Before You Buy

Weigh sources before making a recommendation

6.RL.22 "Assess the relevance, reliability, and validity of information from printed and/or digital texts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail that makes a source trustworthy, circle one claim that needs stronger evidence, and number two details that limit what a source can prove. Use your marks to decide which information best supports the class's decision.

Will a Bat House Help?

1. A sixth-grade class wants fewer mosquito bites near its outdoor lunch tables. Mina searches for evidence before anyone buys a bat house. A 2025 article from a university extension program names its writer, an insect scientist, and links to studies about bats and insects. It explains that bats eat insects, but a bat house does not promise fewer mosquitoes in one yard. The article also says mosquitoes can breed in standing water, such as water left in buckets. Mina saves the article because it addresses both the idea and another possible solution.

2. Next, Mina finds a bat-house seller's webpage. Its headline promises, "No mosquito bites after one week!" The page names no scientist, gives no test results, and offers a discount if readers order today. A customer comment says, "I saw bats and got fewer bites." The comment does not say how many bites occurred before or after the bat house went up. Mina also finds a classmate's survey of eight friends. Six say they saw fewer mosquitoes last week, but nobody recorded whether any bat houses were nearby.

3. Finally, Mina reads a printed log kept by the school's groundskeeper for four weeks. It lists dates when water was dumped from three buckets near the lunch tables and the number of mosquito larvae found in those buckets each week: 18, 12, 4, and 0. The log describes how the groundskeeper counted larvae, but it does not record mosquito bites or bat activity. Mina plans to recommend emptying buckets and to explain why the log alone cannot prove that this change will stop every bite.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why is the university extension article relevant to the class's decision? What does it not promise?

2. Which two details make the bat-house seller's promise less reliable?

3. Why can't the survey of eight friends show that bat houses caused a change in mosquito numbers?

4. What does the groundskeeper's log show, and why can't it prove that emptying buckets will stop every mosquito bite?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

You find an unsigned online post claiming that planting mint beside the lunch tables will stop all mosquito bites. It says one neighbor tried it but gives no bite counts. In three or four sentences, judge how relevant, reliable, and convincing this post is, then name evidence you would seek before recommending mint.

ANSWER KEY

Before You Buy

GRADE 6 · 6.RL.22

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail that makes a source trustworthy, circle one claim that needs stronger evidence, and number two details that limit what a source can prove. Use your marks to decide which information best supports the class's decision. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is the university extension article relevant to the class's decision? What does it not promise?	**It discusses bat houses and standing water, both related to reducing mosquitoes near the tables. It does not promise that a bat house will reduce mosquitoes in one yard.**
2	Which two details make the bat-house seller's promise less reliable?	**The webpage names no scientist and gives no test results. It also tries to sell bat houses.**
3	Why can't the survey of eight friends show that bat houses caused a change in mosquito numbers?	**Nobody recorded whether any bat houses were nearby, so the survey cannot connect the reported change to bat houses.**
4	What does the groundskeeper's log show, and why can't it prove that emptying buckets will stop every mosquito bite?	**The number of larvae found in the buckets fell from 18 to 0 over four weeks. The log does not record bites, so it cannot show that every bite will stop.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The post is relevant because it suggests a way to prevent bites near the lunch tables. It is less reliable because no writer is named. One neighbor's story without bite counts does not prove that mint stops all bites. I would look for a study that counts bites in similar places with and without mint.

Accept other supported judgments that distinguish a source's connection to the decision from its trustworthiness and the strength of its evidence. For the log, students should not treat fewer larvae in three buckets as proof that all bites will stop.