice

Have a go at each one. There is space underneath to work it out.

1. What is an independent clause?

2. Join with a semicolon: 'The cake was in the oven. The kitchen smelled wonderful.'

3. Join with a colon: 'I couldn't sleep. The owl hooted all night.'

4. Join with a dash: 'I reached for the last biscuit. It had gone.'

5. Is this semicolon correct? 'The match was cancelled; the pitch was flooded.'
6. Is this semicolon correct? 'Because it snowed; school closed.'
7. Which mark is usually the most informal: colon, semicolon or dash?
8. Correct the comma splice: 'It was late, we hurried home.'
9. Add a colon: 'Mr Ahmed had one rule nobody runs in the corridor.'
10. Correct: 'If you are cold; wear a jumper.'
11. Explain why a colon fits better than a semicolon here: 'The plants had died: nobody had watered them.'
12. Rewrite with a semicolon instead of 'but': 'Lewis loves football, but his twin hates it.'
13. How many independent clauses are in: 'The lights went out; somebody screamed.'?
14. Write your own sentence with a dash between two independent clauses.

4. Before you hand it in

The comma splice: 'It was raining, I was fed up.'

It was raining; I was fed up. (or a full stop, or 'and')

A semicolon after a subordinate clause: 'Although it rained; we went out.'

Although it rained, we went out.

A capital after a semicolon: 'The door opened; A man walked in.'

The door opened; a man walked in.

Using a hyphen for a dash: 'I looked-nobody was there.'

I looked – nobody was there.