Trace the Source

Use MLA citations to show where borrowed ideas and words came from.

9.6.W.3 "Students will integrate quotes, paraphrases, and summaries from research, following a consistent citation style (e.g., MLA, APA) to avoid plagiarism."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the words inside quotation marks, circle each in-text citation, and write P beside one paraphrase and S beside one sentence that brings together both sources.

What Happened to the Fruit?

1. At the fictional Elm School, unopened fruit kept appearing in the lunchroom trash. A three-day count found 26 unopened apples and oranges in the bins after lunch (Chen). That number does not show why students threw the fruit away, but it does show how much food was missed. The count was taken on ordinary school days in October, not during a special event (Chen). For students who plan lunch orders, those details offer a useful starting point. A single count cannot predict every week, so the school would need more observations before changing its menu.

2. Custodian Leo Ortiz offered one possible reason for the waste. "Students often take fruit because it comes with the meal, then leave it on the tray" (Ortiz). His observation suggests that some students may accept fruit without planning to eat it (Ortiz). Still, Ortiz did not interview every student, so his explanation should not be treated as a proven fact about everyone. The count shows that unopened fruit was thrown away, while the interview offers a possible reason (Chen; Ortiz). Together, the sources point to a question worth testing: would letting students choose fruit later reduce waste?

3. One practical test would be to place a basket for unopened fruit near the lunchroom exit, if school rules allow it. Before making that change, staff could count discarded fruit again and ask students why they did not eat it. Chen's count gives the school a starting number, and Ortiz's interview suggests a question to ask, not an answer to assume (Chen; Ortiz). These sources support a small trial, not a claim that one idea will solve all food waste. Works Cited. Chen, Maya. "Lunchroom Sort Count." Elm School, 2025. Ortiz, Leo. "Custodian Interview." Elm School, 2025.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Copy the direct quote and its in-text citation. What on the page shows that these are Ortiz's exact words?

2. Find the sentence that reports the three-day fruit count. How does it credit the source without quoting it?

3. Copy an in-text citation that credits both sources. What does each source contribute to the idea beside that citation?

4. Which Works Cited entry matches the citation (Ortiz), and what title would help a reader identify that source?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Use these notes from a different fictional school: Ava Bell, "Hallway Bottle Count," Cedar School, 2025, wrote, "On Monday, we collected 18 disposable bottles near the gym; on Friday, we collected 7 after the refill station opened"; Noah Price, "Refill Station Interview," Cedar School, 2025, wrote, "Students filled reusable bottles 43 times on Friday, and the custodian said the nearby bin was less full." Write three sentences about the station that include one direct quote, one paraphrase, and a summary of both sources, cite each borrowed detail in MLA style, then add two Works Cited entries.

ANSWER KEY

Trace the Source

GRADE 9 · 9.6.W.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the words inside quotation marks, circle each in-text citation, and write P beside one paraphrase and S beside one sentence that brings together both sources. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Copy the direct quote and its in-text citation. What on the page shows that these are Ortiz's exact words?	**"Students often take fruit because it comes with the meal, then leave it on the tray" (Ortiz). Quotation marks identify the exact words, and the citation names Ortiz.**
2	Find the sentence that reports the three-day fruit count. How does it credit the source without quoting it?	**"A three-day count found 26 unopened apples and oranges in the bins after lunch (Chen)." It reports Chen's finding in the writer's own words and cites Chen.**
3	Copy an in-text citation that credits both sources. What does each source contribute to the idea beside that citation?	**"(Chen; Ortiz)" credits both sources. Chen counted discarded fruit, and Ortiz offered a possible reason it was discarded.**
4	Which Works Cited entry matches the citation (Ortiz), and what title would help a reader identify that source?	**Ortiz, Leo. "Custodian Interview." Elm School, 2025. The title is "Custodian Interview."**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At fictional Cedar School, a bottle count found fewer disposable bottles near the gym after a refill station opened: "On Monday, we collected 18 disposable bottles near the gym; on Friday, we collected 7 after the refill station opened" (Bell). Price reported 43 reusable-bottle fills that Friday and a custodian's observation that the nearby bin was less full (Price). Together, the records suggest that students used the station while fewer disposable bottles appeared nearby, though they cannot prove the station caused the drop (Bell; Price).

Works Cited

Bell, Ava. "Hallway Bottle Count." Cedar School, 2025.

Price, Noah. "Refill Station Interview." Cedar School, 2025.

Accept other accurate paraphrases and summaries that distinguish the count from Ortiz's possible explanation. In Part 3, check that the quote matches a note exactly and that all three uses of source material have matching MLA citations.