

# The Writing Center

## DLA: Comma Splices and Run-ons Part II



This DLA is a writable PDF form. You can enter your answers directly into this document.

**YOU MUST DOWNLOAD AND SAVE THIS FILE TO YOUR COMPUTER.**

**Do not complete this form in a web browser. You will not be able to save your work.**

Student Name:

### Important Note

To get completion credit for this DLA, make sure you complete all the required activities. If you'd like help while working on a specific DLA, you can meet with a specialist at the Writing Center. Keep in mind that you might need to schedule a second appointment to review your work, check your understanding, and get your completion credit. You can only review **ONE** DLA per appointment. (Check the last section of this DLA for information on making your appointment and receiving completion credit for your work).

### Learning Outcomes

Through computer and other independent work, this activity will familiarize you with comma splices and run-ons and help you practice finding and correcting these common sentence errors.

#### Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

A **run-on** (a.k.a. a fused sentence) occurs when there is no separation between independent clauses.

**Example:** My sister is a hairstylist she works in the city of Orange. (**Incorrect**)

A **comma splice** occurs when a writer joins two independent clauses with only a comma, which on its own is insufficient coordination.

**Example:** Dogs are one of the best pets a person can have, they are loving and loyal. (**Incorrect**)

### How to Avoid Coordination Errors

From the "Comma Splices and Run-Ons" DLA, we learned five methods to avoid coordination errors, but for this DLA, we will focus on 3 of the methods: 1) Semicolon, 2) Subordination, and 3) Semicolon + conjunctive adverb + comma.

#### 1. Semicolon (;

For a more formal, academic approach, use the semicolon in this way when the relationship between the ideas is implicit or understood without a conjunctive word (or words).

When you use the semicolon, you can think of it as a piece of stacked punctuation: the top half acts like a period that stops the first independent clause while the comma in the bottom half tells the reader that the second clause is related to the first. This will help us remember that we are still showing separation and relationship.

- **American Horror Story is an interesting series; the plotline changes each season.**

## 2. Subordination

When you use a dependent clause with an independent clause, you are using subordination. When you subordinate, you are telling your reader that your dependent clause is under (as the prefix “sub-” suggests) or less important than your independent clause. Here are *a few* common subordinating conjunctions: **after, although, if, until, when, as, because, since, before, even though, while**.

When you place the dependent clause before the independent clause, remember to place a comma before the independent clause begins:

- **Because Kathy likes to help members of her community, she decided to feed the homeless on Thanksgiving Day.**

When the dependent clause comes after the independent clause, do not use a comma.

- **Kathy decided to feed the homeless on Thanksgiving Day because she likes to help members of her community.**

## 3. Semicolon (;) + conjunctive adverb + comma (,)

When you use a conjunctive adverb while coordinating, be sure to 1) use a semicolon before the conjunctive adverb 2) choose the conjunctive adverb showing the appropriate relationship 3) place a comma after the conjunctive adverb (if it is more than one syllable [with the exception of hence and first]). Here are *a few* common conjunctive adverbs: **however, otherwise, in addition, furthermore, therefore, consequently, nevertheless, on the other hand, first**.

Using a conjunctive adverb makes the formal connection of the semicolon's relationship explicitly understood. For a detailed list of some of these words and the relationships they show, refer to the "Words That Show Relationships" handout.

- **It is not easy being a college student; in fact, many students suffer from stress and anxiety.**

## Summary Chart

The following shows an overview of how to correctly put clauses together and example sentences.

Key: *S* = subject, *V* = verb.

**1. SV. SV.** (Two simple sentences separated by a period)

**2. SV; SV.** (Compound Sentence using a semi-colon)

Relationship	3. Coordinating Conjunctions	4. Subordinating Conjunctions	5. Conjunctive Adverbs
addition	and		also, in addition, furthermore, moreover
comparison		as ... as, as if, as though	similarly, likewise
contrast	but, yet	although, though, even though, whereas, while	however, in contrast, on the other hand, nevertheless
reason	for	because, since	
condition		if, unless, whether, that	

Relationship	3. Coordinating Conjunctions	4. Subordinating Conjunctions	5. Conjunctive Adverbs
result	so		therefore, thus, hence, otherwise, consequently, as a result
place		where, wherever	
time		after, before, until, since, as, when, while, whenever, as soon as	then, next, later, earlier, afterwards, subsequently
negation	nor		
purpose		so that	

Method	Example Sentences
1. SV. SV.	The weather is pleasant. Larry wants to go for a swim. The weather looks bad. You should stay home.
2. SV; SV.	The weather is pleasant; Ming wants to go to the park. The weather looks bad; the dog should come inside.
3. Coordinating Conjunction	The weather is pleasant, so I want to go for a swim. The weather looks bad, but let's go out anyway. I don't want to swim, nor do I want to go to the beach. Paula wants to walk to the library, and Ben wants to go with her.
4. Subordinating Conjunction	Lance went to the park because the weather is nice. Gina likes to swim in the water when she goes to the beach. If the weather clears up, Maria will go for a jog. Before you go outside, you should remember to put on sunscreen.
5. Conjunctive Adverb	Jason usually rides his bike; however, he took the bus today. The beach was too crowded; therefore, we went to the park.

## Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

### 1. Online Quiz

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/eng1ccssandrosdlaquiz> and take the DLA Quiz. You must score at least 75% on the quiz before meeting with a specialist. After you complete the task, please take a screenshot of the page that has your score and show it to your specialist. Do not exit the quiz until you take the screenshot.).

