**Commas vs Semicolons**

**A semicolon [ ; ] CAN take the place of a period.**

**A comma [ , ] CANNOT.**

* **I went to the store. I was hungry.**
* **I went to the store; I was hungry.**

**Why would you want to use a semicolon instead of a period? Good question. It’s usually to make your writing more fluid. A bunch of short, choppy sentences—one after the other—creates choppy, immature writing:**

**CHOPPY: I went to the store. I was hungry. I bought bread. I also bought peanut butter. I ate it all.**

**BETTER: I went to the store because I was hungry. I bought bread; I also bought peanut butter. I ate it all.**

**You don’t want to use too many semicolons, though; one per large paragraph (or even one per page) is about the max.**

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**To clarify, a comma cannot take the place of a period.**

**Semicolons CAN take the place of a period, but don’t overuse them.**

**Conventions 13: Commas vs Semicolons; spelling: PRIVILEGE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Conventions 13: Commas and Semicolons**

**Commas** are used for many things including indicating a pause and separating items in a series, as in, “John, Ana, and Tom went to the store.”

**Semicolons**, on the other hand, are used to join together two full sentences. (There are times when semicolons can be used to separate items in a series, too, but we won’t get into that right now.) “John and Ana went to the store**;** they wanted some candy.”

**To be clear, a semicolon can take the place of a period. A comma cannot.**

**Part I**: Fill in the blanks with commas or semicolons. Can the sentence be separated into two complete sentences? If so, use a semicolon. If not, use a comma.

1. Terri likes her new puppy \_\_\_\_\_ he makes her smile.
2. Lisa \_\_\_\_\_ Tyler \_\_\_\_\_ and Ramon listen to the same music \_\_\_\_\_ they often share CDs.
3. I asked for an apple \_\_\_\_\_ a banana \_\_\_\_\_ and a pear.
4. He ran \_\_\_\_\_ he wanted to get home early for homework \_\_\_\_\_ dinner \_\_\_\_\_ and bed.
5. My book is green \_\_\_\_\_ yellow \_\_\_\_\_ and red \_\_\_\_\_ I read it often.
6. The carpet \_\_\_\_\_ rug \_\_\_\_\_ and chairs are blue.
7. They ride their bikes often \_\_\_\_\_ they ride streetbikes \_\_\_\_\_ mountainbikes \_\_\_\_\_ and motorbikes.
8. Sometimes we go to school late \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes we get there early.
9. She watches many movies \_\_\_\_\_ most of them are horror \_\_\_\_\_ mystery \_\_\_\_\_ or drama.
10. You should smell these cookies \_\_\_\_\_ they’re great!
11. We went to the store for bread \_\_\_\_\_ lettuce \_\_\_\_\_ and milk \_\_\_\_\_ our refrigerator was empty!
12. Someday you have to go to Hawaii \_\_\_\_\_ it’s beautiful.
13. I like to hike \_\_\_\_\_ swim \_\_\_\_\_ and run \_\_\_\_\_ exercise reduces my stress level.
14. I didn’t go to school yesterday \_\_\_\_\_ I had chills \_\_\_\_\_ aches \_\_\_\_\_ and a fever.
15. He was tired yesterday \_\_\_\_\_ he went to the bank \_\_\_\_\_ to the store \_\_\_\_\_ and to school.
16. We love to write essays of all sorts \_\_\_\_\_ we love long ones \_\_\_\_\_ short ones \_\_\_\_\_ and essays

that are medium-length.

**Part II**: Write a sentence using **commas** to separate items in a series AND this week’s spelling word. (Hint: The word starts with “p,” and it means an honor.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Write a sentence using a **semicolon** to make two short sentences into one longer sentence AND a word using one of this week’s roots (**not** one of the matching words I’ve provided on this week’s half-sheet Roots handout, though).

2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Write one sentence that requires at least one comma **and** a semicolon. (See #14 above.)

3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**that are medium-length.**

**1. John attended a four-year college in high school he always earned good grades got high SAT scores and teachers wrote him strong recommendations.**

**2. John attended a four-year college in high school he always earned good grades got high SAT scores and had strong recommendations.**

**3. Although John was happy at OSU he decided he’d rather be challenged live somewhere beautiful and gain practical skills so he moved to Eugene.**

**4. John was fulfilled in Eugene he learned to read academically write analytically and think critically.**

**5. John graduated from U of O and went on to get a degree in his field of study in retrospect he was glad he had transferred.**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (first and last names)

**Conventions 13 Quiz**

1. Because your answers are\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, quizzes will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ your grade more.

alright / all right affect / effect

2. We have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ learned so much this year, but what’s the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of your work?

already / all ready affect / effect

3. The students are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to write; so far their quizzes have been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

already / all ready alright / all right

**Circle the correct spelling.**

4. A. Gramar

B. Gramer

C. Grammar

D. Grammer

5. A. Adress

B. Address

C. Addres

D. Adres

6. A. License

B. Lisence

C. Lisense

D. Licence

7. A. Committment

B. Comitment

C. Comittment

D. Commitment

8. A. Embarased

B. Embarrased

C. Embarrassed

D. Embarassed

9. A. Absense

B. Abcence

C. Abcense

D. Absence

10. A. Innocence

B. Innosence

C. Inosence

D. Inocence

E. Innosense

11. A. Separate

B. Seperate

C. Separut

D. Seprate

12. A. Neseccery

B. Nesessary

C. Nececcery

D. Necessary

E. Neccesary

13. A. Begininng

B. Beginning

C. Beggining

D. Begining

E. Begginning

14. A. Acidentally

B. Accidently

C. Accidentaly

D. Accidentely

E. Accidentally

15. A. Priviledge

B. Privilig

C. Priveledge

D. Privilege

**Complete sentence, fragment, or run-on? Put “CS” in the blank if it’s a complete sentence. Put “F” in the blank if it’s a fragment. Put “R-O” in the blank if it’s a run-on.**

16. \_\_\_\_\_ Although Sue and Bob went to dinner that night.

17. \_\_\_\_\_ They didn't have a good time, they left early.

18. \_\_\_\_\_ Tom drove home Sue listened to the radio.

19. \_\_\_\_\_ Tom walked Sue to the door and said good night.

20. \_\_\_\_\_ Sue was done going out with men named Bob.

21. \_\_\_\_\_ No matter how much Sue said she wouldn't go out with Bob again.

**Insert commas and semicolons where they belong. Make your punctuation OBVIOUS.**

22. Although Bob didn't like Sue very much he was willing to listen to his

friend Tom so he called her talked to her and asked her to dinner.

23. When he called her Sue who didn't like going out with men named Bob

said she would meet him she had been bored at home and wanted

to go out.

24. Bob drove up in his new car and went to the door he rang

the doorbell but she didn’t answer right away.

25. Write a sentence with a comma **and** a semicolon.

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**26. Write a paragraph about last year’s Lock-In –OR-- what your plans are for spring break (or write about something else). Your paragraph should be at least six sentences long, and you need a strong topic sentence.**

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