

Punctuation Road Signs

Stop:

Semicolon (;) Beans are planted on the mounds; squash is planted between the mounds.

Period (.) Beans are planted on the mounds. Squash is planted between the mounds

Conjunction (, fanboy) Beans are planted on the mounds, and squash is planted between the mounds.

Go:

Comma (,) Beans are planted on the mounds, while squash is planted between the mounds.

Dash (-) Beans – a healthy vegetable – are planted on the mounds.

YIELD:

Colon (:) Beans are planted on the mounds: they need higher elevation. (Why)

Beans are planted on the mounds: easy to grow. (Because)

Punctuation, one is taught, has a point: to keep up law and order. Punctuation marks are the traffic signals placed along the highway of our communications to control speeds, provide direction, and prevent head-on collisions. A period has the unblinking finality of a red light; the comma is a flashing yellow light that asks us only to slow down; and the semicolon is a stop sign that tells us to ease gradually to a halt before starting up again. By establishing the relations between words, punctuation establishes the relations between the people using words.

1. The primary purpose of the passage is to
 - a) illustrate the role of different punctuation marks
 - b) chastise people for not using correct punctuation
 - c) emphasize the dangers of ignoring traffic signals
 - d) demonstrate the importance of laws in maintaining order
 - e) suggest that learning grammar is similar to learning to drive