

Years 6 Punctuation: Semicolons, Colons and Dashes

Learning From Home Activity Booklet

Statutory Requirements	Activity Sheet	Page Number
Pupils should be introduced to the use of the semicolon, colon and dash to mark the boundary between independent clauses (for example, 'It's raining; I'm fed up!').	Colin Colon	2
	Adding a Semicolon	3
	Daisy's Dash Challenge	4
	Punctuation Pursuit	5
	Describe the Scene	6-7
	A Parent's Guide to Terminology	8

A note to parents: This booklet is designed to support and reinforce work done in school on **colons**, **semicolons** and **dashes**. If you would first like to review this terminology before completing this booklet, please see the PowerPoint in the following resource on the Twinkl website:

<http://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/tp2-e-011-new-planit-y6-spag-lesson-pack-semi-colons-colons-and-dashes>

Colin Colon

Year 6 Punctuation: Semicolons, Colons and Dashes

Colon Colin loves to use colons (:) in his sentences as he knows these will impress his teacher. He has set a challenge for you below. You must join together the two **independent clauses** that match best and then join them together using a **colon**.

Colin's Tip: When using colons, the first clause is usually a descriptive clause. Then, the next clause gives more information about the first clause.



The waves crashed violently against the shore it had whipped up a frenzy of sea foam.

The volcano was dangerous it had erupted many times before.

Heavily my eyelids began to close it was time to go to bed.

Sloths are extremely slow they take hours to cross the smallest of distances.

Medusa was an appalling monster she killed people by turning them to stone.

Challenge: Now write out each of the sentences in full below. Remember to add the colon (:) in the correct place between the two independent clauses.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Adding a Semicolon

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Each sentence below contains a pair of **closely related** independent clauses that have been joined with a conjunction. However, because they are closely related, they can be linked together with a **semicolon (;)**. Rewrite each sentence below, replacing the conjunction with a **semicolon**.

1. The boys were very excited because they were going bowling.

2. On a hillside, the goats bleated loudly and the valley echoed with the sound.

3. Jemima was feeling sad because her best friend had moved to another town.

4. John raced through the gates when he was running late for school.

5. Long shadows emerged through the streets as the sun was slowly setting.

6. The dog barked at his owner because he wanted to go for a walk.

7. In the supermarket, there was a long queue at the checkout because all the other tills were closed.

Daisy's Dash Challenge

Year 6 Punctuation: Semicolons, Colons and Dashes

Daisy has written some sentences below. However, she isn't sure where to include **dashes** (-). Please rewrite the sentences below, adding the dashes in the correct places.

Tip: Dashes can also be used to separate two independent clauses (like colons and semicolons) but they are often used in less formal writing. They can also be used to add extra information like brackets or commas to mark parenthesis or an embedded relative clause.



1. Dogs are very cute and cuddly I think they're my favourite animal.

2. My friend Will who is extremely good at sports has been chosen for team captain.

3. Greed, jealousy, ambition which of these was Macbeth's worst trait?

4. Amaan didn't like spicy food it always made her feel poorly!

5. The singer was captivating he had the audience in the palm of his hand.

6. Lethargically, the man rubbed his heavy eyes he hadn't slept for two days.

Punctuation Pursuit

Year 6 Punctuation: Semicolons, Colons and Dashes

In this booklet, you have practised using colons, semicolons and dashes. Now it's time to find examples of each type of punctuation in your favourite reading books. Try to find an example of each style of punctuation in a book of your own. To show your understanding of punctuation, try to explain how it has been used in each sentence. For example:

Example: These books gave Matilda a hopeful and comforting message: you are not alone.

Explanation: The writer has used a colon as the second clause gives more information about the first clause.



