Detail Detectives

Identify extra details, capitals, and correct spellings.

6.LL.16 "Identify the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling in published texts. a. Identify commas, parentheses..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

EXTRA DETAIL

An extra detail adds information about someone or something already identified. Paired commas, parentheses, or dashes set it off.

The violin, an old family treasure, rested in its case.

NEEDED DETAIL

A needed detail tells which person or thing the sentence means. It is not set off as an aside by commas, parentheses, or dashes.

The pitcher wearing blue socks threw a strike.

1 SORT

9 items

Circle EXTRA or NEEDED for each numbered sentence, then in Part 2 choose one item from each category and explain how you knew. In item 9, circle both dashes and underline the extra detail.

1. The Pacific Ocean, Earth's largest ocean, covers more area than any other ocean. EXTRA NEEDED

2. Rosa Parks (a civil rights activist) refused to give up her bus seat. EXTRA NEEDED

3. The ocean that borders California is the Pacific Ocean. EXTRA NEEDED

4. Mount Everest (the world's highest mountain above sea level) rises in Asia. EXTRA NEEDED

5. The book about volcanoes has a red cover. EXTRA NEEDED

6. Students who finish the mural early must clean the brushes. EXTRA NEEDED

7. The trail that leads to the waterfall is closed today. EXTRA NEEDED

8. The recipe, a family favorite, uses two eggs. EXTRA NEEDED

9. The library—our quiet reading place—closes at six. EXTRA NEEDED

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Choose one item from each category and explain how you knew.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new sentence with an extra detail set off by paired commas or parentheses, and one with a needed detail that identifies a person or thing.

EXTRA _____

NEEDED _____

CHALLENGE

Write two versions of one sentence: set off a detail as extra in the first, but use the same detail to identify someone in the second, then explain how the meaning changes. Published text: "Yellowstone National Park was established on March 1, 1872." (National Park Service, Park Facts.) Circle the park name and month; explain their capitals. Copy the correctly spelled verb from the excerpt, choosing established, establised, or establishd.

ANSWER KEY

Detail Detectives

GRADE 6 · 6.LL.16

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The Pacific Ocean, Earth's largest ocean, covers more area than any other ocean.	**EXTRA**	The name identifies the ocean; the fact set off by commas adds information.
2	Rosa Parks (a civil rights activist) refused to give up her bus seat.	**EXTRA**	Her name identifies her; the parentheses add information.
3	The ocean that borders California is the Pacific Ocean.	**NEEDED**	The detail tells which ocean the sentence means.
4	Mount Everest (the world's highest mountain above sea level) rises in Asia.	**EXTRA**	The name identifies the mountain; the parentheses add information.
5	The book about volcanoes has a red cover.	**NEEDED**	The detail tells which book the sentence means.
6	Students who finish the mural early must clean the brushes.	**NEEDED**	The detail identifies which students must clean the brushes.
7	The trail that leads to the waterfall is closed today.	**NEEDED**	The detail identifies which trail is closed.
8	The recipe, a family favorite, uses two eggs.	**EXTRA**	The phrase set off by commas adds information about the recipe.
9	The library—our quiet reading place—closes at six.	**EXTRA**	The paired dashes set off an extra description of the already identified library.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Task: Choose one item from each category and explain how you knew.
Accept an explanation that answers every part of the task and identifies the deciding feature for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **EXTRA**: The library (a quiet place to read) closes at six.
- **NEEDED**: The coat with silver buttons belongs to Maria.

Challenge: The baker, who wore a green apron, served the cake. The baker who wore a green apron served the cake. In the first sentence, the apron detail is extra; in the second, it identifies which baker served the cake. Published-text check: Yellowstone National Park is a proper name, and March is a month name; both use capitals. The correct spelling copied from the text is established. Item 9: circle both dashes and underline our quiet reading place.

For Part 2, look for an explanation that an extra detail adds information about someone or something already identified, while a needed detail identifies which person or thing is meant. Accept original sentences in Part 3 that follow the same distinction. The additional published excerpt is from National Park Service, Park Facts: https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/parkfacts.htm. Students identify conventions already used correctly in the published text; the alternatives are intentionally misspelled comparison choices.