# Clause Clue Sort

Decide whether a clause identifies or adds information.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.1** "Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking."

NAME _____ DATE _____

**NEEDED DETAIL**

An essential clause tells which person or thing you mean. Do not set it off with commas.

Books that contain primary sources are on the reserve shelf.

**EXTRA DETAIL**

An extra-detail clause adds information about a person or thing already identified. Set it off with commas.

The library, which closes at six, is across the courtyard.

## 1 SORT

8 items

For each sentence, circle ESSENTIAL or EXTRA, then choose two sentences and explain whether each clause identifies a noun or adds information about it.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1.** | The manuscripts that contain handwritten notes require special handling. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |
| **2.** | Ms. Okafor, who directs the debate team, will announce the finalists. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |
| **3.** | Students who miss the lab safety lesson may not use the equipment. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |
| **4.** | The solar eclipse, which lasted nearly four minutes at this location, drew a large crowd. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |
| **5.** | Our principal, who began her career as a librarian, opened the new media center. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |
| **6.** | The evidence that the prosecutor presented changed the jury's view. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |
| **7.** | Maya's first novel, which she drafted during college, won a regional award. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |
| **8.** | Cars that block the fire lane will be towed. | ESSENTIAL EXTRA |

## 2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

**ITEM #** _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

**ITEM #** _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

## 3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one sentence with an essential clause and one sentence with an extra-detail clause. Use commas only for the extra-detail clause.

**ESSENTIAL** _____

**EXTRA** _____

**CHALLENGE**

Rewrite this sentence so the clause becomes extra detail: The athletes who qualified will travel to Boston.

**ANSWER KEY**

# Clause Clue Sort

**HIGH SCHOOL · L.11-12.1**

## PART 1 · SORT

| # | ITEM | CATEGORY | WHY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The manuscripts that contain handwritten notes require special handling. | **ESSENTIAL** | The clause identifies which manuscripts require special handling, so no commas are used. |
| 2 | Ms. Okafor, who directs the debate team, will announce the finalists. | **EXTRA** | The name already identifies Ms. Okafor. The clause adds information and needs commas. |
| 3 | Students who miss the lab safety lesson may not use the equipment. | **ESSENTIAL** | The clause identifies which students may not use the equipment. |
| 4 | The solar eclipse, which lasted nearly four minutes at this location, drew a large crowd. | **EXTRA** | The specific eclipse is already identified. The clause adds a detail and is set off by commas. |
| 5 | Our principal, who began her career as a librarian, opened the new media center. | **EXTRA** | Our principal is already identified. The clause adds background information. |
| 6 | The evidence that the prosecutor presented changed the jury's view. | **ESSENTIAL** | The clause identifies which evidence changed the jury's view. |
| 7 | Maya's first novel, which she drafted during college, won a regional award. | **EXTRA** | Maya's first novel is already identified. The clause adds information about when she drafted it. |
| 8 | Cars that block the fire lane will be towed. | **ESSENTIAL** | The clause identifies which cars will be towed. |

## PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

## PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **ESSENTIAL**: Players who arrive late must wait until the next quarter to enter.
- **EXTRA**: Our captain, who practices every morning, led the team in scoring.

**Challenge:** Our track team, which qualified for the meet, will travel to Boston.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, students should explain that essential clauses identify a specific noun, while extra-detail clauses add nonessential information and use commas. Accept original Part 3 responses that clearly maintain the meaning and punctuation of each clause type.