

# HIGH SCHOOL GRAMMAR

## GRADES 9-10

A STRUCTURED FULL-YEAR CURRICULUM

For Precise and Confident Writing

**FREE LESSON SAMPLE**

**Lesson 28:  
Commas, Semicolons, and Colons.**

Independent Study Ready

Progressive Skill-Building

Built-in Progress Tracking

**Natasha Attard Ph.D.**

# ELA Textbooks and Skills Practice for Grades 7-12

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with Companion Activities for Home and School



Thank you for downloading this free sample from *High School Grammar Grades 9-10: A Structured Full-Year Curriculum for Precise and Confident Writing*.

I hope these lessons help your child or students review important grammar skills in a way that feels manageable, clear, and encouraging, especially during the summer months or the transition into high school.

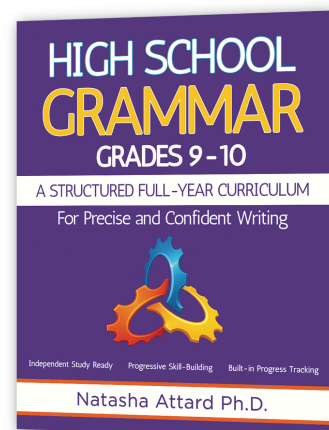
One of the challenges of selecting grammar resources is determining whether the teaching style, level of rigor, and lesson structure are a good fit for your students. For that reason, I believe it is important to see more than a few preview pages. This sample lesson has been provided so that you can experience the instructional approach firsthand.

As you work through the lesson, consider whether the explanations are clear, whether the practice activities provide an appropriate level of challenge, and whether the overall structure supports the needs of your students. The lesson reflects the same format used throughout the book: concise instruction, progressive practice, and opportunities for students to apply their understanding independently.

If you find that this approach aligns with your educational goals, you can learn more about the full curriculum by scanning the QR code included in this sample. The code will take you directly to the Amazon listing, where you can view additional details and purchase the complete book.

I hope you find the lesson useful, and I wish you and your students every success in your grammar studies.

Natasha Attard, Ph.D.  
Author and Curriculum Developer



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## Lesson 28: Commas, Semicolons, and Colons



### Reference Guide

**A comma separates parts of a sentence and signals a brief pause in reading.** However, commas are placed according to sentence structure, not simply according to where a reader might pause. A comma does not replace a period. When writing a sentence that contains a dependent clause, use a comma to separate it from the independent clause.

- Example: *When the auditions ended, the board discussed the participants' performance.*

**Use a comma in a compound sentence when joining two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*).**

- Example: *She reviewed her notes carefully, and she felt confident before the exam.*

**Use a comma to separate a list of three or more items.**

- Example: *He packed a jacket, a flashlight, and a map.*

**A semicolon is stronger than a comma but not as final as a period.** It joins two independent clauses that are closely related.

- Example: *The application deadline passed; several students requested an extension.*

**A semicolon may also appear before conjunctive adverbs such as *however, therefore, or for example*.**

- Example: *She wanted to join the program; however, she needed more information.*

**A colon is used after a complete sentence to introduce additional information such as a list, an explanation, a quotation, or an example.**

- Examples:
  - *She researched three historical periods: the Colonial Era, the Civil War, and the Great Depression.* (list)
  - *The present perfect has a specific function: it connects a past action to the present.* (explanation)
  - *She looked at the horizon and whispered a promise: "I will come back."* (quotation)
  - *Some hobbies require patience: gardening, woodworking, and photography.* (example)

Choose your punctuation based on the relationship between ideas,  
not just where you pause.

**Practice 72: Read each narrative carefully. Then answer the questions on the right.**

1. The train station was nearly empty when the final announcement echoed through the hall. Although the departure board still flickered with destinations, most travelers had already left. A single suitcase sat beside a metal bench; no one claimed it. Mara hesitated for a moment, then stepped closer. She noticed three unusual details: a torn luggage tag, a faint ticking sound, and a thin trail of sand beneath the wheels. The ticking grew louder; her pulse did the same. She considered her options carefully, and she made a decision she would later question: she picked up the suitcase.

