

Sentence Detectives

Find complete thoughts and sentence pieces.

3.L.GC.2 "Syntax: Apply understandings of sentence structure to comprehend and compose varied sentences."

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

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

Penguins waddle slowly.

FRAGMENT

A fragment is only part of a thought. It may be missing a subject, a verb, or a complete idea.

Under silver bridges

1 SORT

8 items

Circle SENTENCE or FRAGMENT for each item, then choose two items and explain how you knew.

1. The parade moved down Main Street.

SENTENCE

FRAGMENT

2. My brother laughed at the joke.

SENTENCE

FRAGMENT

3. Across the dusty playground.

SENTENCE

FRAGMENT

4. A squirrel buried an acorn.

SENTENCE

FRAGMENT

5. After the last bell.

SENTENCE

FRAGMENT

6. The red backpack on the chair.

SENTENCE

FRAGMENT

7. Clouds covered the sun.

SENTENCE

FRAGMENT

8. We planted seeds in the garden.

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 the sort and turn it into a complete sentence by adding words.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The parade moved down Main Street.	SENTENCE	It has a subject, parade, and a verb, moved, and it tells a complete thought.
2	My brother laughed at the joke.	SENTENCE	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
3	Across the dusty playground.	FRAGMENT	It does not have a verb or express a complete thought.
4	A squirrel buried an acorn.	SENTENCE	It has a subject, squirrel, and a verb, buried, and it is complete.
5	After the last bell.	FRAGMENT	It is a phrase that does not tell what happened.
6	The red backpack on the chair.	FRAGMENT	It names a thing but has no verb.
7	Clouds covered the sun.	SENTENCE	It has a subject and verb and tells a complete thought.
8	We planted seeds in the garden.	SENTENCE	It has a subject, we, and a verb, planted, and it is complete.

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 baker mixed dough.
- **FRAGMENT:** Before breakfast.

Challenge: Children ran across the dusty playground.

Answers in order: SENTENCE, SENTENCE, FRAGMENT, SENTENCE, FRAGMENT, FRAGMENT, SENTENCE, SENTENCE. For Part 2, accept explanations that identify a complete thought, a subject and verb, or what is missing from a fragment.