**Colon and Semi-Colon Rules**

**Use a semicolon when**

* joining two independent clauses that relate to one another.

There is a dog park down the street; I think I will take my dog there today!

* joining two independent clauses when the SECOND clause begins with a conjunctive adverb (see the handout I gave you for a list of conjunctive adverbs)

My exam is on Monday; consequently, I need to study this weekend.

* the use of a comma would cause confusion, as in the division between a list of cities and states.

I have visited San Juan, Puerto Rico; Stockholm, Sweden; and London, England.

**Use a colon when:**

* introducing a list

I have several favorite classes: Drama, Language Arts, and Chorus.

NOTE: NEVER USE A COLON AFTER A VERB!

* introducing a long quote

As Rob Stiltanen wrote: “Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.”

* following the greeting in a formal letter

Dear Sir or Madam:

* identifying the time

My plane leaves at 10:17 this morning.

* giving a ratio

The student to teacher ratio in that school is 21:1.

* identifying scripture

Her favorite verse, especially when faced with challenging times, is Isaiah 40:31.