Clause Detectives

Sort sentences by the clauses they contain.

10.LU.1.B "Use complex sentence structure (made up of main and subordinate clauses and subordinating conjunctions) to infuse sentence variety in writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

COMPLEX SENTENCE

A complex sentence has one main clause and at least one subordinate clause. A subordinating conjunction, such as although, because, or while, begins the subordinate clause.

Although rain drummed on windows, musicians rehearsed quietly.

SIMPLE SENTENCE

A simple sentence has one main clause. It does not include a subordinate clause beginning with a subordinating conjunction.

Several astronauts floated calmly.

1 SORT

8 items

For each sentence, circle COMPLEX or SIMPLE, then in Part 2 choose two items and explain how you identified each one.

1.	Because the trail was icy, hikers moved carefully.	COMPLEX SIMPLE
2.	The baker smiled when the bread rose.	COMPLEX SIMPLE
3.	Clouds covered the stadium.	COMPLEX SIMPLE
4.	If the alarm rings, the crew will leave.	COMPLEX SIMPLE
5.	My cousin collects postcards.	COMPLEX SIMPLE
6.	The violinist tuned her instrument.	COMPLEX SIMPLE
7.	We stayed indoors while the hail fell.	COMPLEX SIMPLE
8.	After the vote ended, the committee announced its decision.	COMPLEX SIMPLE

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 COMPLEX sentence and one new SIMPLE sentence.

COMPLEX _____

SIMPLE _____

CHALLENGE

Write a complex sentence, then rewrite it by moving the subordinate clause to the other end of the sentence. Use correct punctuation in both versions.

ANSWER KEY

Clause Detectives

GRADE 10 · 10.LU.1.B

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Because the trail was icy, hikers moved carefully.	**COMPLEX**	"Because the trail was icy" is a subordinate clause, and "hikers moved carefully" is a main clause.
2	The baker smiled when the bread rose.	**COMPLEX**	"When the bread rose" is a subordinate clause, and "The baker smiled" is a main clause.
3	Clouds covered the stadium.	**SIMPLE**	This sentence has one main clause and no subordinate clause.
4	If the alarm rings, the crew will leave.	**COMPLEX**	"If the alarm rings" is a subordinate clause, and "the crew will leave" is a main clause.
5	My cousin collects postcards.	**SIMPLE**	This sentence has one main clause and no subordinate clause.
6	The violinist tuned her instrument.	**SIMPLE**	This sentence has one main clause and no subordinate clause.
7	We stayed indoors while the hail fell.	**COMPLEX**	"While the hail fell" is a subordinate clause, and "We stayed indoors" is a main clause.
8	After the vote ended, the committee announced its decision.	**COMPLEX**	"After the vote ended" is a subordinate clause, and "the committee announced its decision" is a main clause.

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)

- **COMPLEX**: Before dawn arrived, the gardener watered the roses.
- **SIMPLE**: The puppy chased a leaf.

Challenge: The museum opened after the mayor arrived. After the mayor arrived, the museum opened.

For Part 2, accept explanations that correctly identify a main clause and a subordinate clause in a complex sentence, or explain that a simple sentence has only one main clause. In the challenge, students should use a comma when the subordinate clause comes first.