

Sentence Detectives

Sort complete thoughts from incomplete word groups.

4.11 "Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--writing process. The student uses the writing process recursively to compose multiple texts that are legible and uses appropriate conventions..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

A complete sentence has a subject and a predicate. It expresses a whole thought.

A comet crossed the sky.

FRAGMENT

A fragment is not a complete sentence. It may be missing a subject, a predicate, or a whole thought.

Near the quiet harbor.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For Part 1, circle COMPLETE or FRAGMENT for each item, then for Part 2, choose two item numbers and explain what makes each one complete or a fragment.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. The turtles rested on warm rocks. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |
| 2. The librarian returned the books. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |
| 3. Beneath the tall pine tree. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |
| 4. We cheered when the team scored. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |
| 5. While the soup simmered. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |
| 6. Carrying a bright umbrella. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |
| 7. The wind pushed dark clouds away. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |
| 8. Across the slippery stepping-stones. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ FRAGMENT |

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 COMPLETE sentence and one new FRAGMENT.

COMPLETE

FRAGMENT

CHALLENGE

Turn these two fragments into one complete sentence: During the science fair. Explained her model to the judges.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The turtles rested on warm rocks.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, turtles, and a predicate, rested on warm rocks, and expresses a whole thought.
2	The librarian returned the books.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, librarian, and a predicate, returned the books, and expresses a whole thought.
3	Beneath the tall pine tree.	FRAGMENT	It is a prepositional phrase and does not tell what happened.
4	We cheered when the team scored.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, we, and a predicate, cheered when the team scored, and expresses a whole thought.
5	While the soup simmered.	FRAGMENT	It begins a thought but does not finish it.
6	Carrying a bright umbrella.	FRAGMENT	It does not name who is carrying the umbrella or state a whole thought.
7	The wind pushed dark clouds away.	COMPLETE	It has a subject, wind, and a predicate, pushed dark clouds away, and expresses a whole thought.
8	Across the slippery stepping-stones.	FRAGMENT	It is a prepositional phrase and does not tell what happened.

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)

- **COMPLETE:** The little boat floated across the pond.
- **FRAGMENT:** Near the crowded ticket booth.

Challenge: During the science fair, Leila explained her model to the judges.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Accept complete sentences with a clear subject and predicate that express a whole thought. Accept fragments that are clearly incomplete and do not function as complete sentences.