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.

ANSWER KEY

Sentence Detectives

GRADE 4 · L.4.1f

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.

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