

Clause Clues

Sort clauses by whether they can stand alone.

7.LU.1.A "Construct simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to communicate ideas clearly and add variety to writing."

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMPLETE CLAUSE

A complete clause has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. It can stand alone as a sentence.

Owls hunt at dusk.

DEPENDENT CLAUSE

A dependent clause has a subject and a verb, but it does not express a complete thought. It needs a complete clause.

while the stars appeared

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Read each clause, then circle COMPLETE or DEPENDENT.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. The river flooded the field. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 2. before the train arrived | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 3. Although the paint was wet | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 4. Mina solved the puzzle. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 5. Our neighbors planted tomatoes. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 6. because the road was icy | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 7. The speaker answered questions. | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |
| 8. while the engine cooled | ☐ COMPLETE | ☐ DEPENDENT |

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 clause and one new DEPENDENT clause.

COMPLETE _____

DEPENDENT _____

CHALLENGE

Write one compound-complex sentence with two complete clauses and one dependent clause.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The river flooded the field.	COMPLETE	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
2	before the train arrived	DEPENDENT	The word “before” makes the clause unable to stand alone.
3	Although the paint was wet	DEPENDENT	The word “although” makes the clause unable to stand alone.
4	Mina solved the puzzle.	COMPLETE	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
5	Our neighbors planted tomatoes.	COMPLETE	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
6	because the road was icy	DEPENDENT	The word “because” makes the clause unable to stand alone.
7	The speaker answered questions.	COMPLETE	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
8	while the engine cooled	DEPENDENT	The word “while” makes the clause unable to stand alone.

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 drummer tapped a steady beat.
- **DEPENDENT:** unless the wind changes

Challenge: Although the wind changed, the sailors adjusted the sails, and the captain checked the compass.

Items 1, 4, 5, and 7 are COMPLETE. Items 2, 3, 6, and 8 are DEPENDENT because their opening words connect them to an idea that must be completed.