

Line Break Detectives

Notice how a line ending changes the way a poem moves.

7.8.B “analyze the effect of rhyme scheme, meter, and graphical elements such as punctuation and capitalization in poems across a variety of poetic forms;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

END-STOPPED LINE

An end-stopped line ends with a complete thought or punctuation. It creates a pause and can make an idea stand out.

Morning mist veiled orchards.

ENJAMBED LINE

An enjambed line continues its thought onto the next line. It moves the reader forward and can build momentum.

Silently, swallows wheel overhead.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For Part 1, circle PAUSED or FLOWING for each item; for Part 2, choose two items and explain how the punctuation and line break helped you decide.

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The lantern flickered in the rain. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |
| 2. Stone steps led down to the cellar. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |
| 3. A fox slipped beneath the rusted gate. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |
| 4. At noon, the market bells rang. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |
| 5. The old map showed a trail across the island. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |
| 6. We waited quietly for the train to arrive. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |
| 7. Clouds gathered above the empty field. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |
| 8. My brother packed the blue suitcase. | ☐ PAUSED | ☐ FLOWING |

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 PAUSED example and one new FLOWING example.

PAUSED _____

FLOWING _____

CHALLENGE

Write a two-line mini-poem with a FLOWING first line and a PAUSED second line. Underline the words or punctuation that show each choice.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The lantern flickered in the rain.	PAUSED	The period ends a complete thought at the line ending.
2	Stone steps led down to the cellar.	PAUSED	The line ends with a complete thought and a period.
3	A fox slipped beneath the rusted gate.	FLOWING	The phrase "beneath the rusted gate" continues across the line break.
4	At noon, the market bells rang.	PAUSED	The period creates a pause after a complete thought.
5	The old map showed a trail across the island.	FLOWING	The thought continues from "trail" to "across the island."
6	We waited quietly for the train to arrive.	FLOWING	The words after the break complete the phrase "waited quietly for."
7	Clouds gathered above the empty field.	PAUSED	The line ends with a complete thought and a period.
8	My brother packed the blue suitcase.	PAUSED	The period marks the end of a complete thought.

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)

- **PAUSED:** Copper leaves covered sidewalks.
- **FLOWING:** Inside the museum, visitors whispered near statues.

Challenge: Raindrops tapped softly on the window.

Sort answers: 1 PAUSED, 2 PAUSED, 3 FLOWING, 4 PAUSED, 5 FLOWING, 6 FLOWING, 7 PAUSED, 8 PAUSED. In Part 2, students should identify whether the thought stops at the line ending or continues onto the next line.