**a. Find one example of a comma used after an introductory clause.**  
-----  
-----  
-----

**b. Find one example of a semicolon and explain why it is used instead of a comma or a period.**  
-----  
-----  
-----

**c. Find one example of a colon and explain what it introduces.**  
-----  
-----  
-----

2. The old lighthouse stood at the edge of the cliff, silent but watchful. When the storm clouds rolled in, the waves crashed harder against the rocks, and the wind howled through the broken windows. Inside, Daniel examined the walls; someone had carved symbols into the wood. He traced the markings with his fingers, however, he did not recognize the pattern. In the corner of the room, he found a small wooden box: it was locked. He had one clear goal: uncover the truth before the tide rose again.

**a. Locate the example of a comma used to join two independent clauses.**  
-----  
-----  
-----

**b. Find one example of a colon and explain why it is correct in that position.**  
-----  
-----  
-----

**c. Locate the sentence in which a comma could not replace a semicolon.**  
-----  
-----  
-----

**Practice 73: For each pair of sentences below, determine which sentence uses commas, semicolons, or colons correctly. Tick the box next to the correct sentence.**

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1a. When the fireworks finally lit up the sky, the entire neighborhood cheered at once.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1b. When the fireworks finally lit up the sky the entire neighborhood cheered at once.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2a. After the parade passed through downtown. The marching band stayed behind to greet the crowd.           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2b. After the parade passed through downtown, the marching band stayed behind to greet the crowd.           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3a. She brought cornbread, coleslaw, and homemade peach cobbler to the block party.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3b. She brought cornbread; coleslaw; and homemade peach cobbler to the block party.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4a. The town square filled with familiar sights. Red, white, and blue banners hanging from every lamppost.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4b. The town square filled with familiar sights: red, white, and blue banners hanging from every lamppost.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5a. The road trip across the Southwest was exhausting; it was also unforgettable.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5b. The road trip across the Southwest was exhausting, it was also unforgettable.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6a. The farmers' market opened at sunrise: but the best produce sold out within an hour.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6b. The farmers' market opened at sunrise, but the best produce sold out within an hour.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7a. The small-town theater nearly closed last year; however, community donations kept it alive.             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7b. The small-town theater nearly closed last year, however, community donations kept it alive.             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8a. The food trucks lined the street; and families gathered with lawn chairs and blankets.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8b. The food trucks lined the street, and families gathered with lawn chairs and blankets.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9a. The festival offered something for everyone, live music, street food, local art, and fireworks at dusk. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9b. The festival offered something for everyone: live music, street food, local art, and fireworks at dusk. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10a. The diner had been part of the town for decades; locals still met there every Sunday morning.          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10b. The diner had been part of the town for decades: locals still met there every Sunday morning.          | <input type="checkbox"/> |



## Consolidation

**Practice 74:** You have been asked to review a younger student's essay. Some punctuation marks are incorrect or missing. Circle each error and write the correct punctuation mark in the space provided. Do not rewrite the sentence.

My name is Tyler and I guess I'm supposed to write about myself for this assignment. \_\_\_\_\_  
I'm twelve years old and I have an older sister who is fifteen she acts like she knows \_\_\_\_\_  
everything but sometimes she actually does. We don't always get along, but when it \_\_\_\_\_  
really matters she has my back. \_\_\_\_\_

I live in a pretty normal neighborhood where everyone kind of knows each other. \_\_\_\_\_  
After school I usually drop my backpack in my room and head outside because I don't \_\_\_\_\_  
really like sitting still for too long. If the weather is good I ride my bike around the \_\_\_\_\_  
block with my best friend Marcus, we try to see who can do the sharpest turns \_\_\_\_\_  
without wiping out. Sometimes we film slow motion videos of our jumps and post them \_\_\_\_\_  
online. We also play basketball at the park near my house; the hoop is slightly crooked \_\_\_\_\_  
but we don't care. \_\_\_\_\_

