

Time Clue Sort

Sort statements by the kind of time clue they use.

4.19.C “analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

ABSOLUTE TIME

Absolute time tells the exact date, year, or time when something happened. Look for a specific number that names when.

On March 3, 1955, a new courthouse opened.

RELATIVE TIME

Relative time tells the order of events without giving an exact date. Look for clues such as before, after, first, or later.

The parade began after the mayor gave a speech.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For each statement, circle ABSOLUTE or RELATIVE; then, for Part 2, choose two items and explain which time clues helped you sort them.

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. The Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |
| 2. The Declaration of Independence came before the Constitution. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |
| 3. The Wright brothers flew before people landed on the Moon. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |
| 4. The Civil War began in 1861. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |
| 5. The first transcontinental railroad was finished in 1869. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |
| 6. The Emancipation Proclamation came after the Civil War began. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |
| 7. The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |
| 8. People traveled west after the Louisiana Purchase. | ☐ ABSOLUTE | ☐ RELATIVE |

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 ABSOLUTE time statement and one new RELATIVE time statement.

ABSOLUTE _____

RELATIVE _____

CHALLENGE

Write a two-sentence mini timeline about the same events. Use one ABSOLUTE time statement and one RELATIVE time statement.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787.	ABSOLUTE	It gives an exact date.
2	The Declaration of Independence came before the Constitution.	RELATIVE	It uses before to show the order of two events.
3	The Wright brothers flew before people landed on the Moon.	RELATIVE	It uses before to compare the order of events.
4	The Civil War began in 1861.	ABSOLUTE	It gives an exact year.
5	The first transcontinental railroad was finished in 1869.	ABSOLUTE	It gives an exact year.
6	The Emancipation Proclamation came after the Civil War began.	RELATIVE	It uses after to show the order of events.
7	The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970.	ABSOLUTE	It gives an exact date.
8	People traveled west after the Louisiana Purchase.	RELATIVE	It uses after to show the order of events.

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)

- **ABSOLUTE:** On January 15, 2001, the new town hall opened.
- **RELATIVE:** The vote happened before the new mayor took office.

Challenge: On October 8, 2022, the community planted trees. The cleanup happened before the tree planting.

For Part 2, students should name an exact date or year for ABSOLUTE, or an order word such as before or after for RELATIVE. Accept original Part 3 and challenge responses that accurately use these time clues.