

Sentence Detectives

Spot complete thoughts and incomplete pieces.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.1f "Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.*"

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

A complete sentence has a subject and a verb. It tells a complete thought.

Silver comets streaked skyward.

FRAGMENT

A fragment is only part of a sentence. It does not tell a complete thought.

During autumn.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle COMPLETE or FRAGMENT for each item, then choose two items and explain what makes each one complete or a fragment.

1. The turtle rested on a warm rock.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

2. Before the parade began.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

3. In the basket near the door.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

4. Marcus found his missing library book.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

5. Three blue kites flew above the beach.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

6. The chef stirred the soup slowly.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

7. While the paint was still wet.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

8. Our neighbor waved from the porch.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

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 new complete sentence and one new fragment.

COMPLETE _____

FRAGMENT _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one fragment from Part 1. Write its number, then turn it into a complete sentence.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The turtle rested on a warm rock.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, turtle, and a verb, rested, and it tells a complete thought.
2	Before the parade began.	FRAGMENT	It begins an idea but does not tell what happened before the parade began.
3	In the basket near the door.	FRAGMENT	It is a phrase that does not have a verb or a complete thought.
4	Marcus found his missing library book.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, Marcus, and a verb, found, and it tells a complete thought.
5	Three blue kites flew above the beach.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, kites, and a verb, flew, and it tells a complete thought.
6	The chef stirred the soup slowly.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, chef, and a verb, stirred, and it tells a complete thought.
7	While the paint was still wet.	FRAGMENT	It starts an idea with while but does not tell what happened while the paint was wet.
8	Our neighbor waved from the porch.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, neighbor, and a verb, waved, and it tells a complete thought.

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)

- **COMPLETE:** Owls hunt quietly at night.
- **FRAGMENT:** Across the empty field.

Challenge: 2. The drums started before the parade began.

Sort answers: 1 COMPLETE, 2 FRAGMENT, 3 FRAGMENT, 4 COMPLETE, 5 COMPLETE, 6 COMPLETE, 7 FRAGMENT, 8 COMPLETE. For Part 2, accept explanations that name a complete thought, a subject and verb, or what information the fragment is missing.