Sentence Detectives

Find complete thoughts and sentence pieces.

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

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

A complete sentence tells a complete thought. It has a subject and a predicate, or it can be a command with an understood subject.

My parrot whistled at dawn.

FRAGMENT

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

Beside a silver waterfall.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle the category for each item, then choose two items and explain how you knew.

1.	The lanterns glowed along the path.	COMPLETE	FRAGMENT
2.	Did you pack your lunch?	COMPLETE	FRAGMENT
3.	Under the tall bridge.	COMPLETE	FRAGMENT
4.	Please fold the map carefully.	COMPLETE	FRAGMENT
5.	After the movie ended.	COMPLETE	FRAGMENT
6.	The noisy crowd at the game.	COMPLETE	FRAGMENT
7.	Across the muddy field.	COMPLETE	FRAGMENT
8.	Wow, that puzzle was tricky!	COMPLETE	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.

COMPLETE _____

FRAGMENT _____

CHALLENGE

Choose your fragment and turn it into a complete sentence by adding a subject and a predicate.

ANSWER KEY # Sentence Detectives

GRADE 4 · 4.L.GC.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The lanterns glowed along the path.	**COMPLETE**	It has a subject, lanterns, and a predicate, glowed along the path.
2	Did you pack your lunch?	**COMPLETE**	It asks a complete question with a subject and predicate.
3	Under the tall bridge.	**FRAGMENT**	It tells where, but not who or what did something.
4	Please fold the map carefully.	**COMPLETE**	It is a command with an understood subject, you, and a predicate.
5	After the movie ended.	**FRAGMENT**	It begins a thought but does not finish it.
6	The noisy crowd at the game.	**FRAGMENT**	It names a group but does not tell what the group did.
7	Across the muddy field.	**FRAGMENT**	It tells where, but it is not a complete thought.
8	Wow, that puzzle was tricky!	**COMPLETE**	It has a subject, puzzle, and a predicate, was tricky.

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)

- **COMPLETE**: The puppy chased a leaf.
- **FRAGMENT**: During the thunderstorm.

Challenge: The family stayed indoors during the thunderstorm.

For Part 2, students should identify the missing or present subject and predicate in each chosen item. Accept varied student responses in Part 3 when each example clearly fits its category.