

Tense Time Detectives

Track whether verbs stay in the same time.

5.L.GC.2.b "Use a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences to strengthen clarity and coherence, maintaining consistent verb tense throughout the entire text. (C)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

CONSISTENT VERB TENSE

The verbs stay in the same time, such as past or present. This helps readers follow the action.

Jordan washed the bicycle and dried the seat.

UNPLANNED TENSE SHIFT

The verbs jump from one time to another without a reason. This can confuse readers.

The squirrel climbed the fence, but it searches for an acorn.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle CONSISTENT or SHIFTED for each sentence, then choose two items and explain which verbs showed you the answer.

1. Maya planted beans and watered them after school.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

2. The hikers crossed the bridge before they reached camp.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

3. Our robot rolled across the floor, then it bumps into a chair.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

4. When the bell rang, students opened their notebooks.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

5. Leo sketches a dragon, and he colored its wings.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

6. After the rain stopped, the puddles reflect the clouds.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

7. Nina mixed batter, then placed the pan in the oven.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

8. The baby laughed because the puppy chases its tail.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTED

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 CONSISTENT sentence and one new SHIFTED sentence.

CONSISTENT _____

SHIFTED _____

CHALLENGE

Write a three-sentence story in past tense with one simple sentence, one compound sentence, and one complex sentence.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Maya planted beans and watered them after school.	CONSISTENT	Both planted and watered are past-tense verbs.
2	The hikers crossed the bridge before they reached camp.	CONSISTENT	Both crossed and reached are past-tense verbs.
3	Our robot rolled across the floor, then it bumps into a chair.	SHIFTED	Rolled is past tense, but bumps is present tense.
4	When the bell rang, students opened their notebooks.	CONSISTENT	Both rang and opened are past-tense verbs.
5	Leo sketches a dragon, and he colored its wings.	SHIFTED	Sketches is present tense, but colored is past tense.
6	After the rain stopped, the puddles reflect the clouds.	SHIFTED	Stopped is past tense, but reflect is present tense.
7	Nina mixed batter, then placed the pan in the oven.	CONSISTENT	Mixed and placed are both past-tense verbs.
8	The baby laughed because the puppy chases its tail.	SHIFTED	Laughed is past tense, but chases is present tense.

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)

- **CONSISTENT:** The painter cleaned the brush and closed the jar.
- **SHIFTED:** Tara jumped rope, then she trips on a stone.

Challenge: The fox rested beneath a tree. It heard a rustle, and it lifted its ears. When the wind calmed, the fox trotted toward the creek.

Accept proof statements that name the verbs and correctly identify their tenses. In Part 3, accept any clear examples that either keep one tense throughout or intentionally shift between tenses.