

Clause Clue Sort

Sort clauses by whether they can stand alone.

8.L.GC.2.a "Apply understandings of syntax to comprehend and analyze a variety of grade-level texts. (I)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPLETE CLAUSE

A complete clause has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. It can stand alone as a sentence.

A sculptor polished the marble statue.

DEPENDENT CLAUSE

A dependent clause has a subject and a verb, but it does not express a complete thought. It needs another clause to finish its meaning.

while sunlight filled the studio

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Circle COMPLETE or DEPENDENT for each item, then choose two items in Part 2 and explain what syntax clue helped you sort each one.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. When the bell rang | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 2. Since the trail was icy | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 3. The violinist tuned her instrument. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 4. Even though the battery was low | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 5. My cousin packed sandwiches for the trip. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 6. The committee selected a new captain. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 7. After the parade ended | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 8. Our neighbors planted tulips near the fence. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |

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 clause and one new DEPENDENT clause.

COMPLETE _____

DEPENDENT _____

CHALLENGE

Combine your two new clauses into one complete complex sentence. Use a comma if your dependent clause comes first.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	When the bell rang	DEPENDENT	The subordinating word when makes the clause incomplete.
2	Since the trail was icy	DEPENDENT	Since signals that more information is needed.
3	The violinist tuned her instrument.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, a verb, and a complete thought.
4	Even though the battery was low	DEPENDENT	Even though introduces an incomplete idea.
5	My cousin packed sandwiches for the trip.	COMPLETE	It can stand alone as a complete sentence.
6	The committee selected a new captain.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, a verb, and a complete thought.
7	After the parade ended	DEPENDENT	After makes the reader wait for what happened next.
8	Our neighbors planted tulips near the fence.	COMPLETE	It expresses a complete thought and can stand alone.

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 campers lit a fire.
- **DEPENDENT:** when the temperature dropped

Challenge: When the temperature dropped, the campers lit a fire.

For Part 2, students should identify whether each chosen clause expresses a complete thought and point to a clue such as a subordinating word. Accept varied original examples if the complete clause stands alone and the dependent clause needs another clause.