

Evidence Before Answers

Trace how researchers focus, test, and revise an inquiry.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 "Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every source named in the passage, circle each stated limit, and put a star beside each sentence that shows how the team changes or combines its inquiry.

A Question Gets Sharper

- ① When Riverton High considered moving its first bell from 7:25 to 8:10, a student research team began with a broad question: How might a later start affect teenagers? A review of an American Academy of Pediatrics statement recommended 8:30 a.m. or later for middle and high schools, citing adolescent sleep needs. That source helped the team narrow its inquiry. Instead of trying to prove that one change would improve every outcome, students asked, "What evidence could show whether a later bell changes sleep, attendance, and travel for Riverton students?" The revised question named outcomes the team could investigate locally.
- ② To study sleep, the team selected peer-reviewed research on adolescent circadian rhythms and a voluntary, anonymous student sleep log collected for two weeks. For attendance, they requested de-identified daily absence totals from the school office for the same months in two consecutive years. Bus routes required a different source: the transportation director provided route maps, pickup times, and projected costs. Each source had limits. Sleep logs described participants, not every student. Absence totals showed patterns but could not, by themselves, identify causes. The director's projections estimated possible effects rather than reporting results after a schedule change.
- ③ After comparing the sources, the team wrote a qualified finding: national medical guidance and sleep research support investigating later starts, while local logs may reveal whether students report too little sleep. Attendance records can establish whether absences differ by day or month before any change, and transportation data can identify practical constraints. The evidence does not yet show what a new bell schedule would cause at Riverton. The team therefore broadened its plan to include family interviews and a comparison with a similar school that changed its schedule. It would then revise the question if new evidence pointed to a more specific problem.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the team narrow its original question? State the specific outcomes in its revised inquiry.

2 What three types of local evidence did the team collect or request, and what topic did each source address?

3 Choose either the attendance records or the transportation projections. What could that source show, and what could it not show?

4 Why did the team broaden its plan after comparing the sources? Name the two additions to the plan.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a school problem that could be investigated with evidence. Write a focused research question, then write a 70-90-word research plan that names three sources, gives a limit for each source, explains how you will combine the evidence, and states when you would narrow or broaden the inquiry.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline every source named in the passage, circle each stated limit, and put a star beside each sentence that shows how the team changes or combines its inquiry. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the team narrow its original question? State the specific outcomes in its revised inquiry.	It shifted from asking how later starts might affect teenagers generally to investigating possible changes in sleep, attendance, and travel for Riverton students.
2	What three types of local evidence did the team collect or request, and what topic did each source address?	A student sleep log addressed sleep, school-office absence totals addressed attendance, and transportation records such as route maps, pickup times, and projected costs addressed bus travel.
3	Choose either the attendance records or the transportation projections. What could that source show, and what could it not show?	Attendance records could show patterns in absences, but not identify causes by themselves. Transportation projections could estimate possible effects and constraints, but not report actual results after a schedule change.
4	Why did the team broaden its plan after comparing the sources? Name the two additions to the plan.	The existing evidence could not show what a new bell schedule would cause at Riverton. The team added family interviews and a comparison with a similar school that changed its schedule.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Research question: How could our school reduce disposable plastic bottle use without limiting access to drinking water? I will compare a one-week waste audit, an anonymous student survey, and fountain-maintenance records. The audit counts bottles but cannot show why students use them. The survey shows reasons but may miss nonrespondents. Maintenance records show repairs but not whether students brought bottles from home. I will combine the three sources to identify locations and times with the most bottle use. If broken fountains are central, I will narrow the inquiry to repair priorities. If access differs across buildings, I will broaden it to an equity question.

Accept answers that accurately distinguish what a source can show from what it cannot establish. For Part 3, accept varied school problems if the response includes a focused question, three relevant sources with limits, a synthesis plan, and a reasonable condition for narrowing or broadening the inquiry.