Source Detectives

Ethical choices across interviews, articles, and websites

6.RL.21 "Summarize ethical guidelines and explain how they govern the process of finding and recording information from primary, secondary, and digital sources, with guidance and support."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one step that respects a person, circle two details the students save to credit sources, and number two steps they take to check or record information honestly.

The Story Behind the Trees

1. The sixth graders wanted to learn why the school planted trees near the playground. They started with a primary source: an interview with Ms. Vega, a custodian who watched the planting. Before recording her words, they explained their project and asked permission to take notes. She agreed to notes but not to an audio recording. The students respected that limit. They wrote her words carefully, marked exact quotes with quotation marks, and kept her phone number out of their notes because it was private.

2. Next, the group found a newspaper article about the planting. The reporter had gathered details from interviews after the event, so the article retold the story as a secondary source. The students checked its date and author before using it. In their notes, they put the article's ideas in their own words and recorded the title, author, date, and newspaper name. They also labeled one claim as coming from the article so they would not mistake it for Ms. Vega's memory.

3. A city website offered a digital copy of the original tree-planting plan. Because the plan was made for the project at the time, it was a primary source even though the students found it online. They checked that the site belonged to the city and compared the plan's date with the article's date. They saved the page title, web address, and the date they opened it. When the plan and Ms. Vega's memory differed about the number of trees, they recorded both instead of changing either one.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Summarize the rule the students followed before recording Ms. Vega. How did it shape what they recorded?

2. How did the group give credit to the newspaper article and keep its ideas separate from Ms. Vega's account?

3. Why was the online plan a primary source? What did the students check before using this digital copy?

4. The sources disagreed about the number of trees. What did the students record, and why was that an honest choice?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In five sentences, explain how you would find and record information about books students enjoy using a student interview, an article on reading choices, and a library website's public book list. Include permission or privacy, a way to check a source, and the details you would save to give credit.

ANSWER KEY

Source Detectives

GRADE 6 · 6.RL.21

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one step that respects a person, circle two details the students save to credit sources, and number two steps they take to check or record information honestly. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Summarize the rule the students followed before recording Ms. Vega. How did it shape what they recorded?	**They asked permission and followed her limits. They took notes but made no audio recording, and they left out her private phone number.**
2	How did the group give credit to the newspaper article and keep its ideas separate from Ms. Vega's account?	**They saved the article's title, author, date, and newspaper name. They also labeled a claim as coming from the article.**
3	Why was the online plan a primary source? What did the students check before using this digital copy?	**The plan was made for the planting project at the time. The students checked that the website belonged to the city and compared the plan's date with the article's date.**
4	The sources disagreed about the number of trees. What did the students record, and why was that an honest choice?	**They recorded both accounts rather than changing either one. This preserved the disagreement instead of making the sources seem to agree.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would ask a classmate for permission before interviewing them and take notes only if they agree. I would leave their name out unless they allow me to share it. I would read an article about reading choices, check its author and date, and write its ideas in my own words. On the library website, I would check who runs it and note the book list's title, web address, and the date I opened it. I would record the article's title, author, date, and publisher so readers can find it.

For the marking task, accept any passage steps that fit each requested purpose. For Part 3, accept different ethical plans if the response covers all three sources, permission or privacy, source checking, and enough details to identify the sources.