Syllable Sleuth

Sort words by their first syllable.

4.2.PWS.1 "Students will decode unfamiliar and multisyllabic words using their combined knowledge of the following phonics skills: • letter-sound correspondences • all major syllable types (i.e., closed, consonant +le, open, vowel digraphs..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

OPEN FIRST SYLLABLE

An open syllable ends in a vowel. Its vowel usually says its long sound.

mu.sic

CLOSED FIRST SYLLABLE

A closed syllable ends in a consonant. Its vowel usually says its short sound.

bas.ket

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle OPEN or CLOSED for the first syllable of each word; for Part 2, choose two numbered words and explain how the ending letter and vowel sound helped you decide.

1.	ti.ger	OPEN CLOSED
2.	lem.on	OPEN CLOSED
3.	nap.kin	OPEN CLOSED
4.	pa.per	OPEN CLOSED
5.	ze.ro	OPEN CLOSED
6.	rab.bit	OPEN CLOSED
7.	ba.con	OPEN CLOSED
8.	ro.bot	OPEN CLOSED

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

For Part 3, write one new two-syllable word with an open first syllable and one with a closed first syllable, and use a dot to show each syllable break.

OPEN _____

CLOSED _____

CHALLENGE

Write another two-syllable word, split it with a dot, and explain whether its first syllable is open or closed and why.

ANSWER KEY # Syllable Sleuth

GRADE 4 · 4.2.PWS.1

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	ti.ger	**OPEN**	Ti ends in a vowel, and the i is long.
2	lem.on	**CLOSED**	Lem ends in a consonant, and the e is short.
3	nap.kin	**CLOSED**	Nap ends in a consonant, and the a is short.
4	pa.per	**OPEN**	Pa ends in a vowel, and the a is long.
5	ze.ro	**OPEN**	Ze ends in a vowel, and the e is long.
6	rab.bit	**CLOSED**	Rab ends in a consonant, and the a is short.
7	ba.con	**OPEN**	Ba ends in a vowel, and the a is long.
8	ro.bot	**OPEN**	Ro ends in a vowel, and the o is long.

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)

- **OPEN**: pi.lot
- **CLOSED**: mag.net

Challenge: ho.tel: Ho is open because it ends in a vowel, and the o says its long sound.

For Part 2, students might explain that ti in item 1 ends in a vowel with a long sound, while lem in item 2 ends in a consonant with a short vowel sound. Accept other correctly split words that match the named category.