Comma Clue Sort

Look at the opening words in each sentence.

5.L.GC.1.40 "Mechanics: Use commas after introductory phrases or clauses. (Master)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMMA IS USED	COMMA IS MISSING
A comma comes after the introductory phrase or clause. It separates the opening words from the main sentence. Beneath heavy clouds, owls hooted.	The sentence begins with an introductory phrase or clause, but it needs a comma before the main sentence begins. Across distant dunes travelers paused.

1 SORT

8 items

Read each sentence, circle USED if a comma follows the introductory words or MISSING if a comma is needed, then choose two items and explain whether a comma is present or needed after the introductory words.

1. After the final bell, Maya packed her sketchbook. USED MISSING
2. Before breakfast began the puppies chased a ball. USED MISSING
3. When the trail ended, our group rested beside the creek. USED MISSING
4. At the end of the assembly, Mr. Chen found a map. USED MISSING
5. Because the wind howled the campers secured their tents. USED MISSING
6. At the science fair on Friday Jordan explained the robot. USED MISSING
7. While the paint dried, Luis washed the brushes. USED MISSING
8. When recess ended the team planned a game. USED MISSING

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 sentence for USED and one new sentence for MISSING.

USED _____

MISSING _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite this sentence with commas after both introductory parts: Early on Saturday before the sun rose the bakers mixed dough.

ANSWER KEY # Comma Clue Sort

GRADE 5 · 5.L.GC.1.40

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	After the final bell, Maya packed her sketchbook.	**USED**	A comma correctly follows the introductory phrase.
2	Before breakfast began the puppies chased a ball.	**MISSING**	The introductory clause needs a comma after began.
3	When the trail ended, our group rested beside the creek.	**USED**	A comma correctly follows the introductory clause.
4	At the end of the assembly, Mr. Chen found a map.	**USED**	A comma correctly follows the introductory phrase.
5	Because the wind howled the campers secured their tents.	**MISSING**	The introductory clause needs a comma after howled.
6	At the science fair on Friday Jordan explained the robot.	**MISSING**	The introductory phrase needs a comma after Friday.
7	While the paint dried, Luis washed the brushes.	**USED**	A comma correctly follows the introductory clause.
8	When recess ended the team planned a game.	**MISSING**	The introductory clause needs a comma after ended.

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)

- **USED**: Before the parade started, neighbors gathered along the street.
- **MISSING**: After the long hike the visitors drank cold water.

Challenge: Early on Saturday, before the sun rose, the bakers mixed dough.

For PROVE IT, students should identify the introductory phrase or clause and explain whether a comma appears after it or is needed. Part 3 responses will vary, but each USED sentence should include the comma and each MISSING sentence should leave it out.