On weekends things get more interesting. My dad likes grilling and he says there are \_\_\_\_\_  
three things you need for the perfect cookout good food good music and good company. \_\_\_\_\_  
My job is usually setting up the folding chairs and carrying out the cooler full of drinks. \_\_\_\_\_  
When my cousins come over the backyard turns into complete chaos, someone is always \_\_\_\_\_  
arguing about the score of whatever game we're playing. Even though it gets loud and \_\_\_\_\_  
competitive it's actually my favorite time of the week. \_\_\_\_\_

I have a few hobbies that keep me busy. I like building model cars, playing video \_\_\_\_\_  
games, and editing short clips on my laptop. Video games are probably my favorite \_\_\_\_\_  
hobby; however I don't just sit there all day like people think. Marcus and I play \_\_\_\_\_



## Consolidation

multiplayer games together and we use headsets to talk strategy sometimes we end up laughing more than actually playing. My sister says gaming is a waste of time, but she spends hours scrolling on her phone so I don't think she can judge.

Writing is probably my least favorite subject in school I don't really understand why we have to do so much of it when computers can type faster than anyone. I mean we already have spellcheck and autocorrect and even programs that can finish your sentences for you. It feels like by the time I'm an adult most writing will be done by machines; people will just tell the computer what they want and it will handle everything else. Still my teacher says writing helps you think clearly and express your ideas better I guess that makes sense but it still feels unnecessary sometimes.

One thing that definitely matters to me is friendship. Marcus has been my best friend since second grade and we've basically grown up together. We've built snow forts in the winter stayed up late during summer break and tried to learn skateboard tricks even though we fell a lot. When something embarrassing happens at school he's the first person I text. When something awesome happens he's there too. That kind of loyalty is rare; at least that's what my mom says.

Even though I complain about assignments like this one I guess writing does help me organize my thoughts. It forces me to slow down and actually think about what I care about. My family my friends my hobbies and even the annoying things that I pretend not to like. Maybe computers can help us write faster but they can't decide what matters to us.

So that's basically me. I might not be the most exciting person in the world but I have people who support me things that I enjoy and goals that I'm still figuring out. And maybe that's enough.

# **ANSWER KEY**

## Lesson 27: Run-On Sentences

### Practice 71

*Possible corrections are shown below. Students were required to provide any two different correct revisions.*

1.

She started a small online business last summer. It quickly gained attention.

She started a small online business last summer; it quickly gained attention.

She started a small online business last summer, and it quickly gained attention.

2.

The neighborhood organized a weekend clean-up. Many residents volunteered to help.

The neighborhood organized a weekend clean-up; many residents volunteered to help.

The neighborhood organized a weekend clean-up, and many residents volunteered to help.

3.

He trained for months for the marathon. He crossed the finish line exhausted but proud.

He trained for months for the marathon; he crossed the finish line exhausted but proud.

He trained for months for the marathon, and he crossed the finish line exhausted but proud.

4.

The charity event raised more money than anyone predicted. It exceeded last year's total.

The charity event raised more money than anyone predicted; it exceeded last year's total.

The charity event raised more money than anyone predicted, and it exceeded last year's total.

5.

The chemistry experiment requires precise measurements. Otherwise, the reaction will not occur as expected.

The chemistry experiment requires precise measurements; otherwise, the reaction will not occur as expected.

## Lesson 28: Commas, Semicolons, and Colons

### Practice 72

1a. **"Although the departure board still flickered with destinations, most travelers had already left."**

1b. **"A single suitcase sat beside a metal bench; no one claimed it."**

Another correct example: **"The ticking grew louder; her pulse did the same."**

In both sentences, the semicolon joins two closely related independent clauses. A comma alone would create a comma splice, and a period would separate the ideas too completely.

1c. **"She noticed three unusual details: a torn luggage tag, a faint ticking sound, and a thin trail of sand beneath the wheels."**

The colon introduces a list that explains what the "three unusual details" are. The clause before the colon is a complete sentence.

Another correct example: **"She considered her options carefully, and she made a decision she would later question: she picked up the suitcase."** The colon introduces an explanation of the decision mentioned in the first clause. The clause before the colon is a complete sentence.

