

Say It Straight

Sort what words say from what they suggest.

3L5.a "Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

LITERAL

Literal words mean exactly what they say. They tell about something that can really happen.

Mina opened the window.

NONLITERAL

Nonliteral words mean something different from the exact words. They help create a strong picture or feeling.

The stars winked at us.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For each sentence, circle LITERAL or NONLITERAL, then for Part 2 choose two item numbers and explain how you knew the meaning of each one.

1. The puppy slept under the table.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

2. The cold wind bit my cheeks.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

3. I have a mountain of homework.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

4. Dad held the baby's hand.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

5. Nora spilled the beans onto her plate.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

6. The test was a piece of cake.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

7. Luis broke the ice in his cup.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

8. The class watched the sun set behind the hills.

LITERAL

NONLITERAL

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 LITERAL sentence and one new NONLITERAL sentence.

LITERAL _____

NONLITERAL _____

CHALLENGE

Write a two-sentence mini-story that uses one NONLITERAL phrase, underline the phrase, and tell what it means.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The puppy slept under the table.	LITERAL	The puppy can really sleep under a table.
2	The cold wind bit my cheeks.	NONLITERAL	Wind cannot literally bite; the phrase means the wind felt painfully cold.
3	I have a mountain of homework.	NONLITERAL	The homework is not a real mountain; the phrase means there is a lot of homework.
4	Dad held the baby's hand.	LITERAL	Dad can really hold the baby's hand.
5	Nora spilled the beans onto her plate.	LITERAL	Beans can really spill onto a plate.
6	The test was a piece of cake.	NONLITERAL	The test was not food; the phrase means the test was easy.
7	Luis broke the ice in his cup.	LITERAL	Ice in a cup can really break.
8	The class watched the sun set behind the hills.	LITERAL	Students can really watch the sun appear to set behind hills.

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)

- **LITERAL:** The rabbit hopped across the yard.
- **NONLITERAL:** My backpack weighs a ton.

Challenge: After practice, Jay said, "My legs are jelly." He meant his legs felt shaky and tired.

Items 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 are LITERAL. Items 2, 3, and 6 are NONLITERAL; accept Part 2 and Part 3 responses that correctly explain the intended meaning.