Lean Language Moves

Spot the verb forms that make sentences leaner and more varied.

11.LU.1.A "Use verbal phrases to achieve sentence conciseness and variety in speaking and writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

VERBAL PHRASE

A verbal phrase uses a verb form that is not the main verb. In these phrases, no subject is paired with a finite verb.

without interrupting the speaker

CLAUSE

A clause includes a subject and a finite verb. A clause can be dependent, so it may not stand alone.

although the speaker paused

1 SORT

8 items

Circle VERBAL or CLAUSE for each item, then choose two items and explain whether each has a verbal phrase or a subject and finite verb.

1.	to map the shoreline	VERBAL CLAUSE
2.	crossing the finish line	VERBAL CLAUSE
3.	although the lights flickered	VERBAL CLAUSE
4.	to strengthen the argument	VERBAL CLAUSE
5.	when the bell rang	VERBAL CLAUSE
6.	the researchers published their findings	VERBAL CLAUSE
7.	having solved the puzzle	VERBAL CLAUSE
8.	collecting data at dawn	VERBAL CLAUSE

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 VERBAL example and one new CLAUSE example.

VERBAL _____

CLAUSE _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite this sentence by replacing the opening clause with a verbal phrase: "After the reporter interviewed the witness, she drafted the article."

ANSWER KEY # Lean Language Moves

GRADE 11 · 11.LU.1.A

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	to map the shoreline	**VERBAL**	An infinitive phrase, with no stated subject and finite verb.
2	crossing the finish line	**VERBAL**	A participial phrase, with no stated subject and finite verb.
3	although the lights flickered	**CLAUSE**	It has the subject "lights" and the finite verb "flickered."
4	to strengthen the argument	**VERBAL**	An infinitive phrase, with no stated subject and finite verb.
5	when the bell rang	**CLAUSE**	It has the subject "bell" and the finite verb "rang."
6	the researchers published their findings	**CLAUSE**	It has the subject "researchers" and the finite verb "published."
7	having solved the puzzle	**VERBAL**	A perfect participial phrase, with no stated subject and finite verb.
8	collecting data at dawn	**VERBAL**	A participial phrase, with no stated subject and finite verb.

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)

- **VERBAL**: to compare the results
- **CLAUSE**: because the results differed

Challenge: After interviewing the witness, the reporter drafted the article.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify an infinitive, an -ing form, or a past-participle form without a stated subject and finite verb in these VERBAL items, or a subject plus a finite verb in CLAUSE items. For the challenge, accept equivalent revisions that use a verbal phrase and clearly modify the reporter.