Printable Punctuation Rules Chart and Correction Practice

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Correct the punctuation: She brought three items to the picnic a sandwich a drink and a napkin

Answer: She brought three items to the picnic: a sandwich, a drink, and a napkin.

Reason: The first part, "She brought three items to the picnic," is a complete clause, so a colon can introduce the list that follows. The three list items are separated by commas, and the conjunction "and" joins the final two items. The sentence ends with a period.

Check: Check that a colon appears after the complete introductory clause and before the first list item, that the three list items are separated by commas with "and" before the final item, and that the sentence ends with a period. Count the list items: three, matching "three items."

Task 2

Correct the punctuation: The dog chased its tail it was very funny

Answer: The dog chased its tail; it was very funny.

Reason: "The dog chased its tail" and "it was very funny" are each independent clauses. A semicolon joins them and shows the close connection. A period would also be correct; a comma alone would create a comma splice.

Check: Check that a semicolon or period separates the two clauses and that no comma alone stands between them. Read each side aloud: each should stand as a complete sentence.

Task 3

Correct the punctuation: The students books were left in the classroom

Answer: The students' books were left in the classroom.

Reason: The books belong to the students, so a possessive apostrophe is needed. "Students" is a plural noun ending in s, so the apostrophe goes after the s.

Check: Confirm the apostrophe is placed after the plural noun (students') to show possession, and that the sentence ends with a period. Ask: whose books? The students' books.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Correct the punctuation: She asked where are my keys

Answer: She asked, "Where are my keys?"

Reason: The sentence reports a direct question. A comma separates the introductory phrase "She asked" from the quoted question, quotation marks enclose the question, and the question mark goes inside the closing quotation mark because it belongs to the quoted question.

Check: Check that a comma follows "asked," quotation marks surround the question, and the question mark is inside the closing quotation mark. An indirect version, "She asked where her keys were," is also valid because it needs no quotation marks or question mark.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] All missing punctuation marks are inserted correctly.
- [ ] Incorrect marks are identified and replaced according to the rules.
- [ ] The corrected sentence is clear and grammatically sound.
- [ ] Valid alternative marks (e.g., dash for parentheses) are accepted if the rule is followed.
- [ ] Correction convention (circle errors, caret for missing marks) is used consistently.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?