

Question Shift

Trace how researchers use sources to sharpen an inquiry.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.7 "Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each of the three sources Jada used before changing her question. Number three details that show why she made her question smaller.

A Smaller, Stronger Question

- ① Jada began a short research project with a big question: Can green roofs cool an entire city? A green roof is planted on top of a building, where soil and plants cover part or all of the roof. She first read a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration webpage about urban heat islands. It explained that pavement and dark roofs absorb sunlight and can make cities warmer than nearby areas. Jada underlined this background information, but she noticed it did not show how much one green roof changes city temperature.
- ② Next, Jada compared two more sources. An Environmental Protection Agency page described green roofs as one strategy that can lower a building's roof-surface temperature and help manage rainwater. A city public works report described a library roof garden and gave its size, plant types, and maintenance costs. Neither source measured the temperature of the whole city. Together, the three sources suggested a clearer, smaller inquiry: How might a green roof affect heat and rainwater at one public building? Jada wrote the new question in her notes.
- ③ To answer it, Jada planned to collect three kinds of evidence. She would use the library's energy bills from similar summer months before and after the garden was installed. She would check the city report for rainfall captured by the roof, then read a university extension guide about limits of comparing bills when weather or building use changes. Jada would not claim that one roof cools the whole city. Instead, she would explain what her sources could show about that library and identify questions that still needed more evidence.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 What was Jada's original question, and what was her revised question? Why was the revised question a better fit for her sources?

- 2 Identify the three sources Jada used before she changed her question. What information did each source provide?

- 3 Which source would help Jada avoid making an unfair comparison between energy bills, and why?

- 4 What claim does Jada decide not to make? What narrower claim could her evidence support?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose a question about your school or community that could be researched in a short project. In 55 to 75 words, state your original question, name three sources and what each can provide, then write a narrower revised question and explain why you changed it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each of the three sources Jada used before changing her question. Number three details that show why she made her question smaller. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What was Jada's original question, and what was her revised question? Why was the revised question a better fit for her sources?	Her original question was whether green roofs can cool an entire city. Her revised question was how a green roof might affect heat and rainwater at one public building. Her sources did not measure the temperature of a whole city, but they could provide information about a single building.
2	Identify the three sources Jada used before she changed her question. What information did each source provide?	The NOAA webpage gave background about urban heat islands. The EPA page explained that green roofs can lower roof-surface temperature and help manage rainwater. The city public works report described the library roof garden, including its size, plants, and costs.
3	Which source would help Jada avoid making an unfair comparison between energy bills, and why?	The university extension guide would help because it explains that weather or changes in building use can affect energy-bill comparisons.
4	What claim does Jada decide not to make? What narrower claim could her evidence support?	She decides not to claim that one green roof cools the whole city. Her evidence could support a claim about how the library's green roof affects heat or rainwater at that library.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My original question is, Does our school cafeteria waste too much food? I would examine cafeteria waste records for amounts, interview the cafeteria manager about serving rules, and read a county recycling guide about food-waste collection. These sources may show that waste changes by meal and cannot be judged from one day. My revised question is, How much lunch food is discarded during one typical week, and what causes it?

Accept answers that accurately connect each source to the information it provides and explain that the inquiry became narrower because the available evidence could not support a citywide claim. For Part 3, accept varied topics when the response includes three relevant sources, a narrower revised question, and a reasonable explanation.