Citation Detective

Spot the citation slips in lines from imagined stories.

9-10.W "Students compose writing and presentations for various genres which demonstrate a command of English grammar and usage through the writing and research processes; compositions will include correct use of standard formatting (e.g., MLA..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

MLA READY

For a quotation from a single-author book with numbered pages, put the author's last name and page number in parentheses, with no comma or "p." Put the sentence period after the closing parenthesis.

"Blue feathers lined the attic" (Navarro 18).

NEEDS REVISION

A citation needs revision if it breaks that pattern. Check the author, page number, punctuation, and placement of the period.

"Salt covered the empty pier" (Sato, 7).

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle READY or REVISE for each line; for Part 2, choose one line from each category and explain how you knew where it belonged.

1.	"We waited until the lantern went dark" (Okafor 23).	READY	REVISE
2.	"The stairs seemed to hum at night" (Vega, 61).	READY	REVISE
3.	"I hid the map beneath the floor" (Cho p. 9).	READY	REVISE
4.	"No one spoke when the curtain fell" (Bennett 47).	READY	REVISE
5.	"The river carried our paper boats away" (Malik 12).	READY	REVISE
6.	"The clock stopped just before dawn" (Reed 34.)	READY	REVISE
7.	"A single key opened every door" (Tan 83).	READY	REVISE
8.	"The garden had turned to glass" (Patel 6).	READY	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

For Part 3, write two new quoted lines from imagined single-author books with page numbers: one READY example and one REVISE example. Label each line.

READY _____

REVISE _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one REVISE item, rewrite its whole sentence with a correct MLA citation, and explain your change in one sentence.

ANSWER KEY # Citation Detective

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PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	"We waited until the lantern went dark" (Okafor 23).	**READY**	The citation has the author's last name and page number without a comma, followed by the period.
2	"The stairs seemed to hum at night" (Vega, 61).	**REVISE**	MLA does not use a comma between the author's name and page number.
3	"I hid the map beneath the floor" (Cho p. 9).	**REVISE**	MLA omits "p." before the page number.
4	"No one spoke when the curtain fell" (Bennett 47).	**READY**	The author and page follow MLA's parenthetical pattern, with the period afterward.
5	"The river carried our paper boats away" (Malik 12).	**READY**	The citation contains the author's last name and page number in the correct order and position.
6	"The clock stopped just before dawn" (Reed 34.)	**REVISE**	The period belongs after the closing parenthesis, not inside it.
7	"A single key opened every door" (Tan 83).	**READY**	The citation follows the author-page pattern and places the period after the parenthesis.
8	"The garden had turned to glass" (Patel 6).	**READY**	The citation has the correct author-page format and end punctuation.

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)

- **READY**: "A kite drifted over the fence" (Mora 31).
- **REVISE**: "My backpack held a tiny bell" (Lin, 22).

Challenge: Item 2: "The stairs seemed to hum at night" (Vega 61). I removed the comma between the author's name and page number.

Items 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 are READY. Items 2, 3, and 6 need revision because of a comma, "p.," and a misplaced period, respectively.