Clause Clarity Sort

Sort complete thoughts from dependent thoughts.

9.LU.1.D "Use appositives and main and subordinate clauses to convey and clarify a message when speaking and writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

MAIN CLAUSE

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

Musicians rehearsed indoors.

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE

A subordinate clause has a subject and a verb, but it does not express a complete thought. It needs a main clause to complete its meaning.

while rain tapped the windows

1 SORT

8 items

For each item, circle MAIN or DEPENDENT, then choose two items and explain what makes each clause main or dependent.

1. The hikers reached the shelter before sunset. **MAIN** **DEPENDENT**

2. Although the trail was steep. **MAIN** **DEPENDENT**

3. when the fog lifted **MAIN** **DEPENDENT**

4. The guide checked the map. **MAIN** **DEPENDENT**

5. Our group packed extra water. **MAIN** **DEPENDENT**

6. A red-tailed hawk circled overhead. **MAIN** **DEPENDENT**

7. because the bridge was closed **MAIN** **DEPENDENT**

8. We chose a safer route. **MAIN** **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 main clause and one new subordinate clause.

MAIN _____

DEPENDENT _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence with a main clause and a subordinate clause. Add an appositive that gives extra information about a noun, then label the main clause and subordinate clause.

ANSWER KEY

Clause Clarity Sort

GRADE 9 · 9.LU.1.D

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The hikers reached the shelter before sunset.	**MAIN**	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
2	Although the trail was steep.	**DEPENDENT**	Although makes the clause dependent on a main clause.
3	when the fog lifted	**DEPENDENT**	When makes the clause dependent on a main clause.
4	The guide checked the map.	**MAIN**	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
5	Our group packed extra water.	**MAIN**	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
6	A red-tailed hawk circled overhead.	**MAIN**	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
7	because the bridge was closed	**DEPENDENT**	Because makes the clause dependent on a main clause.
8	We chose a safer route.	**MAIN**	It has a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.

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)

- **MAIN**: The librarian organized the display.
- **DEPENDENT**: If the temperature drops

Challenge: After the bell rang, Maya, the team captain, started the meeting. Main clause: Maya, the team captain, started the meeting. Subordinate clause: After the bell rang.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Accept proof explanations that identify whether the clause expresses a complete thought and whether a subordinating word makes it dependent. In the challenge, the appositive should rename or identify a noun and be set off with commas when it is nonessential.