Testing Your Understanding: The Semicolon

Place the semicolons where needed in the following sentences. Cross out any misplaced semicolons. If the sentence is correct as written, indicate with a “C.” An answer key follows.

1. In 1946, Max and Marion Caldwell established a private summer camp, Kennolyn, for children ages six to thirteen; they named it after their two children Ken and Carolyn.
2. The first few years the campers consisted of mostly relative, therefore, Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell acquired the titles of Uncle Max and Aunt Marion.
3. The Caldwell’s private summer camp had a variety of activities to entertain young campers; for example; swimming, horseback riding, crafts, and guitar lessons.
4. You’d think that the cafeteria style food would not be very good on the contrary; the cooks created wonderfully tasty meals.
5. A veteran camper advised her friend to sign up for the six week session, “You’ll have so much fun; you won’t have time to be homesick.”
6. Taps played at 10:00 p.m., the campers; however, were too rowdy to go to sleep.
7. Every morning the campers assembled for the raising of the flag and announcements; and there was a similar ceremony before dinner when the flag was lowered.
8. Thursdays at Kennolyn were spent on “Outpost.” Camping in the woods, away from their cabins and bunk beds, would be more work, less comfortable, sometimes quite cold, often filled with imagined dangers, and isolated, and although the campers were worn out, “Outpost” was always a great adventure.
9. Kennolyn campers came from many cities such as Chico, Sacramento, San Francisco, Menlo Park, and Los Angeles in California, as well as Bonnyville, Canada, in the north, Santa Fe, Arizona in the southwest, and even Puerto Vallarta, Mexico in the south.
10. At summer camp, many children are given a chance to experience things they never could have at home, indeed, the benefits are worth every penny of the expense.

Answers below:

**Answer Key:**

1. In 1946, Max and Marion Caldwell established a private summer camp, Kennolyn, for children ages six to thirteen; they named it after their two children Ken and Carolyn. [see # 1]

2. The first few years the campers consisted of mostly relatives; therefore, Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell acquired the titles of Uncle Max and Aunt Marion. (see # 2 – linked with conjunctive adverb)

3. The Caldwell’s private summer camp had a variety of activities to entertain young campers; for example, swimming, horseback riding, crafts, and guitar lessons. (see # 2 – preceded by a semicolon & followed by a comma)

4. You’d think that the cafeteria style food would not be very good; on the contrary, the cooks created wonderfully tasty meals. (same rule as above)

5. A veteran camper advised her friend to sign up for the six week session, “You’ll have so much fun; you won’t have time to be homesick.” [see # 1]

6. Taps played at 10:00 p.m.; the campers, however, were too rowdy to go to sleep. (see # 2 – transitional expression in the middle → semicolon goes between the clauses)

7. Every morning the campers assembled for the raising of the flag and announcements, and there was a similar ceremony before dinner when the flag was lowered. (see # 2 – coordinating conjunctions are preceded by a comma)
8. Thursdays at Kennolyn were spent on “Outpost.” Camping in the woods, away from their cabins and bunk beds, would be more work, less comfortable, sometimes quite cold, often filled with imagined dangers, and isolated; and although the campers were worn out, “Outpost” was always a great adventure. (see # 2 – *Exception*)

9. Kennolyn campers came from many cities such as Chico, Sacramento, San Francisco, Menlo Park, and Los Angeles in California; as well as Bonnyville, Canada, in the north; Santa Fe, Arizona in the southwest; and even Puerto Vallarta, Mexico in the south. (see # 3)

10. At summer camp, many children are given a chance to experience things they never could have at home; indeed, the benefits are worth every penny of the expense. (see # 2)