Past Tense Detectives

Sort verbs by how they tell about the past.

3.W.7.b "Verbs – Writing sentences that use regular and irregular verbs and simple verb tenses to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

REGULAR PAST VERBS

A regular verb usually adds -ed to tell about the past. If the verb already ends in e, add -d.

The artist **painted** a kite.

IRREGULAR PAST VERBS

An irregular verb does not follow the -ed or -d pattern to tell about the past. Its spelling may change in another way.

A fox **ate** a peach.

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle REGULAR or IRREGULAR for each bold verb; for Part 2, choose two items and explain how you knew where each verb belonged.

1. Last night, Ava **washed** the plates. REGULAR IRREGULAR

2. On Monday, Ben **found** a shell. REGULAR IRREGULAR

3. This morning, Mia **wrote** a note. REGULAR IRREGULAR

4. Before lunch, Leo **jumped** over a puddle. REGULAR IRREGULAR

5. After school, Nia **helped** her dad. REGULAR IRREGULAR

6. At noon, Max **opened** the gate. REGULAR IRREGULAR

7. Last week, Zoe **took** the bus. REGULAR IRREGULAR

8. At sunset, Sam **waved** to a friend. REGULAR IRREGULAR

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 two new sentences about past events, one with a regular past-tense verb and one with an irregular past-tense verb; underline each past-tense verb.

REGULAR _____

IRREGULAR _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences about events in order, using a regular past-tense verb in the first and an irregular past-tense verb in the second; underline both verbs.

ANSWER KEY

Past Tense Detectives

GRADE 3 · 3.W.7.b

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Last night, Ava **washed** the plates.	**REGULAR**	Washed adds -ed to wash.
2	On Monday, Ben **found** a shell.	**IRREGULAR**	Found is the irregular past tense of find.
3	This morning, Mia **wrote** a note.	**IRREGULAR**	Wrote is the irregular past tense of write.
4	Before lunch, Leo **jumped** over a puddle.	**REGULAR**	Jumped adds -ed to jump.
5	After school, Nia **helped** her dad.	**REGULAR**	Helped adds -ed to help.
6	At noon, Max **opened** the gate.	**REGULAR**	Opened adds -ed to open.
7	Last week, Zoe **took** the bus.	**IRREGULAR**	Took is the irregular past tense of take.
8	At sunset, Sam **waved** to a friend.	**REGULAR**	Waved adds -d to wave.

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)

- **REGULAR**: The baker mixed the dough.
- **IRREGULAR**: The child broke a stick.

Challenge: First, Tia packed her bag. Then she ran to the car.

For Part 2, a student might explain that washed adds -ed to wash, while found is the past tense of find without -ed. Accept other explanations that correctly describe how the chosen verbs form the past tense.