Line Break Detectives

Notice how a line ending changes the way a poem moves.

7.8.B "analyze the effect of rhyme scheme, meter, and graphical elements such as punctuation and capitalization in poems across a variety of poetic forms;"

NAME _____ DATE _____

END-STOPPED LINE

An end-stopped line ends with a complete thought or punctuation. It creates a pause and can make an idea stand out.

Morning mist veiled orchards.

ENJAMBED LINE

An enjambed line continues its thought onto the next line. It moves the reader forward and can build momentum.

Silently, swallows wheel
overhead.

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle PAUSED or FLOWING for each item; for Part 2, choose two items and explain how the punctuation and line break helped you decide. Classify the first intentional line in a two-line example; automatic wrapping is not a poetic line break.

1.	The lantern flickered in the rain.	PAUSED FLOWING
2.	Stone steps led down to the cellar.	PAUSED FLOWING
3.	A fox slipped beneath the rusted gate.	PAUSED FLOWING
4.	At noon, the market bells rang.	PAUSED FLOWING
5.	The old map showed a trail across the island.	PAUSED FLOWING
6.	We waited quietly for the train to arrive.	PAUSED FLOWING
7.	Clouds gathered above the empty field.	PAUSED FLOWING
8.	My brother packed the blue suitcase.	PAUSED FLOWING

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 PAUSED example and one new FLOWING example.

PAUSED _____

FLOWING _____

CHALLENGE

Write a two-line mini-poem with a FLOWING first line and a PAUSED second line. Underline the words or punctuation that show each choice.

ANSWER KEY

Line Break Detectives

GRADE 7 · TEKS 7.8.B

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The lantern flickered in the rain.	**PAUSED**	The period ends a complete thought at the line ending.
2	Stone steps led down to the cellar.	**PAUSED**	The line ends with a complete thought and a period.
3	A fox slipped beneath the rusted gate.	**FLOWING**	The phrase "beneath the rusted gate" continues across the line break.
4	At noon, the market bells rang.	**PAUSED**	The period creates a pause after a complete thought.
5	The old map showed a trail across the island.	**FLOWING**	The thought continues from "trail" to "across the island."
6	We waited quietly for the train to arrive.	**FLOWING**	The words after the break complete the phrase "waited quietly for."
7	Clouds gathered above the empty field.	**PAUSED**	The line ends with a complete thought and a period.
8	My brother packed the blue suitcase.	**PAUSED**	The period marks the end of a complete thought.

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)

- **PAUSED**: Copper leaves covered sidewalks.
- **FLOWING**: Inside the museum, visitors whispered near statues.

Challenge: Raindrops tapped softly on the window.

Sort answers: 1 PAUSED, 2 PAUSED, 3 FLOWING, 4 PAUSED, 5 FLOWING, 6 FLOWING, 7 PAUSED, 8 PAUSED. In Part 2, students should identify whether the thought stops at the line ending or continues onto the next line. The rule example and items 3, 5 and 6 deliberately break after wheel, beneath, trail and for respectively. Classify the first line in each two-line item; the second completes the thought. The model challenge has two intentional lines, with the first continuing after on and the second ending with a period.