*Continued on the next page*

### Practice 72 (continued)

2a. "the waves crashed harder against the rocks, and the wind howled through the broken windows."

2b. "In the corner of the room, he found a small wooden box: it was locked."

The colon is correct because it follows a complete sentence and introduces an explanation of what he found. The clause before the colon is a complete sentence.

Another correct example: "He had one clear goal: uncover the truth before the tide rose again."

The colon is correct because it follows a complete sentence and introduces an explanation of the goal. The clause before the colon is a complete sentence.

2c. "Inside, Daniel examined the walls; someone had carved symbols into the wood."

A comma could not replace the semicolon because both parts of the sentence are independent clauses. Using a comma alone would create a comma splice. The semicolon correctly joins two closely related independent clauses.

### Practice 73

- 1a 6b
- 2b 7a
- 3a 8b
- 4b 9b
- 5a 10a

### Practice 74

My name is Tyler and I guess I'm supposed to write about myself for this assignment. I'm twelve years old and I have an older sister who is fifteen she acts like she knows everything but sometimes she actually does. We don't always get along, but when it really matters she has my back.

\_\_\_\_\_ fifteen. She \_\_\_\_\_

I live in a pretty normal neighborhood where everyone kind of knows each other. After school I usually drop my backpack in my room and head outside because I don't really like sitting still for too long. If the weather is good I ride my bike around the block with my best friend Marcus, we try to see who can do the sharpest turns without wiping out. Sometimes we film slow motion videos of our jumps and post them online. We also play basketball at the park near my house; the hoop is slightly crooked but we don't care.

\_\_\_\_\_ good, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Marcus. We \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ house. The \_\_\_\_\_

*Continued on the next page*

Practice 74 (continued)

On weekends things get more interesting. My dad likes grilling and he says there are three things you need for the perfect cookout: good food, good music, and good company. My job is usually setting up the folding chairs and carrying out the cooler full of drinks. When my cousins come over the backyard turns into complete chaos, someone is always arguing about the score of whatever game we're playing. Even though it gets loud and competitive it's actually my favorite time of the week.

\_\_\_\_\_

cookout: / food, / music,

\_\_\_\_\_

over, / chaos. Someone

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have a few hobbies that keep me busy. I like building model cars, playing video games, and editing short clips on my laptop. Video games are probably my favorite hobby; however I don't just sit there all day like people think. Marcus and I play multiplayer games together and we use headsets to talk strategy. Sometimes we end up laughing more than actually playing. My sister says gaming is a waste of time, but she spends hours scrolling on her phone so I don't think she can judge.

\_\_\_\_\_

however,

\_\_\_\_\_

together, / strategy. Sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Writing is probably my least favorite subject in school. I don't really understand why we have to do so much of it when computers can type faster than anyone. I mean we already have spellcheck and autocorrect and even programs that can finish your sentences for you. It feels like by the time I'm an adult most writing will be done by machines; people will just tell the computer what they want and it will handle everything else. Still, my teacher says writing helps you think clearly and express your ideas better. I guess that makes sense but it still feels unnecessary sometimes.

school. I

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Still,

\_\_\_\_\_

better. I

\_\_\_\_\_

One thing that definitely matters to me is friendship. Marcus has been my best friend since second grade and we've basically grown up together. We've built snow forts in the winter, stayed up late during summer break, and tried to learn skateboard tricks even though we fell a lot. When something embarrassing happens at school he's the first person I text. When something awesome happens he's there too. That kind of loyalty is rare; at least that's what my mom says.

\_\_\_\_\_

winter, / break,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Even though I complain about assignments like this one I guess writing does help me organize my thoughts. It forces me to slow down and actually think about what I care about. My family, my friends, my hobbies, and even the annoying things that I pretend not to like. Maybe computers can help us write faster but they can't decide what matters to us.

\_\_\_\_\_

about: my / family, / friends, / hobbies,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

So that's basically me. I might not be the most exciting person in the world but I have people who support me, things that I enjoy, and goals that I'm still figuring out. And maybe that's enough.

\_\_\_\_\_

me, / enjoy,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Also by Natasha Attard, Ph.D.

