Sentence Detectives

Sort complete thoughts from incomplete ones.

6.L.GC.2 "Syntax: Apply understanding of syntax to comprehend, analyze, condense, and combine ideas and information, enhancing clarity, style, and meaning."

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

A complete sentence has a subject and a predicate. It expresses a complete thought.

Lightning flashed beyond distant hills.

FRAGMENT

A fragment is missing a subject, a predicate, or a complete thought. It cannot stand alone as a sentence.

Near a silent waterfall.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle SENTENCE or FRAGMENT for each item, then pick two items and explain how you knew.

1.	The owl watched from the branch.	SENTENCE FRAGMENT
2.	My cousin practiced piano after dinner.	SENTENCE FRAGMENT
3.	Because the trail was slippery.	SENTENCE FRAGMENT
4.	The new librarian recommended a mystery novel.	SENTENCE FRAGMENT
5.	Running toward the finish line.	SENTENCE FRAGMENT
6.	Before the first bell rang.	SENTENCE FRAGMENT
7.	We packed extra water for the hike.	SENTENCE FRAGMENT
8.	Across the noisy cafeteria.	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 your fragment and revise it into a complete sentence.

ANSWER KEY # Sentence Detectives

GRADE 6 · 6.L.GC.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The owl watched from the branch.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject, owl, and a predicate, watched from the branch.
2	My cousin practiced piano after dinner.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject and predicate and expresses a complete thought.
3	Because the trail was slippery.	**FRAGMENT**	It begins with because and leaves the reader waiting for what happened.
4	The new librarian recommended a mystery novel.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject and predicate and expresses a complete thought.
5	Running toward the finish line.	**FRAGMENT**	It does not name who or what was running.
6	Before the first bell rang.	**FRAGMENT**	It leaves the reader waiting for what happened before the bell rang.
7	We packed extra water for the hike.	**SENTENCE**	It has a subject, we, and a predicate, packed extra water for the hike.
8	Across the noisy cafeteria.	**FRAGMENT**	It is a phrase and does not express a complete thought.

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 soccer team celebrated its hard-earned win.
- **FRAGMENT**: Under the bright stage lights.

Challenge: During the heavy rain. → During the heavy rain, the campers stayed inside.

Accept varied explanations in Part 2 when students correctly identify whether each item has a subject, predicate, and complete thought. For Part 3, check that the sentence stands alone and the fragment is intentionally incomplete.