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.

ANSWER KEY

Thought Detectives

GRADE 3 · 3.LU.1.B

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 any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. 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.