

Learning Focus

A semicolon can join two closely related independent clauses instead of a full stop or a conjunction. Example: The eagle soared high; the mountains stretched below.

A colon can also join two independent clauses when the second explains or expands on the first. Example: The eagle's eyesight is remarkable: it can spot prey from two miles away.

A dash can mark the boundary between two independent clauses, similar to a semicolon but a little more informal. Example: The nest was empty – the eaglets had already fledged.

A colon introduces a list. Example: Eagles hunt several types of prey: fish, rabbits and small birds.

Bullet points list information consistently — usually starting the same way (a capital letter or lower case) and ending the same way (all with full stops, or none at all).

A hyphen can join words together to avoid ambiguity. Example: a fish-eating eagle (an eagle that eats fish).

Section A: Mixed Punctuation Practice

Read each sentence carefully. Tick one box to show the correctly punctuated version.

1. Tick one box to show which sentence uses the semicolon correctly.

- ☐ The eagle circled overhead; it was searching for prey.
- ☐ The eagle circled overhead; It was searching for prey.
- ☐ The eagle circled overhead, it was searching; for prey.
- ☐ The eagle circled; overhead it was searching for prey.

2. Tick one box to show which sentence uses the colon correctly.

- ☐ The eagle's talons are deadly: they can crush bone.
- ☐ The eagle's talons are deadly, they can crush bone:
- ☐ The eagle's talons: are deadly they can crush bone.
- ☐ The eagle's talons are deadly: They can crush bone.

3. Tick one box to show which sentence uses the dash correctly.

- ☐ The nest was empty – the eaglets had already fledged.
- ☐ The nest was empty the eaglets – had already fledged.
- ☐ The nest – was empty the eaglets had already fledged.
- ☐ The nest was empty – The eaglets had already fledged.

4. Tick one box to show which sentence uses the colon correctly.

- ☐ Eagles hunt several types of prey: fish, rabbits and small birds.
- ☐ Eagles hunt several types of prey, fish, rabbits and small birds:
- ☐ Eagles hunt: several types of prey fish, rabbits and small birds.
- ☐ Eagles hunt several types of prey: Fish, Rabbits and Small Birds.

5. Tick one box to show which sentence uses the hyphen correctly.

- ☐ The photographer captured a fish-eating eagle on camera.
- ☐ The photographer captured a fish eating eagle on camera.
- ☐ The photographer captured a fish-eating-eagle on camera.
- ☐ The photographer captured a fish, eating eagle on camera.



Section B: Inserting the Missing Punctuation

Correct the punctuation in each sentence below.

1. The falcon dived towards its prey the rabbit had no chance to escape.

2. The golden eagle is a formidable hunter it can lift prey twice its own weight.

3. The chick refused to eat it had not yet learned to hunt.

4. Bald eagles build their nests from several materials sticks moss and grass.

5. The bird watchers followed a well known eagle across the valley.

Section C: Punctuate the List

The list below is missing its punctuation and is not punctuated consistently. Rewrite it correctly, adding a colon to introduce the list and punctuating each bullet point the same way.

a golden eagles diet includes the following prey

- Rabbits and hares*
 - grouse and other game birds*
 - Foxes caught occasionally*
 - carrion when food is scarce*
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Section D: Punctuate the Passage

The passage below is missing all of its punctuation and capital letters. Rewrite it correctly, adding capital letters, full stops, semicolons, colons, dashes, hyphens and apostrophes where they are needed.

eagles are among the most powerful birds of prey their eyesight is roughly four times sharper than a humans a golden eagles wingspan can reach over two metres some are even larger when hunting an eagle relies on several senses sight hearing and an acute awareness of movement sea eagles prefer fish rabbits and waterfowl bald eagles share a similar diet ornithologists have long studied these fastflying hunters tracking their migration across continents a welltimed dive can reach speeds of over one hundred and fifty miles per hour few creatures can escape once spotted

Section E: Find and Correct

Correct the punctuation in each sentence below.

1. The eagle landed on the cliff the wind was strong.

2. The eyrie was carefully built, it had to withstand strong winds.

3. The eaglet took its first flight it was a nervous moment for everyone watching.

4. Sea eagles eat fish crabs and small mammals.

5. The well known bird reserve protects several eagle nests.

6. Correct the list below.

Eagles have three key features

Sharp talons.

keen eyesight

Powerful wings
