


**I can use semi-colons, colons or dashes for clauses.**


All three forms of punctuation can be used to mark clauses, but there are some subtle differences.

**Semi-colons** link two closely related sentences that could either have been written separately or joined with a conjunction.

**She kept going on about the egg; I couldn't understand why.** (With the semi-colon.)

**She kept going on about the egg. I couldn't understand why.** (As two sentences.)

**She kept going on about the egg, but I couldn't understand why.** (With a conjunction.)

**Colons**, on the other hand, add further information or an explanation to the main clause. Sometimes the additional information may be a clause, but often it is just a word or a phrase.

**It's Superman: a superhero.**

**Dashes** can be used in place of semi-colons or colons, but the word, phrase or clause that follows acts more as an interruption or as a dramatic announcement.

**She needed to talk to me on a delicate matter – whatever that might be!** (As an interruption.)

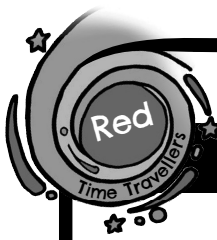
**This young lad isn't who he says he is – he's lying!** (As a dramatic announcement.)

Decide whether there should be semi-colons, colons or dashes in the following sentences. (The clause or phrase has been written in bold to help you.)

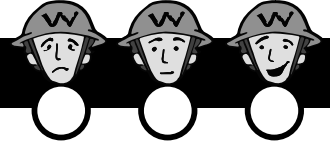
- 1 "You're the ones who are lying **playing stupid games!**" I shouted back.
- 2 "Now calm down son **I'm only trying to do my job,**" replied the policeman.
- 3 A man walked into the front room **it was the lady's husband.**
- 4 He had been working all night **helping people during the air raid.**
- 5 He was also wearing a uniform **he wasn't a policeman, however.**
- 6 I recognised him at once **he was the air-raid warden from the night before.**
- 7 "I know this lad **rescued him from a bombed-out house,**" the warden told the policeman.
- 8 The policeman wanted to know which house **this would confirm who was telling the truth.**
- 9 I could hardly bear to hear the warden's reply **another lie from an actor!**
- 10 "I remember the address very clearly **it was fourteen, Stanley Street,**" the warden said.



**Extension** Write the sentences above with a different phrase or clause after the semi-colon, colon or dash.



**I can use direct speech.**



*Inverted commas (or speech marks) separate the words someone actually says from the rest of the sentence. These words are called **direct speech**.*

*Speech can go at the beginning of a sentence.*

**“One last thing before I go,” said the policeman.**

*Speech can go at the end of the sentence.*

**The policeman asked, “Are the children being evacuated tomorrow?”**

*Speech can go either side of the sentence.*

**“In the meantime,” he said to the lady, “would you be willing to look after him?”**

*This is the only time that you don’t need a capital letter after speech marks. This is because **In the meantime, would you be willing to look after him?** is one sentence interrupted with “he said”.*

*Often though, there are two separate sentences, so we do need to finish the first sentence with a full stop and start the second sentence with a capital letter after the speech marks.*

**“There must be some error,” said the policeman. “This will need looking into.”**

Later that day, Drew was able to speak to Kenneth on his own.

**Write the sentences using all correct speech punctuation. (The actual words spoken have been written in italics to help you.)**

- 1 *thanks for covering for me earlier today* I said *that was kind of you*  
.....
- 2 *that policeman was suspicious of you* Kenneth said  
.....
- 3 *if it hadn't been for you* I said *I don't know what I would have done*  
.....
- 4 *now I've done something for you* he said *you can do something for me*  
.....
- 5 *sure what* I asked  
.....
- 6 *swap pyjamas* he replied *we're about the same size*  
.....
- 7 *if I let you have them* I said *lowering my voice you'll have to tell me a secret*  
.....
- 8 he looked at me suspiciously *go on* he said  
.....
- 9 *you can have my pyjamas* I said *if you tell me where the cameras are hidden*  
.....
- 10 he looked around and whispered *we have a box Brownie in the sideboard*  
.....
- 11 *you don't need to say anymore* I said *giving him a wink.*  
.....

**Extension** Write your own dialogue between Drew and Kenneth.