Sentence Sleuth

Find complete sentences and fragments.

ELA.4.C.3.1 "Follow the rules of standard English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling appropriate to grade level."

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

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

Bright butterflies rested quietly.

FRAGMENT

A fragment is not a complete sentence. It may be missing a subject, a verb, or a complete thought.

After lunchtime.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle SENTENCE or FRAGMENT for each item, then choose two items and explain how you knew which category each one belongs in.

1. The puppy chased its tail. SENTENCE FRAGMENT
2. Clouds covered the moon. SENTENCE FRAGMENT
3. Near the crowded gate. SENTENCE FRAGMENT
4. Our neighbors planted tomatoes. SENTENCE FRAGMENT
5. Because the bus arrived late. SENTENCE FRAGMENT
6. Across the icy pond. SENTENCE FRAGMENT
7. Mia and Jordan built a kite. SENTENCE FRAGMENT
8. When the lights went out. SENTENCE 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.

SENTENCE _____

FRAGMENT _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one fragment from Part 1 and rewrite it as a complete sentence with a capital letter and an end mark.

ANSWER KEY # Sentence Sleuth

GRADE 4 · ELA.4.C.3.1

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The puppy chased its tail.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject and verb and tells a complete thought.
2	Clouds covered the moon.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject and verb and tells a complete thought.
3	Near the crowded gate.	**FRAGMENT**	It does not have a verb or tell a complete thought.
4	Our neighbors planted tomatoes.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject and verb and tells a complete thought.
5	Because the bus arrived late.	**FRAGMENT**	It begins an idea but does not finish the thought.
6	Across the icy pond.	**FRAGMENT**	It does not have a verb or tell a complete thought.
7	Mia and Jordan built a kite.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject and verb and tells a complete thought.
8	When the lights went out.	**FRAGMENT**	It begins an idea but does not finish the 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)

- **SENTENCE**: The drummer tapped a steady beat.
- **FRAGMENT**: Before sunrise.

Challenge: We waited near the crowded gate.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, accept explanations that correctly identify a subject and verb or explain that the words do not express a complete thought. Part 3 answers will vary, but the sentence must be complete and the fragment must be incomplete.