1. Colon

Example: _____

Explanation: _____

2. Semicolon

Example: _____

Explanation: _____

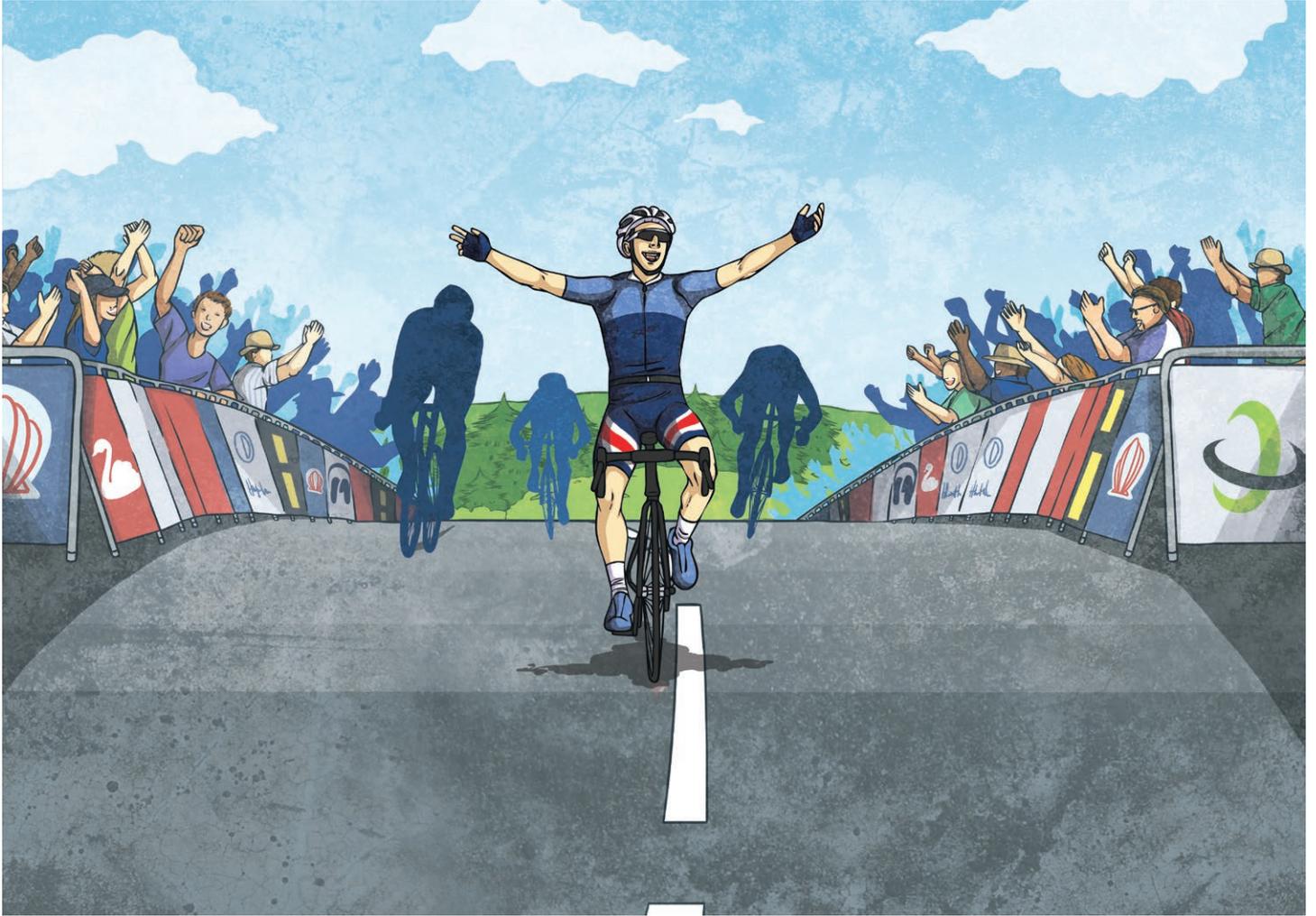
3. Dash

Example: _____

Explanation: _____

Describe the Scene

Year 6 Punctuation: Semicolons, Colons and Dashes



Look at the image above of a winning cyclist scene. Try and write a range of sentences about this picture that include colons, semicolons and dashes. For example:

The cyclist was elated; he held his arms aloft in celebration.

