Follow the Evidence

Choose search tools, refine searches, and test claims.

9.RL.22 "Use a variety of search tools and research strategies."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each search tool Maya uses, circle her search terms and filters, and place a star beside statements about what a source cannot prove.

The Foam in Bell Creek

1 After a storm, pale foam collected along Bell Creek near Maya's bus stop. A neighborhood post blamed a nearby car wash, but it gave no date for the photo or evidence about the foam. Maya wrote a research question: What could explain foam in this creek after rain? She searched a general search engine using the creek's name and 'foam.' The first results mostly repeated the same post. She tried new terms, including 'stormwater runoff' and the name of her city. That search led to a city stormwater page explaining that rain can carry many substances into streams.

2 Maya wanted evidence tied to this place, not just a general explanation. In the public library's newspaper database, she searched the creek's name with 'storm' and limited results to the past five years. An article reported that city workers had inspected a blocked drain upstream last spring. Next, she searched the city website for stormwater inspection records and found a dated report about that drain. The report described trash and leaves but did not mention foam or the car wash. The newspaper helped her locate an event, while the city record let her check what inspectors actually observed.

3 To test the car wash claim, Maya searched the city's permit database for the business name. A current permit showed that the business was allowed to operate, but it did not show what entered the creek after the storm. She emailed the stormwater office to ask whether anyone had sampled the foam; the office said no sample had been taken. Maya could not identify the foam from a photo or the sources she found. In her notes, she listed what each tool could and could not tell her. She planned to search for later sampling reports rather than turn a guess into a conclusion.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. When the first search mostly repeated the neighborhood post, how did Maya change her search to find a different kind of source?

2. What search terms and filter did Maya use in the library's newspaper database to narrow her results?

3. Why did Maya search for the city inspection report after finding the newspaper article?

4. What did the permit database tell Maya about the car wash, and what could it not tell her?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school or community question other than what caused the foam in Bell Creek. In four sentences, state your question, describe two different search tools and the terms or filters you would use, and explain how you would verify a claim.

ANSWER KEY

Follow the Evidence

GRADE 9 · 9.RL.22

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each search tool Maya uses, circle her search terms and filters, and place a star beside statements about what a source cannot prove. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	When the first search mostly repeated the neighborhood post, how did Maya change her search to find a different kind of source?	**She added terms such as 'stormwater runoff' and her city's name, which led to a city stormwater page.**
2	What search terms and filter did Maya use in the library's newspaper database to narrow her results?	**She searched the creek's name with 'storm' and limited results to the past five years.**
3	Why did Maya search for the city inspection report after finding the newspaper article?	**The article pointed her to an inspection, and the city report let her check what inspectors recorded: trash and leaves, but no mention of foam or the car wash.**
4	What did the permit database tell Maya about the car wash, and what could it not tell her?	**It showed that the business was allowed to operate, but it could not show what entered the creek after the storm.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

How many street trees were planted near my school in 2025? I would use a search engine with my city's name, 'street tree planting report,' and '2025' to look for a parks department report. I would search the library's newspaper database for my school's neighborhood and 'new trees,' filtering for articles from 2025. I would compare any newspaper count with the dated parks report and check whether both refer to the same area.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the tools, search terms, and evidence limits in the passage. For Part 3, look for two distinct tools, usable search terms or filters for each, and a specific way to check a claim.