# 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 _____

### HYPHENATE

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

### 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.

**ANSWER KEY** # Hyphen Detective

**GRADE 9 · 9.L.GC.1.61**

## 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.