Motivational words echoed in his head: I'll never give up!

Peter – the cyclist wearing the yellow jersey – had dropped back into fourth place.

Use the following page to write your own sentences about the picture. You could even write a short description about the scene but remember to include the punctuation you have been practising throughout this booklet.

A Parent's Guide to Terminology

In the Year 6 National Curriculum, children are introduced to the terms **colon**, **semicolon** and **dash** and are taught how to use them within writing. These are sometimes tricky to learn as they can often be used interchangeably, which often confuses children. Use this booklet to help reinforce your child's understanding of the terms.

Colons

Colons have two uses: they can be used to introduce a list or they can expand a sentence by linking independent clauses together. Within this booklet, we have practised using colons for expansion, e.g.

The show was a success: it had over two million viewers.

Semicolons

Semicolons have two uses too. They can be used to link two closely related clauses in a sentence (they can often be used in place of a conjunction) and to organise information in a complicated list. Within this booklet, we have practised using semicolons to link closely related clauses, e.g.

Lola was feeling nervous; this was her first dance competition.

Dashes

Dashes can be used to separate or connect two independent clauses and are often in less formal writing. They can also be used to add extra information within a sentence (parenthesis).

To join clauses: Chimpanzees are hilarious – they're my favourite animal!

To add additional information: Chimpanzees – a type of primate – are native to Africa.

Year 6 Grammar: Semicolons, Colons and Dashes

Answers

page 2. Colin Colon.

1. The waves crashed violently against the shore: it had whipped up a frenzy of sea foam.
2. The volcano was dangerous: it had erupted many times before.
3. Heavily my eyelids began to close: it was time to go to bed.
4. Sloths are extremely slow: they take hours to cross the smallest of distances.
5. Medusa was an appalling monster: she killed people by turning them to stone.

page 3. Adding a Semicolon.

1. The boys were very excited because they were going bowling.
The boys were very excited; they were going bowling.
2. On a hillside, the goats bleated loudly and the valley echoed with the sound.
On a hillside, the goats bleated loudly; the valley echoed with the sound.
3. Jemima was feeling sad because her best friend had moved to another town.
Jemima was feeling sad; her best friend had moved to another town.
4. John raced through the gates when he was running late for school.
John raced through the gates; he was running late for school.
5. Long shadows emerged through the streets as the sun was slowly setting.
Long shadows emerged through the streets; the sun was slowly setting.
6. The dog barked at his owner because he wanted to go for a walk.
The dog barked at his owner; he wanted to go for a walk.
7. In the supermarket, there was a long queue at the checkout because all the other tills were closed.
In the supermarket, there was a long queue at the checkout; all the other tills were closed.

Year 6 Grammar: Semicolons, Colons and Dashes

Answers

page 4. Daisy's Dash Challenge.

1. Dogs are very cute and cuddly I think they're my favourite animal.
Dogs are very cute and cuddly – I think they're my favourite animal.
2. My friend Will who is extremely good at sports has been chosen for team captain.
**My friend Will - who is extremely good at sports
- has been chosen for team captain.**
3. Greed, jealousy, ambition which of these was Macbeth's worst trait?
Greed, jealousy, ambition - which of these was Macbeth's worst trait?
4. Amaan didn't like spicy food it always made her feel poorly
Amaan didn't like spicy food - it always made her feel poorly!
5. The singer was captivating he had the audience in the palm of his hand.
The singer was captivating - he had the audience in the palm of his hand.
6. Lethargically, the man rubbed his heavy eyes he hadn't slept for two days.
Lethargically, the man rubbed his heavy eyes - he hadn't slept for two days.