Sentence Detectives

Sort complete thoughts from incomplete word groups.

4.L.GC.1 "Grammar, Usage, & Mechanics: Learn and apply conventions of Standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics to aid the comprehension and analysis of texts and to communicate clearly and precisely in written and spoken language."

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

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

A cheerful baker kneads dough before sunrise.

FRAGMENT

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

Across the busy market.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle SENTENCE or FRAGMENT for each item; Part 2: Pick two items and explain how you knew.

1. The tiny turtle crawled across the warm sand. SENTENCE FRAGMENT

2. My brother and I built a snow fort. SENTENCE FRAGMENT

3. Beneath the old wooden bridge. SENTENCE FRAGMENT

4. The noisy parrot copied Maya's laugh. SENTENCE FRAGMENT

5. Ran quickly toward the finish line. SENTENCE FRAGMENT

6. After the last bell rang. SENTENCE FRAGMENT

7. Bright stars sparkled above the campsite. SENTENCE FRAGMENT

8. In the basket near the door. 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, turn it into a complete sentence, and write its item number and your new sentence.

ANSWER KEY

Sentence Detectives

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The tiny turtle crawled across the warm sand.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject, turtle, and a verb, crawled, and expresses a complete thought.
2	My brother and I built a snow fort.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject, My brother and I, and a verb, built, and expresses a complete thought.
3	Beneath the old wooden bridge.	**FRAGMENT**	It is a prepositional phrase and does not tell what happened.
4	The noisy parrot copied Maya's laugh.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject, parrot, and a verb, copied, and expresses a complete thought.
5	Ran quickly toward the finish line.	**FRAGMENT**	It has a verb, ran, but does not name who ran.
6	After the last bell rang.	**FRAGMENT**	It begins with after and leaves the reader waiting to learn what happened next.
7	Bright stars sparkled above the campsite.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject, stars, and a verb, sparkled, and expresses a complete thought.
8	In the basket near the door.	**FRAGMENT**	It tells where, but it does not tell what happened.

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 river carried leaves downstream.
- **FRAGMENT**: During the quiet afternoon.

Challenge: 3. The fox slept beneath the old wooden bridge.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, students should identify a subject and verb for a sentence or name what is missing from a fragment. Accept varied correct responses for Part 3 and the challenge.