Apostrophe Clues

Sort the lines from a busy theater.

8.5.W.6 "Students will write using correct apostrophe mechanics."

NAME _____ DATE _____

SHOWS OWNERSHIP

A possessive apostrophe shows that something belongs to someone or something. If a plural word already ends in s, put the apostrophe after the s.

Rosa's backpack feels heavy.

JOINS WORDS

In a contraction, an apostrophe takes the place of missing letters when words are combined.

He hasn't eaten breakfast.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle OWNERSHIP or COMBINED for each item, then choose two item numbers and explain what each apostrophe does.

1.	The director's clipboard vanished.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED
2.	The dancers' shoes squeaked.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED
3.	We'll check behind the curtains.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED
4.	The stage's trapdoor creaked.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED
5.	I can't find the key.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED
6.	They're waiting in the wings.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED
7.	The musicians' cases blocked the door.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED
8.	It's nearly showtime.	OWNERSHIP COMBINED

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 sentence with a possessive apostrophe and one with a contraction, and label them OWNERSHIP and COMBINED.

OWNERSHIP _____

COMBINED _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence with both a plural possessive and a contraction, then underline both words with apostrophes.

ANSWER KEY

Apostrophe Clues

GRADE 8 · 8.5.W.6

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The director's clipboard vanished.	**OWNERSHIP**	The clipboard belongs to the director.
2	The dancers' shoes squeaked.	**OWNERSHIP**	The shoes belong to the dancers; the apostrophe follows the plural s.
3	We'll check behind the curtains.	**COMBINED**	We'll combines we and will.
4	The stage's trapdoor creaked.	**OWNERSHIP**	The trapdoor belongs to the stage.
5	I can't find the key.	**COMBINED**	Can't combines can and not.
6	They're waiting in the wings.	**COMBINED**	They're combines they and are.
7	The musicians' cases blocked the door.	**OWNERSHIP**	The cases belong to the musicians; the apostrophe follows the plural s.
8	It's nearly showtime.	**COMBINED**	It's combines it and is.

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)

- **OWNERSHIP**: Malik's sketchbook is on the shelf.
- **COMBINED**: We aren't leaving before sunset.

Challenge: The players' uniforms weren't ready.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify what belongs to whom or name the words combined in a contraction.