

Grammar Worksheets: Comma Splices (Also called Run-on Sentences)
Answers and Teaching Tips <http://www.grammar-worksheets.com>

Exercises: Each sentence below is wrong; it has a comma splice. Please correct it.

1. Each sentence below is wrong, it has a comma splice.

Two sentences: Each sentence below is wrong. It has a comma splice.

Semicolon: Each sentence below is wrong; it has a comma splice.

Subordinating Conjunction: Each sentence below is wrong because it has a comma splice.

Conjunctive Adverb: Each sentence below has a comma splice; therefore, it is wrong.

Coordinating Conjunction: Each sentence below has a comma splice, so it is wrong.

Teaching Tip: I wouldn't ask the students to rewrite the sentence using each technique. However, I would point out that they cannot be mechanical about comma splices. As writers, they must pay attention to the nuances of rhythm; they must "listen" and let the punctuation and syntax rise organically from the meaning.

Also, notice that last two examples, we required a slight alteration of the sentences so that we might use the conjunctive adverb and the coordinating conjunction. That's okay.

The best advice I can offer is to have the students look at the meaning of the original "sentence" and to use a combination of punctuation and conjunctions to establish **the relationship between the two ideas** and to arrange the sentences so that the relationship is obvious to a reader.

In the rest of the sentences, I'll just give the responses, unless some special commentary is warranted.

2. Eliza ran to the store, then she bought some candy.

Two sentences: Eliza ran to the store. Then she bought some candy.

Semicolon: Eliza ran to the store; then she bought some candy.

Subordinating Conjunction: When Eliza ran to the store, she bought some candy.

Conjunctive Adverb: Eliza ran to the store; then she bought some candy.

Coordinating Conjunction: Eliza ran to the store, and then she bought some candy.

Teaching Tip: In this sentence, stress that the word "then," despite its being short, is a conjunctive adverb and thus should not be used only with a comma to join two independent clauses.

The second clause seems only to add information to the first clause. The relationship is, if anything, chronological. I would suggest that "When Eliza..." is a good answer, as is ", and then...."

3. The stock market has moved in one direction lately, it has gone down.

Two sentences: The stock market has moved in one direction lately. It has gone down.

Semicolon: The stock market has moved in one direction lately; it has gone down.

Subordinating Conjunction: (There is no real basis for subordination here. The clauses seem to be of equivalent importance. The second clause merely describes the direction; it adds a little information.)

Conjunctive Adverb: The stock market has moved in one direction lately; in fact, it has gone down. (You can force the issue here with "in fact" but it really does not work well.)

Coordinating Conjunction: The stock market has moved in one direction lately, and it has gone down. (Again, the "and" is somewhat forced.)

Teaching Tip: The best response is the lone semicolon. The semicolon implies a close connection with the first clause, but does not force a semantic relationship through the syntax.

4. Elvis Presley was a great singer, he was never really accepted by the country music's mainstream.

Two sentences: Elvis Presley was a great singer. He was never really accepted by the country music's mainstream.

Semicolon: Elvis Presley was a great singer; he was never really accepted by the country music's mainstream.

Subordinating Conjunction: Although Elvis Presley was a great singer, he was never really accepted by the country music's mainstream.

Conjunctive Adverb: Elvis Presley was a great singer; however, he was never really accepted by the country music's mainstream.

Coordinating Conjunction: Elvis Presley was a great singer, but he was never really accepted by the country music's mainstream.

Teaching Tip: The relationship is fairly obvious. The best constructions seem to be the last three, where the relationship between the two clauses is clearly reinforced by the conjunctions.

5. Computer programs help us live saner lives, obviously the people who write them should make lots of money.

Two sentences: Computer programs help us live saner lives. Obviously the people who write them should make lots of money.

Semicolon: Computer programs help us live saner lives; obviously the people who write them should make lots of money.

Subordinating Conjunction: Since computer programs help us live saner lives, the people who write them should make lots of money.

Conjunctive Adverb: Computer programs help us live saner lives; therefore, the people who write them should make lots of money.

Coordinating Conjunction: Computer programs help us live saner lives, so obviously the people who write them should make lots of money.

Teaching Tip: The word "obviously" helps students understand the relationship between the two clauses. The last three choices seem to make that relationship clear. The "subordinating conjunction" example seems the most euphonious, most pleasing to the ear.

6. Dubai has built magnificent office towers with luxuries and conveniences, it is considered a great location in which to conduct international business.

Two sentences: Dubai has built magnificent office towers with luxuries and conveniences. It is considered a great location in which to conduct international business.

Semicolon: Dubai has built magnificent office towers with luxuries and conveniences; it is considered a great location in which to conduct international business.

Subordinating Conjunction: Because Dubai has built magnificent office towers with luxuries and conveniences, it is considered a great location in which to conduct international business.

Conjunctive Adverb: Dubai has built magnificent office towers with luxuries and conveniences; therefore, it is considered a great location in which to conduct international business.

Coordinating Conjunction: Dubai has built magnificent office towers with luxuries and conveniences, so it is considered a great location in which to conduct international business.

Teaching Tip: All of the techniques work fairly well here, but I would lean toward the last three, again because the relationship is made obvious.

7. Brazil has won several world cups championships in soccer, they are always considered a good team.

Two sentences: Brazil has won several world cups championships in soccer. They are always considered a good team.

Semicolon: Brazil has won several world cups championships in soccer; they are always considered a good team.

Subordinating Conjunction: Because Brazil has won several world cups championships in soccer, they are always considered a good team.

Conjunctive Adverb: Brazil has won several world cups championships in soccer; therefore, they are always considered a good team.

Coordinating Conjunction: Brazil has won several world cups championships in soccer, so they are always considered a good team.

Teaching Tip: You notice that three conjunctive adverbs serve most of our needs: then, however, and therefore. Impress upon students that these three conjunctive adverbs, used correctly, will take them far.

8. The Quaid-i-Azam campus of Punjab University is considered excellent, it attracts many students.

Two sentences: The Quaid-i-Azam campus of Punjab University is considered excellent. It attracts many students.

Semicolon: The Quaid-i-Azam campus of Punjab University is considered excellent; it attracts many students.

Subordinating Conjunction: Because the Quaid-i-Azam campus of Punjab University is considered excellent, it attracts many students.

Conjunctive Adverb: The Quaid-i-Azam campus of Punjab University is considered excellent; therefore, it attracts many students.

Coordinating Conjunction: The Quaid-i-Azam campus of Punjab University is considered excellent, so it attracts many students.