Apostrophe Detectives

Find the phrases that show ownership correctly.

4.11.D.x "punctuation marks, including apostrophes in possessives, commas in compound sentences, and quotation marks in dialogue; and"

NAME _____ DATE _____

CORRECT

Use an apostrophe to show that a noun owns something. For a plural noun ending in s, put the apostrophe after the s.

The pilot's map is folded.

FIX

This phrase has a missing or misplaced apostrophe. Add or move it so the owner is clear.

The sailors compass is wet.

1 SORT

8 items

Part 1, SORT: Circle CORRECT or FIX for each phrase; Part 2, PROVE IT: Choose two item numbers and explain where the apostrophe belongs or why it is correct.

1.	The fox's den is hidden.	CORRECT FIX
2.	The cousins' picnic was fun.	CORRECT FIX
3.	The horses stable needs cleaning.	CORRECT FIX
4.	Dad's camera is on the shelf.	CORRECT FIX
5.	The geese nest is empty.	CORRECT FIX
6.	The girl's' bicycle has a bell.	CORRECT FIX
7.	The baker's bread smells warm.	CORRECT FIX
8.	The campers' lanterns lit the path.	CORRECT FIX

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

Part 3, MAKE YOUR OWN: Write one new sentence for CORRECT and one new sentence for FIX.

CORRECT _____

FIX _____

CHALLENGE

Write a new sentence with a plural noun ending in s that shows ownership correctly.

ANSWER KEY

Apostrophe Detectives

GRADE 4 · TEKS 4.11.D.x

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The fox's den is hidden.	**CORRECT**	A singular noun, fox, owns the den, so the apostrophe comes before s.
2	The cousins' picnic was fun.	**CORRECT**	A plural noun ending in s, cousins, owns the picnic, so the apostrophe comes after s.
3	The horses stable needs cleaning.	**FIX**	The plural owner horses needs an apostrophe after s: horses' stable.
4	Dad's camera is on the shelf.	**CORRECT**	A singular noun, Dad, owns the camera, so the apostrophe comes before s.
5	The geese nest is empty.	**FIX**	The plural owner geese does not end in s, so it needs apostrophe s: geese's nest.
6	The girl's' bicycle has a bell.	**FIX**	Girl is singular, so it needs only one apostrophe before s: girl's bicycle.
7	The baker's bread smells warm.	**CORRECT**	A singular noun, baker, owns the bread, so the apostrophe comes before s.
8	The campers' lanterns lit the path.	**CORRECT**	A plural noun ending in s, campers, owns the lanterns, so the apostrophe comes after s.

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 artist's paintbrush is clean.
- **FIX**: The musicians instruments are packed.

Challenge: The hikers' tents stood near the lake.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. For Part 2, accept explanations that name the owner and tell whether the apostrophe is before s, after s, missing, or misplaced. In the FIX sample, musicians' instruments is the corrected form.