Comma Clues

Sort sentences by what each comma does.

3.5.W.6 "Students will use commas before a coordinating conjunction and to separate individual words in a series."

NAME _____ DATE _____

LIST WORDS

A comma separates words in a list of three or more. Look for several things named together.

The fox saw ants, bees, and moths.

JOINED SENTENCES

A comma goes before and when and joins two complete thoughts. Each thought could be its own sentence.

The moon rose, and the stars shone.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle LIST or JOIN for each sentence, then choose two items and explain what each comma separates.

1. Mia packed crayons, glue, and paper. LIST JOIN

2. The frog leaped, and the fish swam. LIST JOIN

3. A bell rang, and the class cheered. LIST JOIN

4. We ate rice, peas, and corn. LIST JOIN

5. I found shells, stones, and feathers. LIST JOIN

6. Dad bought apples, plums, and pears. LIST JOIN

7. The rain stopped, and the sun appeared. LIST JOIN

8. Sam drew squares, circles, and hearts. LIST JOIN

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 LIST sentence and one new JOIN sentence.

LIST _____

JOIN _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence with a list of three words and a second complete thought joined by a comma and and.

ANSWER KEY

Comma Clues

GRADE 3 · 3.5.W.6

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Mia packed crayons, glue, and paper.	**LIST**	The commas separate three items in a list.
2	The frog leaped, and the fish swam.	**JOIN**	The comma comes before and, which joins two complete thoughts.
3	A bell rang, and the class cheered.	**JOIN**	The comma comes before and, which joins two complete thoughts.
4	We ate rice, peas, and corn.	**LIST**	The commas separate three foods in a list.
5	I found shells, stones, and feathers.	**LIST**	The commas separate three things in a list.
6	Dad bought apples, plums, and pears.	**LIST**	The commas separate three fruits in a list.
7	The rain stopped, and the sun appeared.	**JOIN**	The comma comes before and, which joins two complete thoughts.
8	Sam drew squares, circles, and hearts.	**LIST**	The commas separate three shapes in a list.

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)

- **LIST**: Tia chose pens, pads, and folders.
- **JOIN**: The door opened, and our guests entered.

Challenge: Nora gathered twigs, leaves, and rocks, and Ben filled a bucket.

For item 1, crayons, glue, and paper are the list words. For item 2, The frog leaped and the fish swam can each stand alone as a sentence.