Comma Detectives

Find the lists with commas in the right places.

2.L.GC.1.17 "Mechanics: Use commas to separate items in a series and to format dates, addresses, salutations, and closings. (Master)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMMAS IN PLACE

This list sentence uses commas to separate its items.

Our picnic had blankets, plates, and napkins.

COMMAS MISSING

This list sentence has items, but commas are missing between them.

Our picnic had blankets plates and napkins.

1 SORT

8 items

For each sentence in Part 1, circle RIGHT or MISSING; in Part 2, choose two item numbers and explain how you knew.

1. I saw a fox, a deer, and a rabbit. RIGHT MISSING

2. Dad bought milk bread and cheese. RIGHT MISSING

3. The band played drums, bells, and flutes. RIGHT MISSING

4. We need glue, paper, and paint. RIGHT MISSING

5. My lunch has apples crackers and juice. RIGHT MISSING

6. The baby smiled, waved, and clapped. RIGHT MISSING

7. At the pond we found frogs turtles and fish. RIGHT MISSING

8. Sam chose red, blue, green, and yellow. RIGHT MISSING

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 for RIGHT and one new list sentence for MISSING.

RIGHT _____

MISSING _____

CHALLENGE

Write a sentence with four items in a series. Use commas correctly.

ANSWER KEY # Comma Detectives

GRADE 2 · 2.L.GC.1.17

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	I saw a fox, a deer, and a rabbit.	**RIGHT**	Commas separate the three animals in the list.
2	Dad bought milk bread and cheese.	**MISSING**	Commas are needed between the list items.
3	The band played drums, bells, and flutes.	**RIGHT**	Commas separate each instrument in the list.
4	We need glue, paper, and paint.	**RIGHT**	Commas separate the three supplies in the list.
5	My lunch has apples crackers and juice.	**MISSING**	A comma is needed between apples and crackers; adding one before and is also a common classroom style.
6	The baby smiled, waved, and clapped.	**RIGHT**	Commas separate the actions in the list.
7	At the pond we found frogs turtles and fish.	**MISSING**	Commas are needed between the animals in the list.
8	Sam chose red, blue, green, and yellow.	**RIGHT**	Commas separate the four colors in the 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)

- **RIGHT**: The kite has red, orange, and purple stripes.
- **MISSING**: The shelf has games books and puzzles.

Challenge: For art, we need crayons, tape, stickers, and scissors.

Items 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8 are RIGHT. Items 2, 5, and 7 are MISSING because commas should separate the items in each series. Item 5 now omits the indispensable comma between apples and crackers. In students' own clear lists, accept either consistent serial-comma style or omission before the final and when meaning stays clear; an optional serial comma is not the sole deciding error.