

EXERCISE 53-6 Recognizing common knowledge in MLA papers To read about what constitutes common knowledge in the humanities, see 53 in *Rules for Writers*, Sixth Edition.

Read each student passage and determine if the student needs to cite the source of the information in an MLA paper. If the material does not need citation because it is common knowledge, write “common knowledge.” If the material is not common knowledge and the student should cite the source, write “needs citation.” Example:

The playwright August Wilson won two Pulitzer Prizes in drama. *Common knowledge* [Winners of well-known prizes such as the Pulitzer Prize are common knowledge because the information is readily available in any number of sources.]

1. Many of William Faulkner’s novels are set in Yoknapatawpha County, a fictional part of Mississippi.
2. William Faulkner may have gotten the word *Yoknapatawpha* from a 1915 dictionary of the Choctaw language.
3. The writer and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston died in poverty in 1960.
4. William Shakespeare was the only playwright of his generation known to have a long-standing relationship with a single theater company.
5. Walt Disney fired and blacklisted all of his animators who went on strike in 1941.
6. William Wordsworth and Percy Bysshe Shelley were poets of the Romantic era.
7. As of 2002, the film *Titanic* had earned over \$600 million in the United States alone.
8. Heroic couplets are rhyming pairs of lines written in iambic pentameter.
9. Iris Murdoch wrote many sophisticated and complex novels before she succumbed to Alzheimer’s disease.
10. George Lucas made a larger fortune by selling *Star Wars* toys than he made by selling tickets to *Star Wars*.