Trace the Evidence

Search strategically and check sources before using them

11.RL.25 "Use a variety of search tools and research strategies to locate credible sources."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each search tool or search strategy Mara uses, and number them in the order she uses them. Circle two details she checks to judge whether a source is credible or useful.

A Search for Shade

1. At 3 p.m., Mara waits at a bus stop with no shade and wonders whether her city should install shelters. She needs evidence about heat exposure, not just photos of attractive shelters. A general web search for "hot bus stops" turns up advertisements and opinion posts. She narrows her search with site:.gov and her city's name to find the transportation department's stop inventory and a recent municipal heat map. She checks each page's update date and methods. The inventory identifies which stops lack shelters; the heat map estimates surface temperatures, which are not the same as the air temperatures riders experience.

2. To find research on actual exposure, Mara searches a library database using "transit stop" AND "heat exposure." She filters for peer-reviewed studies and reads abstracts before downloading articles. One study measures air temperature at shaded and unshaded stops in another state. Its methods describe when and where measurements were taken, but the different climate limits how confidently Mara can apply its findings to her city. She follows the study's references to an earlier experiment, then checks whether a newer study cites it. That citation trail helps her locate related evidence; it does not make every cited claim reliable.

3. A neighborhood group shares a post saying shelters cut heat-related illness in half, but it links only to a shelter vendor's brochure. Mara searches the exact statistic in quotation marks and finds no public health study supporting it. She could use the brochure to learn what the company sells, not as proof of a health outcome. For a fuller picture, she searches the county health department's reports for heat illness trends and emails the transit agency to ask whether it collects rider complaints. She records each source's author, date, methods, and purpose so readers can judge its credibility.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which search filter helps Mara move past ads to find local records, and what two records does she locate?

2. How does Mara search for studies of heat exposure, and why must she be cautious about applying the study she finds?

3. What two steps does Mara take to locate research related to the study, and what does that strategy not prove?

4. How does Mara investigate the claim that shelters cut heat-related illness in half, and where does she look for better evidence about illness?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a local decision unrelated to heat or bus shelters. In 4 to 5 sentences, name two different search tools, give a specific query and likely source for each, and explain one credibility check for each source.

ANSWER KEY

Trace the Evidence

GRADE 11 · 11.RL.25

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each search tool or search strategy Mara uses, and number them in the order she uses them. Circle two details she checks to judge whether a source is credible or useful. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which search filter helps Mara move past ads to find local records, and what two records does she locate?	**She uses site:.gov with her city's name to find the transportation department's stop inventory and a municipal heat map.**
2	How does Mara search for studies of heat exposure, and why must she be cautious about applying the study she finds?	**She searches a library database for "transit stop" AND "heat exposure," filters for peer-reviewed studies, and reads abstracts. The study is from a different climate, so its findings may not apply to her city.**
3	What two steps does Mara take to locate research related to the study, and what does that strategy not prove?	**She follows the study's references to an earlier experiment and checks whether a newer study cites it. Being part of a citation trail does not make every claim reliable.**
4	How does Mara investigate the claim that shelters cut heat-related illness in half, and where does she look for better evidence about illness?	**She searches the exact statistic in quotation marks and finds no supporting public health study. She then searches county health department reports for heat illness trends.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town is deciding whether to add protected bike lanes near the high school. I would search the city transportation website for "bike crash reports near high school" to find official collision records, then check the years covered and how crashes were reported. I would use a library research database with "protected bike lanes" AND "injury rates" to locate a peer-reviewed study. I would check how researchers measured injuries and whether the study's streets resemble ours.

Accept other relevant search tools, queries, and source checks when the student explains how they would locate and assess credible evidence. A peer-reviewed label alone is not a sufficient credibility check.