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.

ANSWER KEY

Clause Clue Sort

GRADE 8 · 8.L.GC.2.a

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 as a sentence.

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.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. 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.