

Thought Detectives

Sort complete thoughts from unfinished word groups.

3.LU.1.B "Distinguish between complete and incomplete sentences."

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPLETE SENTENCE

A complete sentence tells a complete thought. It names who or what and tells what happens.

A bright star shines.

INCOMPLETE SENTENCE

An incomplete sentence does not tell a complete thought. It may be missing who or what, or what happens.

Beside the window.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Circle COMPLETE or INCOMPLETE for each item, then pick two items and explain how you knew.

1. The baby laughed.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

2. Our class planted seeds.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

3. Under the tall bridge.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

4. My sister draws comics.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

5. After the movie ended.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

6. The noisy trucks.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

7. We packed lunches.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

8. Dad fixed the bicycle.

COMPLETE

INCOMPLETE

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 COMPLETE sentence and one new INCOMPLETE sentence.

COMPLETE _____

INCOMPLETE _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one INCOMPLETE item from Part 1. Add or change words to make it a COMPLETE sentence.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The baby laughed.	COMPLETE	It tells who, the baby, and what happened, laughed.
2	Our class planted seeds.	COMPLETE	It tells who, our class, and what happened, planted seeds.
3	Under the tall bridge.	INCOMPLETE	It does not tell what happened.
4	My sister draws comics.	COMPLETE	It tells who, my sister, and what she does, draws comics.
5	After the movie ended.	INCOMPLETE	It does not tell what happened after the movie ended.
6	The noisy trucks.	INCOMPLETE	It names trucks but does not tell what they do.
7	We packed lunches.	COMPLETE	It tells who, we, and what happened, packed lunches.
8	Dad fixed the bicycle.	COMPLETE	It tells who, Dad, and what happened, fixed the bicycle.

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)

- **COMPLETE:** The fireflies glow at night.
- **INCOMPLETE:** Across the sandy beach.

Challenge: Under the tall bridge, a boat passed.

Accept different explanations if students correctly identify whether the words tell a complete thought. For the challenge, accept any revised sentence that is complete and uses or changes one incomplete item.