

Pause Signal Sort

Choose the punctuation that matches the kind of pause.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2a "Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break."

NAME _____

DATE _____

BRIEF PAUSE

Use a comma after an introductory word or phrase to mark a short pause before the main idea.

At dawn, Keisha watered the basil.

TRAILING THOUGHT

Use an ellipsis when a speaker's or writer's thought trails off without finishing.

The next clue is hidden...

1 SORT

8 items

Circle BRIEF or TRAILING for each item, then choose two items and explain how the punctuation shows the kind of pause.

1. After the concert, Luis folded his program.

BRIEF

TRAILING

2. In the basement, the old pipes rattled.

BRIEF

TRAILING

3. I meant to bring the...

BRIEF

TRAILING

4. Before dinner, Sora finished her sketch.

BRIEF

TRAILING

5. The recipe says to stir...

BRIEF

TRAILING

6. Our class might visit...

BRIEF

TRAILING

7. Across the field, a hawk circled slowly.

BRIEF

TRAILING

8. During rehearsal, Priya checked the microphone.

BRIEF

TRAILING

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 sentence with a comma for a BRIEF pause and one new sentence with an ellipsis for a TRAILING thought.

BRIEF _____

TRAILING _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence that uses both a comma for a BRIEF pause and an ellipsis for a TRAILING thought.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	After the concert, Luis folded his program.	BRIEF	The comma follows an introductory phrase and marks a short pause.
2	In the basement, the old pipes rattled.	BRIEF	The comma follows an introductory phrase and marks a short pause.
3	I meant to bring the...	TRAILING	The ellipsis shows that the thought is left unfinished.
4	Before dinner, Sora finished her sketch.	BRIEF	The comma follows an introductory phrase and marks a short pause.
5	The recipe says to stir...	TRAILING	The ellipsis shows that the thought trails off before the instruction is complete.
6	Our class might visit...	TRAILING	The ellipsis shows an unfinished thought.
7	Across the field, a hawk circled slowly.	BRIEF	The comma follows an introductory phrase and marks a short pause.
8	During rehearsal, Priya checked the microphone.	BRIEF	The comma follows an introductory phrase and marks a short pause.

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)

- **BRIEF:** Without warning, the puppy chased a leaf.
- **TRAILING:** I cannot remember where...

Challenge: Before sunset, Omar said, "I may be late..."

Answers: 1 BRIEF, 2 BRIEF, 3 TRAILING, 4 BRIEF, 5 TRAILING, 6 TRAILING, 7 BRIEF, 8 BRIEF. Accept student examples that correctly use a comma after an introductory element and an ellipsis for an unfinished thought.