**Semicolons and Colons Practice:**

Exercise 1: Accuracy Using Colons and Semicolons

In each sentence, fill in the blank with the appropriate punctuation: either a colon, or a semi-colon.

1. She practiced piano every day for more than an hour \_\_ however, she had not improved by the end of the summer.

2. Frustrated, she sought out a local maestro for lessons \_\_ she was not used to failure.

3. Instead of recommending further practice, the maestro urged her to listen to recordings by famous pianists \_\_ Rachmaninoff, Rubinstein, Horowitz.

4. She listened every day \_\_ every day she put a new recording in her CD player, hoping to hear something useful.

5. For ten days she heard piano recordings \_\_ then, after many hours of listening, she heard something different.

6. She heard, in a way she hadn't heard previously, feelings within the music \_\_\_\_\_ sadness, exuberance, loneliness.

7. Returning to the maestro, she explained that she heard in Chopin, longing \_\_ in Mozart, celebration; and in Bach, glory.

8. She returned to the piano and found that her fingers were rusty and her mistakes many \_\_\_ nevertheless, she persevered.

10. After two weeks of daily practice, she smiled \_\_\_ she knew that today she had made music.

**Purpose Practice**

Paragraph One:

Did you know that there are more pieces of trash in the average landfill than there are people on this planet? Many people believe that recycling can’t really be that important, but they couldn’t be more wrong! Recycling is vital to the survival of humanity because it protects the environment, reduces the amount of space needed for landfills, and allows humans to reuse items over and over. There are lots of ways to get involved with recycling in the community. You could begin my simply taking your plastic, glass, and aluminum to the nearest recycling center. You could start a campaign for recycling paper at your school. Of you could write or plan protests to get the public involved. No matter how you choose to do your part, the important thing is that recycling becomes widespread so that we can save our planet.

Paragraph Two:

The importance of recycling is a major issue in our nation. Some people believe that recycling is the most important factor in the protection of our planet and its resources. Others believe that the hassles of recycling far outweigh its benefits. People on both sides of this issue are passionate and vocal. Did you know that there have been more protests regarding the environment in the last year than there have been over abortion or illegal immigration? Those on the side of recycling appear to be greater in number, with 54% of the population stating that they currently recycle according to a recent poll conducted by Time Magazine. However, those who say recycling will make no difference in the long run state that there is evidence on their side as well. Biologist Robert Chandler stated in a recent article in the New York Times, “There is just no evidence that recycling is really the answer to protecting our environment.” One thing is for certain: this is not an issue that will be resolved anytime soon.

Paragraph Three:

When I was five, I lived in a house next to a small stream. Though I loved fishing and swimming, my favorite stream pastime was feeding and watching the ducks. I would sit for hours tearing off pieces of leftover bread to feed them and watching the mama ducks teach their little ones to swim and quack and fly. One day, as I walked down to the creek, I saw a group of baby ducks clustered around their mother. She was dead, strangled by the ring of a plastic bottle she must have tried to eat. That was the day I became a mother. I couldn’t leave them there to starve. I took them home and raised them until they were big enough to be on their own. We moved away from the stream, but I have always wondered if they lived to see adulthood, or were they, like their mother, strangled by someone’s trash.

**Idioms, can you guess their meanings?**

1. A penny for your thoughts
2. Add insult to injury
3. A hot potato
4. Once in a blue moon
5. Caught between a rock and a hard place
6. See eye to eye
7. Hear it on the grapevine
8. Miss the boat
9. Kill two birds with one stone
10. On the ball
11. Cut corners
12. To hear something straight from the horse's mouth
13. Costs an arm and a leg
14. The last straw
15. Take what someone says with a pinch of salt
16. Sit on the fence
17. The best of both worlds
18. Put wool over other people's eyes
19. Feeling a bit under the weather
20. Speak of the devil!

**Vocabulary in Context:**

Practice with the following:

The adverse effects of this medicine, including dizziness, nausea, and headaches, have caused it to be removed from the market.

Adverse means

a. artificial b. energetic c. harmful

Why?

I prefer the occasional disturbance of ear-splitting thunder to the incessant dripping of the kitchen sink.

Incessant means

1. harmless b. exciting c. nonstop

More Practice:

1. Nocturnal Creatures, such as bats and owls, have highly developed senses that enable them to function in the dark.
2. Mundane activities such as doing the laundry or dishes or going food shopping or reading the newspaper all help me relax.
3. Instances of common euphemisms include “final resting place” for grave, “intoxicated” for drunk, and “restroom” for toilet.
4. Since my grandfather retired, he has developed several new avocations. For instance, he now enjoys gardening and riding a unicycle.
5. Changes in such abilities as learning, reasoning, thinking, and language are aspects of cognitive development.
6. White-collar crime – for example, accepting a bribe from a customer or stealing from an employer – is more costly than “common” crime.
7. The candidate vowed to discuss pragmatic solutions to the problems of the city. He said the people want practical answers, not empty theory.
8. In the same way that the arrival of mechanical equipment meant fewer farm jobs, the advent of the computer has led to fewer manufacturing jobs.
9. Many corporations like to be seen as benevolent and will actively seek publicity for their charitable donations.
10. Many politicians do not give succinct answers. They prefer long ones that help them avoid the point.

**Connotation and Denotation Practice**

Why the Giraffe's Neck Is Long

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| (1) | Once giraffes had short necks, like horses. The giraffes ate grass, bushes, and leaves near the bottoms of trees. But the greedy animals ate and ate until all the plants were gone, except for the leaves at the very tops of the tallest trees. To get them, the giraffes stood on one another's heads! It was quite uncomfortable, to say the least, but the leaves were tender and juicy. |
| (2) | One day, Gayle Giraffe was perched on top, nibbling away at the leaves. Suddenly, the giraffes under her moved away, leaving her head stuck between two branches! There she dangled, far above the ground. The clever giraffe didn't panic; she took a deep breath and stretched her body agonizingly until her hoofs felt the soft earth. Then, she pulled her neck free. |
| (3) | "Look!" said another giraffe, who had witnessed the struggle. "Gayle's neck has stretched! Now she can reach the leaves without climbing!" |
| (4) | So one by one, the others stuck their heads into the branches and stretched their necks. A few giraffes were chicken and didn't want to do it, but they finally did. And now, all giraffes can eat the juiciest leaves in the treetops any time! |

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| 1. | Which word could the author have used instead of greedy that means the same thing but does NOT have a negative connotation? |
| a. | miserly |
| b. | gluttonous |
| c. | selfish |
| d. | Hungry |
| 2. | A denotation of chicken is "a barnyard fowl" and the connotation is |
| a. | "a brave person" |
| b. | "a squawking person" |
| c. | "a coward" |
| d. | "a clown" |
| 3. | Which of these words from the story has a positive connotation? |
| a. | agonizingly |
| b. | clever |
| c. | dangled |
| d. | panic |

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4. Which connotation is more positive?

Our trip to the amusement park was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?

 a. fine

 b. wonderful

5. Which connotation is more positive?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people rode on the roller coaster.

 a. Brave

 b. Foolhardy

6. Which connotation is more positive?

We saw \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ animals in the animal house.

 a. fascinating

 b. weird

7. Which connotation is more positive?

Some of the monkeys made \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ faces.

 a. hilarious

 b. amusing

8. Which connotation is more positive?

Everyone had a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on his or her face on the way home.

 a. smile

 b. smirk

9. Which connotation is more negative?

Mike \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ us to go to the funny house.

 a. nagged

 b. reminded

10. Which connotation is more negative?

It made me feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 a. uneasy

 b. frightened