Tense Time Sort

Sort tense patterns, then write all four sentence forms.

6.L.GC.2.b "Use a variety of simple, compound, complex, and compound- complex sentences to condense and combine ideas, maintaining consistent verb tense throughout the text. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

TENSE STAYS

Choose STEADY when all main verbs use the same time, such as past or present. Use steady tense in every form: a simple sentence has one independent clause, a compound sentence joins two, a complex sentence adds a dependent clause, and a compound-complex sentence has two independent clauses and a dependent clause.

The drummer practiced each afternoon, and the neighbors heard the rhythm.

TENSE SHIFTS

Choose SHIFT when verbs in one sentence switch between times, such as past and present. The sentence form does not change the tense rule.

The puppy chases the ball and barked loudly.

1 SORT

8 items

Read each sentence, then circle STEADY or SHIFT to show whether its verbs stay in one tense.

1. The hikers packed their water before sunrise. STEADY SHIFT

2. Lena drew a map, and Omar checked the trail. STEADY SHIFT

3. Although the road was steep, the cyclists pedal steadily. STEADY SHIFT

4. While the rain fell, the team waited, and the coach watched the clock. STEADY SHIFT

5. The chef mixes the batter and placed the pan in the oven. STEADY SHIFT

6. The fox ran toward the woods, but the owl watches from a branch. STEADY SHIFT

7. While the machines hummed, workers packed the boxes. STEADY SHIFT

8. Although the road was icy, Dad drove slowly, and we arrived late. STEADY SHIFT

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 STEADY sentence and one SHIFT sentence. Make the two sentences different forms, such as simple and complex.

STEADY _____

SHIFT _____

CHALLENGE

Write a four-sentence paragraph about one topic. Include one simple, one compound, one complex, and one compound-complex sentence. Keep all verbs in the same tense.

ANSWER KEY

Tense Time Sort

GRADE 6 · 6.L.GC.2.b

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The hikers packed their water before sunrise.	**STEADY**	Packed is past tense.
2	Lena drew a map, and Omar checked the trail.	**STEADY**	Drew and checked are both past tense.
3	Although the road was steep, the cyclists pedal steadily.	**SHIFT**	Was is past tense, but pedal is present tense.
4	While the rain fell, the team waited, and the coach watched the clock.	**STEADY**	Fell, waited, and watched are all past tense.
5	The chef mixes the batter and placed the pan in the oven.	**SHIFT**	Mixes is present tense, but placed is past tense.
6	The fox ran toward the woods, but the owl watches from a branch.	**SHIFT**	Ran is past tense, but watches is present tense.
7	While the machines hummed, workers packed the boxes.	**STEADY**	Hummed and packed are both past tense.
8	Although the road was icy, Dad drove slowly, and we arrived late.	**STEADY**	Was, drove, and arrived are all past 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)

- **STEADY**: Although the library was crowded, Mia found a seat.
- **SHIFT**: The robot rolled across the floor and stops beside the door.

Challenge: Our class planted seeds. We watered the soil, and the sun warmed the pots. When the sprouts appeared, everyone measured them. Although the weather turned cold, we moved the pots indoors, and the plants continued to grow.

Items 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 are STEADY. Items 3, 5, and 6 are SHIFT. For the challenge, check for all four sentence forms and a consistent verb tense throughout the paragraph.