

# Semicolons and Colons

## Reteaching

A **semicolon** marks a break in a sentence; it is stronger than a comma, but not as strong as a period. Use a semicolon in the following ways: to join the parts of a compound sentence if no coordinating conjunction is used; to separate the parts of a series when there are commas within the parts; and before a conjunctive adverb that joins the clauses of a compound sentence.

Twelve actresses tried out for the leading role in the musical; only three were called back for a second reading.

The first was from Garfield, Pennsylvania; the second was from Waco, Texas; and the third was from Los Angeles, California.

All 12 did well; however, the first and third auditioned best.

A **colon** indicates that a list, a quotation, or an explanation follows. Use a colon in the following ways: to introduce a list of items; between two independent clauses when the second explains or summarizes the first; and to introduce a long or formal quotation.

The perfect actress for this role will have the following qualities: enthusiasm, the ability to dance well, and a strong singing voice.

After the second audition the choice was clear: Melinda sang like an angel.

William Shakespeare wrote: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players; they have their exits and entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts."

Also use a colon in these places: after the greeting of a business letter; between numerals indicating hours and minutes; and in references to religious works.

## Using Semicolons and Colons

Add semicolons and colons appropriately to the following sentences.

1. Jim enjoys history, literature, and psychology but Rebecca prefers math, science, and music.
2. Beethoven visited Vienna in 1787 Mozart heard him play there.
3. Dan is interested in Japan consequently, he enjoyed the novel *Shogun*.
4. The runner has trained for months unfortunately, yesterday he broke his ankle.
5. Alison is a real gymnastics expert she has been participating in gymnastics for nine years.
6. Before you paint, gather the following things paint, a palette, and brushes.
7. Let's ask Sylvia to play the piano she's the best pianist I know.
8. The plane took off at exactly 5 28 P.M.
9. Rembrandt was a great painter nevertheless, he died penniless.
10. For skiing you need the following skis, poles, a warm jacket, a hat, and gloves.
11. In one of his essays, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote "Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not."
12. E. B. White was an essayist however, he is best known for the children's book *Charlotte's Web*.

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## More Practice

### A. Using the Semicolon and the Colon

Add semicolons and colons where they are needed in the numbered sentences.

To jump-start a car in cold weather, first, find another car with a strong battery. **(1)** Then, take the following safety precautions make sure that the cars do not touch turn off the ignitions of both cars turn off all accessories in both cars.

Now, take a set of jumper cables coded with black and red markings.

**(2)** Locate the positive terminals of the two batteries then connect the clamps of the red cable to the positive terminals. **(3)** Next, connect one clamp of the black cable to the negative terminal of the assisting battery connect the other clamp of the black cable to the engine block of the car to be started.

**(4)** When all the cables are connected, start the engine of the assisting car then start the engine of the other car. Once you have cut the engine of the assisting car, take one important final step for safety's sake. **(5)** Remove the cable clamps in the reverse order from the way you connected them first, disconnect one of the black cable's clamps from the engine block then, disconnect the other from the assisting battery and, finally, disconnect the red cable's clamps from the positive terminals.

### B. Using the Semicolon and the Colon in Writing

Write the words from each sentence that should be followed by a semicolon or colon. Write the correct punctuation mark following the word. If the sentence is punctuated correctly, write **Correct**.

1. That play has been a great success it has played for several months to packed audiences. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Critics approve of the treatment of all of these elements the theme, the acting, the writing, and the staging. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Audiences enjoy the play's fast pace, its light humor, and its touching message. \_\_\_\_\_
4. One theater critic wrote "Although at first I could not understand the motivations of all the characters, as the play progressed I found myself actually liking these misfits and hoping that their lives would finally work out." \_\_\_\_\_
5. I did not reserve tickets to the play in advance consequently, I couldn't get any on the day of the show. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I learned my lesson: always plan ahead. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I saw my first professional play in Frankfort, Kentucky my second in Chicago, Illinois and my third in New York City, New York. \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPTER 11