Aloha Writing Team, Mahalo for all of your hard work and continued effort to increase your students’ writing proficiency! As always, there are many exciting things going on and we want to catch you up on all of the details.

**Upcoming Professional Development Session**

Just a friendly reminder, the next PD is scheduled for Saturday, November 6th in the library from 8:30am – 12:30pm. The focus of this session will be on practice and progress monitoring.

**Who’s doing what…**

- **Leah:** Taught the Progress Monitoring mini-module and plans to teach the writing process in November.
- **Greg:** Plans to teach the writing process in November
- **Marc:** We hope you will teach the Analyzing and/or the Vocabulary mini-module.
- **Koren:** Used a dice game with higher order questions to help students study for their math exam on inequalities. This is a way to get students to write more in math class.
- **Juliana:** Plans to assign a MYAccess! prompt within the next couple of weeks.
- **Shiloh:** Continues to use the PAUSE strategy during explicit instruction.

**Mini-Modules**

We still have a number of mini-modules that need to be taught. Please let us know if you have questions or need help planning. The following modules have already been taught:

- General Education (Leah) – 6 Traits of Writing, Progress Monitoring, and Self-Monitoring
- Academy (Bobbye, Marc, Shiloh, Juliana, and Koren) – 6 Traits of Writing, Progress Monitoring, Self-Monitoring, Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Note taking
- Special Education (Greg) – 6 Traits of Writing
Students generally have difficulty with punctuation in sentence structure. Specifically, using a comma to set off dependent clauses and forming compound sentences using punctuation (colon or semi-colon) in lieu of a coordinating conjunction. For example, a student may write a compound sentence “The rain was coming down faster and faster around the house the thunder was louder than he ever heard in his life.” Without punctuation, the sentence flirts with becoming a run-on. With punctuation, it’s much clearer: “The rain was coming down faster and faster around the house; the thunder was louder than he ever heard in his life.” Students don’t seem to know what colons and semi-colons are...

That’s it for now.
Julie Smith, Ph.D.

The Mystery of the Semi-Colon
Dr. Julie is finding that students have no idea how to use the semi-colon. Though it’s not rocket-science, there are rules to their use.

Why do semi-colons exist anyway?
They commonly serve to connect two independent clauses to make compound sentences.

What? “Independent clauses” just means that they can stand alone as sentences. Let’s look at Dr. Julie’s example: “The rain was coming down faster and faster around the house the thunder was louder than he ever heard in his life.” These are the two independent clauses: “The rain was coming down faster and faster around the house.” and “The thunder was louder than he ever heard in his life.”

So where does the semi-colon come in?
It’s used to link the sentences: “The rain was coming down faster and faster around the house; the thunder was louder than he ever heard in his life.” This way, writers are able to connect information to make longer, more interesting sentences.

Semi-colons are often used with transition words or expressions to join two independent clauses: however, therefore, in addition, otherwise, and nevertheless. Here are some examples:

- **however**
  Irène and Jean live in Montréal; however, they are French.

- **therefore**
  Many cats and dogs in Hawaii are not micro-chipped; therefore it is difficult to return all of them to their owners.

- **in addition**
  Keoni surfs all day at the beach; in addition, he runs in the evening.

- **otherwise**
  The boys should learn traffic rules; otherwise, they may have an accident while skateboarding.
nevertheless Jacob failed the State Bar exam; nevertheless, he found work as a legal assistant while he studies to retake it.

For more detailed information and practice quizzes, please check out the studyzone @ http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/410/grammar/colons.htm

“Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take... but by the moments that take our breath away.”