Tracing the Route

Collecting firsthand evidence about a community dispute

SS24.HS.4a "Describe methods for collecting primary source evidence."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each action the students take to collect or document evidence. Circle one caution about what a source cannot show.

The Harborview Bus Route

1. Imagine a class investigating why residents of fictional Harborview protested a bus route change in 1978. In the town archive, students request the original city council minutes and letters sent to the transit office that year. They record each document's creator, date, and archive location before making permitted scans. Minutes can show what officials said and decided, while letters reveal concerns that residents chose to report. Students copy exact words when quoting and note missing pages. Collecting records this way preserves a trail back to the originals, so another researcher can inspect the same evidence.

2. The class also seeks firsthand accounts from people who rode the route in 1978. Before each interview, students explain the project and ask permission to record. They use open questions, such as “What changed about your trip?” and follow up when a detail is unclear. Afterward, they label the audio file with the speaker's name, interview date, and permission terms, then make a transcript. An interview collected today is direct evidence of a person's recollections, not a recording of 1978 itself. The students compare those memories with records from the time rather than treating every remembered detail as certain.

3. One neighbor offers a paper bus schedule she saved from 1978. Students ask to photograph both sides and write down who kept it, how it was obtained, and where the original remains. They photograph the schedule beside a ruler so its size is clear, and they transcribe its route and stop times without writing on the paper. A current photograph documents an old object; it does not show what the street looked like in 1978. By checking the schedule against dated letters and interview accounts, the class can investigate which stops were disputed while keeping each source's limits in view.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the students collect council records while making it possible for someone else to find the originals?

2. What steps do the students take before and after recording an interview?

3. How do the students document the neighbor's schedule without changing the original?

4. How could the students collect evidence about disputed stops without treating a current photograph as a view of a 1978 street?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a school event from at least ten years ago. In four or five sentences, describe two different ways you would collect primary source evidence, including what you would ask for or record, how you would document its origin, and one limit of the evidence.

ANSWER KEY

Tracing the Route

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HS.4a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each action the students take to collect or document evidence. Circle one caution about what a source cannot show. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the students collect council records while making it possible for someone else to find the originals?	**They request the original minutes and letters, record each creator, date, and archive location, and make permitted scans.**
2	What steps do the students take before and after recording an interview?	**They explain the project and ask permission first. Afterward, they label the audio with the speaker's name, date, and permission terms, then make a transcript.**
3	How do the students document the neighbor's schedule without changing the original?	**They ask permission to photograph both sides, record its history and location, photograph it beside a ruler, and transcribe its contents without writing on it.**
4	How could the students collect evidence about disputed stops without treating a current photograph as a view of a 1978 street?	**They could photograph the saved 1978 schedule, collect dated letters, and interview former riders. They could compare the stops in those sources while recognizing that the new photograph shows an old object, not the street in 1978.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would investigate a school play from 2012 by asking the drama department for an original printed program and permission to scan it. I would record its date, the department that kept it, and the names of its creators. I would also ask a former cast member for a recorded interview, with consent, about how rehearsals were organized. The program may omit backstage workers, and the cast member's memories might be incomplete.

Accept equivalent collection steps grounded in the passage. For Your Turn, look for two distinct methods, a way to document where the evidence came from, and a plausible limit.