

Syntax

Consider:

The seven years' difference in our ages lay between us like a chasm: I wondered if these years would ever operate between us as a bridge.

— James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues"

Discuss:

1. What function does the colon serve in this sentence?
2. How would the meaning and impact of the sentence change if the sentence read as follows:

The seven years' difference in our ages lay between us like a chasm, and I wondered if these years would ever operate between us as a bridge.

Apply:

Write two independent clauses; join the two with a colon, giving emphasis to the independent clause which follows the colon. Use Baldwin's sentence as a model. Share your sentence with the class.