

Tense Time Detectives

Track verb tenses to keep each sentence on one timeline.

6.10.D.ii "consistent, appropriate use of verb tenses;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

TENSE MATCHES

The verbs fit the time the sentence describes. If actions happen at the same time, their verbs use the same tense.

A chef chopped onions, simmered soup, and served dinner.

TENSE SHIFTS

One verb jumps to a different tense even though the time has not changed. Edit the verb so the timeline stays clear.

Last night, an owl hooted and flies above the barn.

1 SORT

8 items

For each sentence, circle MATCHES or SHIFTS, then choose two items and explain how the verbs helped you decide.

1. Last Saturday, I washed the car and cleaned the windows.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

2. The hikers pack their lunches and checked the map.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

3. Every morning, Lena feeds the fish before school.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

4. At the game, the crowd cheered when Maya scored.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

5. Tomorrow, we will visit the museum and learned about fossils.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

6. During the storm, thunder rumbled, and the lights flicker.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

7. The robot moves forward, turns left, and stops.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

8. In 2030, scientists will test the device and share their results.

MATCHES

SHIFTS

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 MATCHES sentence and one new SHIFTS sentence.

MATCHES _____

SHIFTS _____

CHALLENGE

Write a two-sentence mini-story about one past event. Use at least four past-tense verbs, and do not shift tense.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Last Saturday, I washed the car and cleaned the windows.	MATCHES	Washed and cleaned are both past tense for actions last Saturday.
2	The hikers pack their lunches and checked the map.	SHIFTS	Pack is present tense, but checked is past tense for the same routine.
3	Every morning, Lena feeds the fish before school.	MATCHES	Feeds is present tense and matches the routine time clue every morning.
4	At the game, the crowd cheered when Maya scored.	MATCHES	Cheered and scored are both past tense.
5	Tomorrow, we will visit the museum and learned about fossils.	SHIFTS	Will visit is future tense, but learned is past tense even though both actions are tomorrow.
6	During the storm, thunder rumbled, and the lights flicker.	SHIFTS	Rumbled is past tense, but flicker is present tense during the same storm.
7	The robot moves forward, turns left, and stops.	MATCHES	Moves, turns, and stops are all present tense.
8	In 2030, scientists will test the device and share their results.	MATCHES	Will test and share are both future 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)

- **MATCHES:** On Fridays, our class reads quietly and discusses books.
- **SHIFTS:** The puppy chased a ball and grabs a stick.

Challenge: Last night, Noor opened her sketchbook and drew a dragon. She added wings and colored the scales.

A verb shift is an error only when the time has not changed. Use the item reasons to assess explanations, and accept original examples that clearly fit each category.