

Hyphen Detective

Use Chicago-style clues to make compound modifiers clear.

9.L.GC.1.61 "Grammar, Usage, Mechanics: Use an appropriate style guide to address complex issues of grammar, usage, or mechanics. (Continue)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

USE HYPHENS

In Chicago style, hyphenate a temporary compound modifier before a noun when the words work as one unit. Number-plus-singular-unit modifiers and many paired modifiers follow this pattern.

a full-time position

LEAVE OPEN

Usually leave a compound open when it follows the noun, begins with an adverb ending in -ly, or is a familiar compound listed open in a dictionary. Not every multiword modifier before a noun needs a hyphen.

The position is full time.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For each phrase or sentence, circle HYPHENATE or OPEN, then choose two items and explain which Chicago-style clue helped you sort each one.

1. a ten-mile hike

HYPHENATE

OPEN

2. a family-owned bakery

HYPHENATE

OPEN

3. a rapidly changing plan

HYPHENATE

OPEN

4. a well-known author

HYPHENATE

OPEN

5. a high school orchestra

HYPHENATE

OPEN

6. The author is well known.

HYPHENATE

OPEN

7. a two-hour delay

HYPHENATE

OPEN

8. a twelve-seat van

HYPHENATE

OPEN

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 example that belongs in HYPHENATE and one new example that belongs in OPEN.

HYPHENATE _____

OPEN _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences using the same number-and-unit idea, first before a noun and then after a noun.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	a ten-mile hike	HYPHENATE	A number plus a singular unit acts as one modifier before hike.
2	a family-owned bakery	HYPHENATE	Family-owned is a compound modifier before bakery, and family is not an adverb ending in -ly.
3	a rapidly changing plan	OPEN	Rapidly is an adverb ending in -ly, so it is not hyphenated with changing.
4	a well-known author	HYPHENATE	Well-known is a compound modifier before author.
5	a high school orchestra	OPEN	High school is an established open compound.
6	The author is well known.	OPEN	Well known follows the noun as a predicate phrase.
7	a two-hour delay	HYPHENATE	A number plus a singular unit acts as one modifier before delay.
8	a twelve-seat van	HYPHENATE	A number plus a singular unit acts as one modifier before van.

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)

- **HYPHENATE:** a six-foot fence
- **OPEN:** The fence is six feet tall.

Challenge: They planned a four-day festival. The festival will last four days.

For Part 2, acceptable explanations identify the position of the modifier, an -ly adverb, an established open compound, or a number-plus-singular-unit modifier. Part 3 answers may vary if they follow Chicago-style hyphenation patterns.