

Evidence or Guess?

Sort research-based judgments from speculation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.8 "Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text."

NAME _____

DATE _____

RESEARCH JUDGMENT

A research judgment is a conclusion drawn from study results, tests, or data. It tells what the evidence suggests.

After comparing maps from five years, city planners determined that bike lanes reduced crashes on Pine Street.

SPECULATION

Speculation is a guess about what could happen or be true. It does not give research results as support.

It is possible that the old bridge will become a popular picnic spot.

1 SORT 8 items

Part 1: Circle RESEARCH or GUESS for each statement; Part 2: choose two statements and explain which words show research evidence or uncertainty.

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Based on 12 growth trials, researchers judged that bean plants near a window grew taller than plants kept in a dark closet. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |
| 2. | After reviewing three test runs, engineers concluded that the wider ramp was safer for wheelchairs. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |
| 3. | The wider ramp might also make the hallway quieter. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |
| 4. | Because students recalled more words after short breaks in a study, researchers judged short breaks more helpful than no breaks for memory. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |
| 5. | A longer lunch period may make every student happier. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |
| 6. | Perhaps the school pond will freeze later this winter. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |
| 7. | Since the filter removed more particles in repeated tests, the science team decided it was the better filter. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |
| 8. | Maybe reading comics will make people faster runners. | <input type="button" value="RESEARCH"/> | <input type="button" value="GUESS"/> |

2

PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3

MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Part 3: Write one new research judgment and one new speculation.

RESEARCH _____

GUESS _____

CHALLENGE

Write a research judgment and a speculation about the same school issue, then underline the evidence words in the research judgment and the uncertainty word or words in the speculation.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Based on 12 growth trials, researchers judged that bean plants near a window grew taller than plants kept in a dark closet.	RESEARCH	It gives trial evidence and a conclusion drawn from the results.
2	After reviewing three test runs, engineers concluded that the wider ramp was safer for wheelchairs.	RESEARCH	It states a conclusion based on test runs.
3	The wider ramp might also make the hallway quieter.	GUESS	The word "might" signals an unsupported possibility.
4	Because students recalled more words after short breaks in a study, researchers judged short breaks more helpful than no breaks for memory.	RESEARCH	It uses study results to support a conclusion.
5	A longer lunch period may make every student happier.	GUESS	The word "may" signals a prediction without evidence.
6	Perhaps the school pond will freeze later this winter.	GUESS	"Perhaps" signals a guess about the future.
7	Since the filter removed more particles in repeated tests, the science team decided it was the better filter.	RESEARCH	Repeated test results support the team's decision.
8	Maybe reading comics will make people faster runners.	GUESS	"Maybe" signals an unsupported guess.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **RESEARCH:** After comparing energy bills from two heating systems, the district concluded that the newer system used less electricity.
- **GUESS:** The new heating system could make the gym feel warmer.

Challenge: Research judgment: __Based on attendance records from two semesters__, the principal concluded that before-school tutoring increased attendance. Speculation: __Maybe__ music in the tutoring room will increase attendance even more.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify evidence language, such as "based on," "tests," or "study," and uncertainty language, such as "might," "may," "perhaps," or "maybe." Part 3 responses may vary if each example clearly fits its category.