

THE BEST ACT PREP COURSE EVER

SEMICOLONS

ACT English: Problem Set

Correct the semicolon error(s) in the following sentences or write “no error.”

1. Rarely do I get to play the piano for myself most of the time I play for big audiences.
2. Julianna kept a thorough record of the birds she spotted on her trip to Veracruz; she didn't want to forget a single detail and hoped that her findings would help her with her research back home.
3. Louis was extremely excited to begin his science experiment for the school fair and knew exactly what he was planning to test; he bought a tank and created a desert-like environment that contained sedimentary rocks, sand, a lizard; and a strong heat lamp.
4. As a company, Google has become so omnipresent in today's world, people across the world use the verb “to google” even if they may not be using it as a search engine.
5. The pool of elite gymnasts competing internationally constantly fluctuates; due to the high rate of injury that forces many to prematurely retire.
6. Finally, on Thursday, Shane received the call; he had waited over a week, and when they called he was so eager that he accidentally hung up!
7. Girl Scouts in our city start selling cookies in early spring and stop selling around June; despite extremely high demand and abundant sales.
8. Some people think that extreme sports are enjoyable, others, including myself, disagree.
9. The fire alarm went off in the middle of the yoga class; although the yoga students were surprised, they calmly walked off the scene to a safe distance.
10. Hannah's pool needed a new filtering system a specialist came to her house to install it.

Unless otherwise specified, choose the correct answer from the following options.

1. Miguel Cervantes, one of the greatest Spanish writers, is most famous for writing the book Don Quixote but joined the navy and worked as a chamber assistant for a cardinal as well.

Which of the following options would NOT be an acceptable alternative to the underlined portion?

- A. for writing the book Don Quixote; though he joined the navy
- B. for writing the book Don Quixote but also joined the navy
- C. for writing the book Don Quixote. He joined the navy
- D. for writing the book Don Quixote; he joined the navy

2. The ballet dancer had stayed with the same company for over ten years, dancing both small and lead roles. She even trained new members on her days off.

Which of the following is NOT an acceptable alternative to the underlined portion above?

- A. dancing both small and lead roles, and even trained
- B. dancing both small and lead roles; she even trained
- C. dancing both small and lead roles, she even trained
- D. dancing both small and lead roles and training

3. The Hagia Sophia, a church originally built during the Byzantine empire, has one of the most complex histories of any architectural masterpiece; plastered over some of the Christian mosaics are traditional muslim decorations and patterns that the Ottomans added when they converted the church into a mosque.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. masterpiece, plastered over some of the Christian mosaics are
- C. masterpiece, still plastered over some of the Christian mosaics are
- D. masterpiece. Over some of the Christian mosaics, plastered

4. It wasn't until the streetcar was extensively established in the late 19th century that living in suburbs and working in the city became possible, thousands of people migrated to the suburbs as a result, which in turn spurred the creation of tract housing.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. became possible, leading
- C. became possible which led
- D. became possible;

5. The farm's apple trees grow along the fence, they border the olive trees and shade the squash plants below. (73E 24)

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. fence, then
- C. fence;
- D. fence

6. The fisherman steered his boat back to shore; after waves crashed violently and almost threw him overboard. (70C 36)

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. shore after
- C. shore: after
- D. shore. After

7. Some honey bees work primarily to sustain the hive others serve to fertilize the queen bee. (73C 39)

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. hive that
- C. hive;
- D. hive,

8. Mickey Mouse first came to life in 1928 at the Walt Disney Studios, Walt Disney created a short film called Steamboat Willie that featured the famous mouse. (72C 69)

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Studios, in fact,
- C. Studios in fact
- D. Studios;

9. Similar looking string instruments, a ukulele may be likened to a guitar; however, there are differences in size and range that distinguish the two. (71H 45)

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. guitar, however,
- C. guitar however,
- D. guitar however

10. Without its antenna the Empire State Building stands at 1,250 feet, an equivalent of 102 floors; wrapping its sides are a total of 6,500 windows. (72C 50)

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. floors; its sides which are wrapping
- C. floors. Its sides which are wrapping
- D. floors, wrapping its sides are

ANSWER KEY

1. Rarely do I get to play the piano by myself; most of the time I play for big audiences.
2. No Error
3. Louis was extremely excited to begin his science experiment for the school fair and knew exactly what he was planning to test; he bought a tank and created a desert-like environment that contained sedimentary rocks, sand, a lizard, and a strong heat lamp.
4. As a company, Google has become so omnipresent in today's world; people across the world use the verb "to google" even if they may not be using it as a search engine.
5. The pool of elite gymnasts competing internationally constantly fluctuates due to the high rate of injury that forces many to prematurely retire.
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ANSWER KEY

1. A 2. B 3. A 4. D 5. C 6. B 7. C 8. D 9. A 10. A

ANSWER EXPLANATIONS

1. A A dependent clause follows the semicolon, so a semicolon cannot be used to separate the two clauses and would therefore not be an acceptable alternative.
2. B The semicolon separates the two independent clauses.
3. A The semicolon appropriately separates the independent clause about the Hagia Sophia from the second independent clause about the mosaics.
4. D A semicolon is needed to avoid a comma splice between the two independent clauses.
5. C The semicolon is used to avoid a comma splice between the two independent clauses.
6. B The semicolon is not needed because a dependent clause follows the independent clause.
7. C A semicolon is needed to separate the two independent clauses.
8. D A semicolon is needed to separate the independent clause about Mickey Mouse from the independent clause about Walt Disney.
9. A A semicolon needs to come before the transition “however.”
10. A A semicolon appropriately separates the two independent clauses.