### 2. Sentence Correction

Read the following sentences and identify the Comma Splice (CS) or Run-on (RO). Rewrite the sentences and correct them using **the methods in bold**. The first one has been done for you.

#### 1. Use a semicolon to correct the comma splice in this sentence.

Sandra Cisneros is best known for her novel, *The House on Mango Street*, the novel explores sexuality, race, identity, and other noteworthy themes of a young Chicano girl named Esperanza Cordero.

#### 2. Use a semicolon + conjunctive adverb + comma to correct the run-on in this sentence.

Cisneros was ten years old when she wrote her very first poem she didn't continue to write poetry until she was in high school.

#### 3. Use subordination to correct the comma splice in this sentence.

Cisneros decided to major in writing, she was in college, and after college, she continued to pursue an education in writing and obtained a Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing.

#### 4. Use a semicolon to correct the comma splice in this sentence.

Once she obtained her Master's degree, Cisneros went on to teach students who dropped out of school at the Latino Youth Alternative High School, she also spent time working and teaching at other schools such as the California State University at Chico, the University of California Berkeley, and many more universities.

**5. Use a semicolon + conjunctive adverb + comma to correct the run-on in this sentence.**

In 1980, Cisneros published her first book, *Bad Boys* the novel that she is most recognized for is *The House on Mango Street* along with *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*.

**6. Use subordination to correct the run-on in this sentence.**

Cisneros' collection of short stories in *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories* have been praised by many people the stories present a vivid and enlightening perspective on growing up as a Mexican-American woman in between the Mexico-US border.

**7. Use a semicolon + conjunctive adverb + comma to correct the run-on in this sentence.**

Many schools are promoting the integration of more diverse authors like Cisneros American public schools have required students to read works from Cisneros.

**8. Use a semicolon to correct the comma splice in this sentence.**

In 2019, Cisneros won PEN/Nabokov Award for Achievement in International Literature, her ability to empower the voices of the Hispanic and Latino/a experience is one of the reasons she has won such a high achievement award and many others.

**9. Use a semicolon + conjunctive adverb + comma to correct the run-on and use subordination to correct the comma splice in this sentence.**

Cisneros' collection of poetry in *Loose Woman* has also won awards this book is advised for a more mature audience, the explicit allusions in the poems explore both the candid and openly erotic side of love and female sexuality.

**10. Use a semicolon to correct the comma splice and use subordination to correct the run-on in the sentence.**

Cisneros currently resides in San Miguel de Allende, she takes care of four different dogs and continues to write. Cisneros has a love for animals her admiration towards animals inspired the stories in her recently published chapbook, *Puro Amor*.

**Choose 3a or 3b Below**

**3a. Correct Your Own Writing**

Collect some of your graded work that identifies comma splice and run-on errors. Correct all marked errors and look for others to correct as well. Bring this revised work to the DLA tutoring session.

**If you do not have your own essay to work with, please complete the supplemental activity below (3b).**

## 3b. Paragraph Correction

For this activity, you must complete **Part I** and **Part II**:

**Part I.** Read the paragraph below and **highlight** the comma splices (3) and **underline** the run-ons (2).

Zora Neale Hurston is one of the most renowned black, female writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century she is best known for her novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, which eventually was adapted into a movie in 2005, starring Halle Berry. Hurston engaged her readers by writing about relatable, fictional characters, her poetic descriptions and storytelling skills captured many audiences and had them invested in her characters' journey, the characters' journey often focused on a black, female heroine and the experiences of that character. Along with writing countless short stories, novels, and research on characters that depicted African Americans' experiences in the South, she also devoted her time to teaching students "about the arts" (Norwood). Hurston received many awards and praise for her works during her time in fact Hurston's work impacted many writers in her time, like Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*. Walker was so impressed with *Their Eyes Were Watching God* that she stated, "'There is no book more important to me than this one'" (Zora Neale Hurston). Hurston's time on this planet ended in the 1960s, her novels and stories continue to influence writers and readers today.

\*adapted from the Zora Neale Hurston Official website: <https://www.zoranealehurston.com/>

\*adapted from the National Women's History Museum page about Zora Neale Hurston:

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/zora-hurston>

**Part II.** Now that you have identified the comma splices and run-ons in the paragraph, rewrite the sentences in the lines below and correct them by using one of the three methods from “How to Avoid Coordination”: 1) *Semicolon*, 2) *Subordination*, or 3) *Semicolon (;) + conjunctive adverb + comma (,)*.

Remember to choose the method that fits the context of the sentences the best.

## 4. Review the DLA/Receive Completion Credit

1. Go to [EAB Navigate](#) and make an appointment (online or in-person).
2. Attend your session and be prepared to explain your understanding of the information you've learned in the DLA. Consider the main concept you learned and how you might use this in your future assignments/classes.
3. If your professor asks you to provide proof, you can review the "appointment summary report" through EAB Navigate (app or desktop). You will find all Writing Center appointments under "appointment summary reports" (app or desktop). Look for the summary report for your DLA appointment. This is where your writing specialist will indicate the title of your DLA and state whether it is "completed" or "not completed." If it is marked as "not completed," book a follow up appointment to complete.

Note: Appointment summary reports are also sent weekly to your instructor on record. If there is an issue, please contact us at [writingcenter@mtsac.edu](mailto:writingcenter@mtsac.edu) or (909) 274-5325.

If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center's website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students, [access@mtsac.edu](mailto:access@mtsac.edu), (909) 274-4290.

**Revised January 2026**