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.

ANSWER KEY # Sentence Detectives

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.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, accept explanations that identify a complete thought, a subject and verb, or what is missing from a fragment.