National Curriculum Objectives:

English Year 6: (6G5.10) [Using colons to mark boundaries between independent clauses](#)
English Year 6: (6G5.11) [Using semicolons to mark boundaries between independent clauses](#)
English Year 6: (6G5.12) [Using dashes to mark boundaries between independent clauses](#)
Terminology for pupils:
- **(6G5.10)** [colon](#)
- **(6G5.11)** [semicolon](#)

Differentiation:

Questions 1, 4 and 7 (Varied Fluency)
Developing Identify the correct punctuation needed within a sentence with up to two clauses.
Expected Identify the correct punctuation needed within a sentence with up to three clauses.
Greater Depth Identify the correct punctuation needed within multi-clause sentences. Some sentences may contain more than one type of punctuation to mark boundaries, for example: Henry was distracted: he could only think about one thing – chocolate!

Questions 2, 5 and 8 (Varied Fluency)
Developing Identify the incorrect use of a colon, semicolon or dash within sentences with up to two clauses.
Expected Identify the incorrect use of a colon, semicolon or dash within sentences with up to three clauses.
Greater Depth Identify the incorrect use of a colon, semicolon or dash within multi-clause sentences. Some sentences may contain more than one type of punctuation to mark boundaries, for example: Henry was distracted: he could only think about one thing – chocolate!

Questions 3, 6 and 9 (Application or Reasoning)
Developing Explain the use of a colon, semicolon or dash within sentences with up to two clauses.
Expected Explain the use of a colon, semicolon or dash within sentences with up to three clauses.
Greater Depth Explain the use of a colon, semicolon or dash within multi-clause sentences. Some sentences may contain more than one type of punctuation to mark boundaries, for example: Henry was distracted: he could only think about one thing – chocolate!

[More resources](#) from our Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling scheme of work.

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Using Punctuation to Mark Boundaries

1. Circle the correct punctuation to complete each sentence below.

A. I'm not allowed to eat certain foods [ ] nuts, wheat and eggs.

;	:	—

B. Some people had been hurt in the accident [ ] most escaped unharmed.

;	:	—

C. Polly — my next-door neighbour [ ] always walks to school with me.

;	:	—

☆D

2. Tick the sentence that shows incorrect use of a colon, semicolon or dash.

A. Albert — my noisy dachshund — loved to bark at the postman. [ ]

B. Betty likes the same food as me; pizza! [ ]

C. The tannoy announced that the train was running 5 – 10 minutes late. [ ]

D. I blamed just one thing for my weight gain: chocolate! [ ]

☆D

3. Add a semicolon, colon or dash to correctly punctuate the sentence below.

The dog barked as he went through the door of the veterinary clinic he was panicking!

Explain your choice of punctuation.

☆D

Using Punctuation to Mark Boundaries

4. Circle the correct punctuation to complete each sentence below.

A. I enjoy reading and writing ☐ my sister prefers more creative subjects like art, or design and technology. ; : —

B. The eclipse, which won't be seen again for another 10 years, can be viewed in the western hemisphere from about 8:30pm ☐ 8:40pm. ; : —

C. When you get home, I need you to do your chores ☐ empty the dishwasher, feed the dog and fold the laundry. ; : —

5. Tick the sentence that shows incorrect use of a colon, semicolon or dash.

A. After weeks of completing chores and saving my pocket money, I finally had enough to buy tickets for my favourite place: Rollercoaster City! ☐

B. My journey to school normally takes 8 – 10 minutes, but I can save time if I run for part of it. ☐

C. As the residential is only a few days away, I have already packed everything I need; warm socks, pyjamas, jogging bottoms and hoodies. ☐

D. The boy — who had been disruptive all day — had wanted his father's undivided attention. ☐

6. Add a semicolon, colon or dash to correctly punctuate the sentence below.

The unrelenting sun beat down on the dry, parched earth below Mally was still hazy about the events that led to him being dumped in this inhospitable place.

Explain your choice of punctuation.

Using Punctuation to Mark Boundaries

7. Circle the correct punctuation to complete each sentence below.

A. For next week, you will need some items for our DT lesson ☐ green or red paint; white or cream card; and an assortment of feathers.

| ; | : | — |

B. The car had been stopped by the police three times in one week; the driver decided it was time to buy a less conspicuous car ☐ a Rover.

| ; | : | — |

C. To lose one phone — regardless of cost — is unfortunate ☐ to lose two phones is careless.

| ; | : | — |

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8. Tick the sentence that shows incorrect use of a colon, semicolon or dash.

A. The coach always gave us the following advice: "Save some energy in the tank to get yourself over the finishing line — preferably before everyone else!" ☐

B. After 2 – 3 hours of solid writing, I've finally finished my essay; it was really hard work and my hand is now sore. ☐

C. After hours of searching, the passports were located in two places: the wardrobe — under the jumpers — and the bottom drawer of the desk. ☐

D. After years of suffering at the hands of his cruel and merciless master, Tom — the farm labourer — wanted just one thing; justice! ☐

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9. Add a semicolon, colon or dash to correctly punctuate the sentence below.

Our professor's last words to us were inspiring: "After years of education, you are finally ready to step out into the world have fun and embrace life, but never stop learning."

Explain your choice of punctuation.

Homework/Extension
Using Punctuation to Mark Boundaries

Developing

1. A. colon (:) B. semicolon (;) C. dash (—)
2. B
3. A colon or a dash is needed as the second clause in the sentence explains the first clause.
The dog barked as he went through the door of the veterinary clinic: he was panicking!

Expected

4. A. semicolon (;) B. dash (—) C. colon (:)
5. C
6. A semicolon is needed as this sentence includes two independent clauses which are closely related. A colon or dash would not be correct here as the second clause does not explain or emphasise the first clause.
The unrelenting sun beat down on the dry, parched earth below; Mally was still hazy about the events that led to him being dumped in this inhospitable place.

Greater Depth

7. A. colon (:) B. dash (—) or colon (:) C. semicolon (;)
8. D
9. A semicolon is needed as this sentence includes two independent clauses which are closely related. A colon or dash would not be correct here as the second clause does not explain the first clause.
Our professor's last words to us were inspiring: "After years of education, you are finally ready to step out into the world; have fun and embrace life, but never stop learning."