

Notes

In Module 3 you learnt that you use a colon when you write a dialogue.



Unit 5 The colon and the semi-colon

The colon (:) and the semi-colon (;) look very similar, but they do totally different jobs.

The colon (:)

- The colon can show that a list will follow the main clause.

Example:

Matthew went to the pharmacy to buy the following: cough mixture, vitamins and face wash.

- It is also used to show that an explanation will follow.

Example:

Walter looked into the mirror: he wanted to see how dirty he had become after the muddy soccer match.

- A colon introduces a quotation or a definition.

Example:

Remember this proverb: 'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.'

The semi-colon (;)

- The semi-colon joins two clauses, replacing *but* or *and*.

Example:

The boy looked into the mirror; he was happy with his reflection.

- You can use a semi-colon when too many commas are found in a list.

Example:

You get pimples, which are big inflamed spots; whiteheads with white pus; blackheads, which are those black, oily spots; and blind pimples.

Activity 5.1 Using the colon and the semi-colon

15 minutes

Copy the paragraph below into your exercise book. Punctuate it correctly using the semi-colon or colon where necessary. (5)

Musa went to the party he was nervous. He was not very good with crowds he was an only child, you see. He had gone to the shops that day and bought these items new jeans, a sweatshirt and socks ... yes socks. At the party, he went straight to the food section and started nibbling on chips, which were so spicy sweets, which he could have done without; and of course, the fattening cake. When he thought he was going to explode from all the food, he just quoted the proverb he knew best *Beauty is only skin deep*, and went to speak to his friends.

Very important

Total: 5

Activity 5.1 Using the colon and the semi-colon

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15 minutes

Musa went to the party ; (✓) he was nervous. He was not very good with crowds : (✓) he was an only child, you see. He had gone to the shops that day and bought these items : (✓) new jeans, a sweatshirt and socks ... yes socks. At the party, he went straight to the food section and started nibbling on chips, which were so spicy ; (✓) sweets, which he could have done without ; and of course, the fattening cake. When he thought he was going to explode from all the food, he just quoted the proverb he knew best : (✓) *Beauty is only skin deep*, and went to speak to his friends.

Total: 5