Hyphen Line Detectives

Decide which word breaks are right.

3.L.GC.1.26 "Mechanics: Use hyphens to divide words at line breaks. (Master)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

CORRECT

A word split at the end of a line needs a hyphen after the first part. The split should be between syllables.

The win-
dow was open.

WRONG

A break is wrong if the hyphen is missing or if it splits a word in the wrong place.

The kite flew ab-
ove us.

1 SORT

8 items

Read each line break, then circle CORRECT or WRONG.

1. The puppy was hap-
py to see me. CORRECT WRONG

2. We saw a rain-
bow after school. CORRECT WRONG

3. The child felt happ-
y after lunch. CORRECT WRONG

4. My sister read a sto-
ry at bedtime. CORRECT WRONG

5. The small bird sat in a ne
st. CORRECT WRONG

6. The fox ran acr-
oss the field. CORRECT WRONG

7. Dad packed a lunch-
box for me. CORRECT WRONG

8. The baby took a nap-
kin to the table.

CORRECT WRONG

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 line-break example for each category.

CORRECT _____

WRONG _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite this sentence so the word breaks correctly: The cat slept bes-
ide the chair.

ANSWER KEY

Hyphen Line Detectives

GRADE 3 · 3.L.GC.1.26

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The puppy was hap- py to see me.	**CORRECT**	The hyphen is at the line end, and hap-py is a correct syllable break.
2	We saw a rain- bow after school.	**CORRECT**	The hyphen is at the line end, and rain-bow is a correct word break.
3	The child felt happ- y after lunch.	**WRONG**	Happ-y does not split the word between syllables.
4	My sister read a sto- ry at bedtime.	**CORRECT**	The hyphen is at the line end, and sto-ry is a correct syllable break.
5	The small bird sat in a ne st.	**WRONG**	Nest has one syllable and must stay together. This display also splits it without a hyphen; adding a hyphen would not make this division correct.
6	The fox ran acr- oss the field.	**WRONG**	Acr-oss does not split the word between syllables.
7	Dad packed a lunch- box for me.	**CORRECT**	The hyphen is at the line end, and lunch-box is a correct word break.
8	The baby took a nap- kin to the table.	**CORRECT**	The hyphen is at the line end, and nap-kin is a correct syllable break.

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)

- **CORRECT**: The farmer fed a chick-
  en.
- **WRONG**: The dog wore a col
  lar.

Challenge: The cat slept be-
side the chair.

For Part 2, students should name the hyphen at the end of the first line and whether the split is between syllables. Part 3 answers may vary if each example clearly shows a correct or incorrect word break. All displayed divisions use actual hard line breaks, including deliberately missing-hyphen examples. Nest cannot be split between syllables because it has only one. Nap-kin is a valid syllable break; preserve its CORRECT classification.