Turtle Sign Test

Weigh sources before drawing a conclusion

7.RL.24 "Determine the relevance, reliability, and validity of information from nonfiction and fictional printed and/or digital texts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline evidence that helps answer whether the signs reduced turtle deaths, circle clues about each source's trustworthiness, and number two details that limit what the evidence can prove.

What Changed on Cedar Road?

1. At the Cedar Road marsh, volunteers wanted to know whether new turtle-crossing signs reduced turtle deaths. The town's wildlife office posted a report on its website in October. It listed 14 dead turtles found during weekly walks from April through June before the signs went up, and 8 during the same months the next year. The report named the volunteers and explained that they walked the same half-mile stretch each week. It also noted that heavy rain sometimes kept volunteers from walking their usual route.

2. A screenshot from a neighborhood message board gives a different answer: "The signs saved every turtle!" The post has no author name, date, or link to observations. Under it, someone wrote that the road had fewer cars after nearby construction closed a lane for six weeks. That comment does not prove what happened to the turtles, but it points to another possible reason for a change. Even the town report cannot show how many turtles died on days when volunteers missed a walk.

3. At the school library, a student finds *Shells at Sunrise*, a short story about a turtle named Moss who follows a bright sign across a busy road. Its author says in the book's opening note that the road and marsh are imaginary. The story could help a writer imagine a turtle's journey, but it cannot verify what happened at Cedar Road. To answer the research question, the student must compare the sources' purposes, check how each claim was supported, and avoid calling a possible connection a proven cause.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which source gives evidence most relevant to whether turtle deaths decreased after the signs went up? Identify the evidence.

2. Why is the town report more reliable than the message board screenshot? Give two details from the passage.

3. Does the report prove that the signs caused fewer turtle deaths? Explain using two limits described in the passage.

4. Could *Shells at Sunrise* verify what happened at Cedar Road? Explain why it is or is not useful for this research question.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A classmate claims the signs made cars slow down on Cedar Road. In four sentences, propose two different sources you could consult, explain which would be more relevant and reliable, and describe a check or limitation before accepting the claim.

ANSWER KEY

Turtle Sign Test

GRADE 7 · 7.RL.24

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline evidence that helps answer whether the signs reduced turtle deaths, circle clues about each source's trustworthiness, and number two details that limit what the evidence can prove. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which source gives evidence most relevant to whether turtle deaths decreased after the signs went up? Identify the evidence.	**The town wildlife office report compares 14 dead turtles found before the signs with 8 found during the same months the next year.**
2	Why is the town report more reliable than the message board screenshot? Give two details from the passage.	**The report names its volunteers and explains where and when they walked. The screenshot has no author name, date, or link to observations.**
3	Does the report prove that the signs caused fewer turtle deaths? Explain using two limits described in the passage.	**No. Volunteers missed some walks because of rain, and a lane closure may have reduced traffic. Either factor limits what the counts can prove about the signs.**
4	Could *Shells at Sunrise* verify what happened at Cedar Road? Explain why it is or is not useful for this research question.	**No. It is a story set at an imaginary road and marsh, so it cannot verify events at Cedar Road, though it could help a writer imagine a turtle's journey.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would look for town traffic-speed records from before and after the signs went up and a driver's message about the road. The records would be more relevant and reliable if they gave dates, locations, and a clear method, while one driver's memory might be mistaken. I would compare speeds measured at the same spot and time of day before and after the signs. Even a drop in speed would not prove the signs caused it because construction closed a lane for six weeks.

Accept other relevant source comparisons that distinguish evidence from an unsupported claim. For the open task, look for two sources, a reasoned reliability judgment, and a check or limitation that addresses whether the signs caused a speed change.