Sentence or Fragment?

Sort complete sentences and fragments used for effect.

11.5.W.2 "Students will demonstrate command of Standard American English (i.e., grammar, mechanics, and usage) in writing, presentations, and/or multimodal literacies to convey specific meanings and ideas..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

STANDARD SENTENCE

A complete sentence has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.

The violinist tuned her instrument before the recital.

PURPOSEFUL FRAGMENT

A writer may intentionally use a fragment, which lacks part of a complete sentence, to create emphasis, pacing, or a particular voice.

In a broadcast: "A broken antenna. Endless static."

1 SORT

8 items

Circle STANDARD or FRAGMENT for each numbered excerpt, then choose two items and explain how you knew where each belonged.

1.	At the bus stop: "The last bus arrived ten minutes late."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT
2.	In a race scene: "Three strides to go. No time to slow down."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT
3.	In a farewell note: "No more calls. No more excuses."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT
4.	During the hearing: "The witness answered every question clearly."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT
5.	On the trail: "A ranger marked the path with blue flags."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT
6.	Before rehearsal: "The dancers stretched while the stage crew checked the lights."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT
7.	In a mystery scene: "An empty safe. A single muddy print."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT
8.	In a campaign speech: "More books for every child. Fewer locked doors."	STANDARD	FRAGMENT

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 STANDARD sentence and one new FRAGMENT used for a clear effect; give your fragment a brief context.

STANDARD _____

FRAGMENT _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite your STANDARD sentence from Part 3 as purposeful fragments, then name the effect you want to create.

ANSWER KEY

Sentence or Fragment?

GRADE 11 · 11.5.W.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	At the bus stop: "The last bus arrived ten minutes late."	**STANDARD**	The excerpt has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
2	In a race scene: "Three strides to go. No time to slow down."	**FRAGMENT**	Both phrases lack a complete subject-verb structure; the fragments quicken the pace.
3	In a farewell note: "No more calls. No more excuses."	**FRAGMENT**	Both phrases lack verbs; the fragments make the refusal emphatic.
4	During the hearing: "The witness answered every question clearly."	**STANDARD**	The excerpt has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
5	On the trail: "A ranger marked the path with blue flags."	**STANDARD**	The excerpt has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
6	Before rehearsal: "The dancers stretched while the stage crew checked the lights."	**STANDARD**	Both clauses have subjects and verbs, and together they express a complete thought.
7	In a mystery scene: "An empty safe. A single muddy print."	**FRAGMENT**	Both phrases lack verbs; the fragments draw attention to clues.
8	In a campaign speech: "More books for every child. Fewer locked doors."	**FRAGMENT**	Both phrases lack verbs; the parallel fragments emphasize the speaker's goals.

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)

- **STANDARD**: The baker opened the shop before sunrise.
- **FRAGMENT**: In a thriller: "A locked cellar. Heavy breathing below."

Challenge: "Before sunrise. The baker at the shop door. One turn of the key." Effect: The fragments slow the moment and build suspense.

For Part 2, students should identify the missing subject-verb structure in a fragment or the complete thought in a standard sentence. Accept varied original examples when the fragment's context makes its intended effect clear.