Words Two Ways

Sort sentences by what their words mean.

3.RL.4 "Identify and explain the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language."

NAME _____ DATE _____

LITERAL

The words mean exactly what they say. The event could really happen as written.

The kitten slept inside a basket.

NONLITERAL

The words do not mean exactly what they say. They help you picture an idea in a new way.

My brother is a walking dictionary.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle LITERAL or NONLITERAL for each sentence, then choose one sentence from each group and explain how you knew.

1.	1. The hikers crossed a wooden bridge over the creek.	LITERAL NONLITERAL
2.	2. A turtle crawled under the fence.	LITERAL NONLITERAL
3.	3. After the long race, Mia's legs were made of jelly.	LITERAL NONLITERAL
4.	4. Grandpa poured hot soup into a bowl.	LITERAL NONLITERAL
5.	5. When I lost my map, my stomach did a flip.	LITERAL NONLITERAL
6.	6. The moon smiled down on our camp.	LITERAL NONLITERAL
7.	7. Lena stacked three books on the desk.	LITERAL NONLITERAL
8.	8. The robin carried a twig to its nest.	LITERAL NONLITERAL

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 literal sentence and one new nonliteral sentence.

LITERAL _____

NONLITERAL _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences about the same moment, one literal and one nonliteral, then explain what your nonliteral sentence means.

ANSWER KEY # Words Two Ways

GRADE 3 · 3.RL.4

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	1. The hikers crossed a wooden bridge over the creek.	**LITERAL**	The hikers could cross a real bridge.
2	2. A turtle crawled under the fence.	**LITERAL**	A turtle could crawl under a fence.
3	3. After the long race, Mia's legs were made of jelly.	**NONLITERAL**	Her legs were not actually jelly. The phrase suggests they felt weak or shaky.
4	4. Grandpa poured hot soup into a bowl.	**LITERAL**	Someone could pour soup into a bowl.
5	5. When I lost my map, my stomach did a flip.	**NONLITERAL**	The stomach did not actually flip. The phrase suggests a sudden worried feeling.
6	6. The moon smiled down on our camp.	**NONLITERAL**	The moon cannot smile. The phrase makes its light seem friendly.
7	7. Lena stacked three books on the desk.	**LITERAL**	Someone could stack books on a desk.
8	8. The robin carried a twig to its nest.	**LITERAL**	A robin could carry a twig to its nest.

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)

- **LITERAL**: The puppy splashed in a puddle.
- **NONLITERAL**: As the curtain rose, my heart was a drum.

Challenge: The classroom was noisy before lunch. Before lunch, the classroom was a beehive. This means the room was busy and loud.

For Part 2, accept explanations that describe what could really happen in the literal sentence and what the nonliteral words mean in the other sentence.