Tense Time Check

Track the verb time in each short paragraph.

7.LU.1.E "Maintain consistent verb tense across paragraphs in writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

SAME TENSE

The verbs stay in one main time, such as past, present, or future, throughout the paragraph.

Each autumn, foxes cross the meadow. They search beneath fallen leaves.

TENSE SHIFT

The verbs change from one tense to another, so the paragraph does not keep a consistent time.

A sailor lowered the anchor. Later, the sailor watches the horizon.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle the category for each paragraph, then choose two item numbers, one from each category, and explain which verbs prove your choices.

1.	Nia packed her lunch before school. At noon, she shared an apple with Rosa.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING
2.	The creek curves behind the library. Ducks float near its banks.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING
3.	Omar folded the map. Then he walks toward the museum.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING
4.	Tomorrow, our class will visit the planetarium. We will sketch the moon.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING
5.	Lena entered the auditorium. She practices her solo for the concert.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING
6.	The hikers crossed the bridge. A guide points to the trail.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING
7.	Marcus opens the recipe book. He measures the flour carefully.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING
8.	The storm ended before sunrise. Sunlight warmed the wet sidewalks.	CONSISTENT	SHIFTING

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 a two-sentence paragraph for SAME TENSE and a two-sentence paragraph for TENSE SHIFT.

CONSISTENT

SHIFTING

CHALLENGE

Revise these two connected paragraphs so the narration stays in past tense across the paragraph boundary. Keep two paragraphs and explain which verb needed changing. Use another sheet if needed.

The baker mixed the dough.

Next, she places it in a warm oven. Soon, the bread smelled sweet.

ANSWER KEY

Tense Time Check

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Nia packed her lunch before school. At noon, she shared an apple with Rosa.	**CONSISTENT**	Both verbs, packed and shared, are past tense.
2	The creek curves behind the library. Ducks float near its banks.	**CONSISTENT**	Both verbs, curves and float, are present tense.
3	Omar folded the map. Then he walks toward the museum.	**SHIFTING**	Folded is past tense, but walks is present tense.
4	Tomorrow, our class will visit the planetarium. We will sketch the moon.	**CONSISTENT**	Both verb phrases use future tense with will.
5	Lena entered the auditorium. She practices her solo for the concert.	**SHIFTING**	Entered is past tense, but practices is present tense.
6	The hikers crossed the bridge. A guide points to the trail.	**SHIFTING**	Crossed is past tense, but points is present tense.
7	Marcus opens the recipe book. He measures the flour carefully.	**CONSISTENT**	Both verbs, opens and measures, are present tense.
8	The storm ended before sunrise. Sunlight warmed the wet sidewalks.	**CONSISTENT**	Both verbs, ended and warmed, are past tense.

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)

- **CONSISTENT**: Tariq carried the lantern down the path. He checked each tent.
- **SHIFTING**: Maya watered the seedlings. Then she checks the soil.

Challenge: The baker mixed the dough.

Next, she placed it in a warm oven. Soon, the bread smelled sweet.

Boundary check: mixed, placed, and smelled all narrate past events. I changed places to placed to keep the second paragraph in the same past timeframe.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Items 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 are CONSISTENT. Items 3, 5, and 6 are SHIFTING because the verbs move between past and present tense. Challenge: require two connected paragraphs, not one combined paragraph, and check past tense on both sides of the break. The explanation is separate from the narrative. Intentional tense changes can be valid when the actual time changes; these examples describe one continuous timeframe.