Dash Detectives

Sort sentences by whether each dash is used correctly.

10.L.GC.1.60 "Mechanics: Use dashes appropriately. (Master)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

CORRECT

A dash can introduce an emphatic ending or surround an extra detail in the middle of a sentence. Use two dashes when the extra detail appears in the middle.

The council reached a decision – postpone the festival.

REVISE

A dash is misplaced when it separates a subject from its verb or leaves an inserted detail open on one side. Revise the punctuation so the sentence reads smoothly.

The pilot – checked the controls before takeoff.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle the category for each sentence.

1. Lena had one goal – victory. CORRECT REVISE
2. The chemistry lab – has new safety goggles. CORRECT REVISE
3. My aunt – who lives in Denver visits each summer. CORRECT REVISE
4. The auditorium – packed before noon – grew quiet. CORRECT REVISE
5. We found the missing document – at last. CORRECT REVISE
6. The chess club – meeting after school – welcomed beginners. CORRECT REVISE
7. The captain – announced the practice time. CORRECT REVISE
8. We finally saw the prize – a restored telescope. CORRECT REVISE

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 sentence for CORRECT and one new sentence for REVISE.

CORRECT _____

REVISE _____

CHALLENGE

Revise one REVISE sentence from Part 1 so its dash use is correct, then name the rule you used.

ANSWER KEY

Dash Detectives

GRADE 10 · 10.L.GC.1.60

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Lena had one goal – victory.	**CORRECT**	The dash introduces an emphatic final word after a complete thought.
2	The chemistry lab – has new safety goggles.	**REVISE**	The dash incorrectly separates the subject, "The chemistry lab," from the verb, "has."
3	My aunt – who lives in Denver visits each summer.	**REVISE**	The inserted detail begins with a dash but needs a second dash after "Denver."
4	The auditorium – packed before noon – grew quiet.	**CORRECT**	Two dashes correctly surround extra information in the middle of the sentence.
5	We found the missing document – at last.	**CORRECT**	The dash adds emphasis to the ending phrase.
6	The chess club – meeting after school – welcomed beginners.	**CORRECT**	Two dashes correctly set off the extra detail, "meeting after school."
7	The captain – announced the practice time.	**REVISE**	The dash incorrectly separates the subject, "The captain," from the verb, "announced."
8	We finally saw the prize – a restored telescope.	**CORRECT**	The dash introduces an emphatic phrase that identifies the prize.

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)

- **CORRECT**: The signal meant one thing – safety.
- **REVISE**: The violinist – performed the solo.

Challenge: My aunt – who lives in Denver – visits each summer. I added a second dash to close the inserted detail.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Accept equivalent explanations that identify emphasis, inserted details, a missing closing dash, or an incorrect split between a subject and verb. For Part 3, the REVISE sentence should contain a clear dash error.