

# Source Smart

Evaluate sources, combine ideas, and credit your evidence.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8** "Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism."

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline details that show why a source is credible, circle details that make a source questionable, and number the steps Maya uses to avoid plagiarism.

### Maya Builds a Pollinator Report

- ① Maya is planning a report about planting native flowers beside the school playground. She begins with a print guide from her county extension office and a digital page from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The guide explains which plants grow in her region. The USDA page describes how flowering plants provide nectar and pollen for many pollinators. Maya also finds a seed-company blog that promises one flower will attract every kind of pollinator. She writes each source's author, date, publisher, and main claim in a research chart.
- ② Next, Maya checks whether the sources deserve her trust. The extension guide names its plant experts, gives a publication date, and lists scientific references. The USDA page identifies the agency and links to related research. These details make both sources more credible than the seed-company blog, which has no named writer or evidence for its broad promise. Maya does not use the blog's claim as proof. Instead, she compares the two stronger sources and makes sure their ideas do not conflict with information from another reliable source.
- ③ In her report, Maya combines information in her own words: "Native flowers chosen for our region can give local pollinators food," she writes, citing the extension guide and the USDA page. This sentence is a paraphrase, not a copied sentence, because Maya changed the wording and combined ideas. When she wants to use an exact phrase from a source, she places it in quotation marks and names the source. She keeps notes separate from her draft so she can tell which words are hers. Her reader can check where each fact came from.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Which two details from the extension guide make it a credible source?

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2 Why does Maya decide not to use the seed-company blog as proof?

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3 What does Maya do to check the accuracy of information from her stronger sources?

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4 How does Maya avoid plagiarism when she uses information from sources?

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## 3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose a school topic you could research. Name one print source and one digital source you would use, explain one detail that would make each source credible, then write one paraphrased sentence that combines information from both sources and names them.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline details that show why a source is credible, circle details that make a source questionable, and number the steps Maya uses to avoid plagiarism. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                          | ANSWER                                                                                                                                     |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Which two details from the extension guide make it a credible source?             | <b>It names plant experts, gives a publication date, and lists scientific references. Accept any two.</b>                                  |
| 2 | Why does Maya decide not to use the seed-company blog as proof?                   | <b>It has no named writer or evidence for its broad claim that one flower attracts every kind of pollinator.</b>                           |
| 3 | What does Maya do to check the accuracy of information from her stronger sources? | <b>She compares the two stronger sources and checks that their ideas do not conflict with another reliable source.</b>                     |
| 4 | How does Maya avoid plagiarism when she uses information from sources?            | <b>She paraphrases in her own words, cites the sources, uses quotation marks for exact words, and keeps notes separate from her draft.</b> |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

Topic: Reducing cafeteria waste. I would use a printed guide from the county recycling office and a digital page from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The county guide is credible if it names its staff and gives current local rules. The EPA page is credible because it identifies the agency and links to research. Paraphrased sentence: According to the county recycling guide and the EPA, sorting food scraps and recyclables can keep useful materials out of trash bins.

Accept other reasonable source choices when students identify meaningful credibility details, such as an author, date, expert organization, evidence, or references. The final sentence should use the student's own wording, combine both sources, and clearly name both sources.