COMMA PRACTICE

Exercises

Instructions: determine what punctuation should be used in these sentences.

1. Hydrocarbons are organic compounds composed of hydrogen and carbon, hydrocarbons found on planet Earth typically occur in crude oil.

2. Before starting the research we must prepare the proppants by uniformly mixing them.

3. We have no recorded history of structural engineering prior to Egyptian times but we know that engineering must have existed before the pyramids were built.

Answer key on page 2.
Answer Key

1. Hydrocarbons are organic compounds composed of hydrogen and carbon; hydrocarbons found on planet Earth typically occur in crude oil.

This sentence needs a semicolon as the sentence contains two complete independent clauses, making it a comma splice if the semicolon is not added.

2. Before starting the research, we must prepare the proppants by uniformly mixing them.

A comma is needed after research to separate the introductory clause from the rest of the sentence.

3. We have no recorded history of structural engineering prior to Egyptian times, but we know that structural engineering must have existed before the pyramids were built.

A comma is needed before but as it is a coordinating conjunction for two independent clauses.