7 Sentences that do what you meant – Part 2

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary

Write each word three times.

English	**Write it 3 times** (English)
misplaced modifier	

Recall

- You have written a sentence and found the reader took it differently.
- You know a misplaced word can change who did what.
- You have used a semicolon and not been sure it was right.

New ideas

Read these first. Each idea has a short worked example. Then do the Practice below.

1 Main and subordinate

The main clause carries what the sentence asserts; a subordinate clause carries what is assumed or conceded. Putting your point in a subordinate clause tells the reader to weight it less.

Worked example. "Although costs rose, the scheme succeeded" asserts success; "although the scheme succeeded, costs rose" asserts the cost.

2 Modifiers

A modifier attaches to what it sits next to. A **misplaced modifier** attaches to the wrong thing and produces a sentence the writer did not mean.

Worked example. "Running for the bus, the rain soaked him" says the rain was running.

■ 3 Punctuation as a signal

Punctuation states relationships. A semicolon claims that two clauses are balanced and closely related; a colon promises that what follows explains or lists.

Worked example. "The plan failed: the funding never arrived" promises an explanation and delivers one.

Watch out: Grammar rules matter here because they change meaning, not because they are polite. Every one of these errors makes the reader understand something other than what you meant.

Practice

2.1 State what the main clause and a subordinate clause each carry. [2]

2.2 "Although the scheme succeeded, costs rose." State what this sentence asserts. [2]

2.3 Define a misplaced modifier. [1]

2.4 "Running for the bus, the rain soaked him." State the error. [2]

2.5 State what a semicolon claims and what a colon promises. [2]

2.6 Explain why these rules change meaning rather than only correctness. [2]