Long A Detectives

Sort words by where you see the long a spelling.

L.2.2.d "Generalize spelling patterns (graphemes)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

AI IN THE MIDDLE

The letters **ai** can spell the long a sound in the middle of a word.

train

AY AT THE END

The letters **ay** can spell the long a sound at the end of a word.

day

1 SORT

8 items

For each word, circle MIDDLE or END, then choose two words and explain how you knew where each belongs.

1. paint — MIDDLE / END
2. chain — MIDDLE / END
3. play — MIDDLE / END
4. snail — MIDDLE / END
5. stay — MIDDLE / END
6. clay — MIDDLE / END
7. mail — MIDDLE / END
8. tray — MIDDLE / END

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 word with ai in the middle and one new word with ay at the end.

MIDDLE _____

END _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence using two new words, one with ai and one with ay, and underline both words.

ANSWER KEY

Long A Detectives

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	paint	**MIDDLE**	The long a sound is spelled ai in the middle.
2	chain	**MIDDLE**	The long a sound is spelled ai in the middle.
3	play	**END**	The long a sound is spelled ay at the end.
4	snail	**MIDDLE**	The long a sound is spelled ai in the middle.
5	stay	**END**	The long a sound is spelled ay at the end.
6	clay	**END**	The long a sound is spelled ay at the end.
7	mail	**MIDDLE**	The long a sound is spelled ai in the middle.
8	tray	**END**	The long a sound is spelled ay at the end.

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)

- **MIDDLE**: tail
- **END**: say

Challenge: I will wait to pay.

For Part 2, accept explanations that point to ai in the middle or ay at the end of the chosen words. For Part 3, accept other correctly spelled words that follow each pattern.