

Falcon Research Trail

Trace how a short research project uses evidence and leads to new questions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.7 "Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the main research question, underline each source and the evidence it adds, and number the two focused questions for a next investigation to trace how research grows.

Following the Falcon Evidence

- ① Question: How did peregrine falcons return to many North American cities after their numbers dropped? A student research team began with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website, which explains that DDT caused eggshells to become thin. The team then checked a National Park Service article describing the 1972 U.S. ban on DDT. These sources helped the team connect a chemical, a law, and the birds' recovery. Still, the team needed evidence about what happened in particular cities.
- ② To investigate city recovery, the team used a 1984 newspaper report from the Chicago Tribune and a 1990 report from the New York Times. The Chicago report described biologists releasing captive-bred young falcons near tall buildings. The New York report noted nesting pairs on bridges and skyscrapers. Because newspapers can contain errors or leave out details, the team compared both reports with a state wildlife agency's records. The records listed nest sites and yearly counts, adding data to the reports.
- ③ After reading, the team answered its main question: DDT restrictions, captive breeding, and suitable tall structures all supported peregrine recovery. The answer came from several sources, not from one source alone. The team also wrote focused questions for a next project: Which Chicago release sites produced nesting adults? How have the number of nesting pairs changed in New York City since 1990? These questions are narrow enough to guide a search for release records, nest surveys, and recent wildlife reports.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What main research question did the team investigate?

2 Give one fact from each of two different sources that helped the team investigate peregrine recovery.

3 Why did the team compare the newspaper reports with state wildlife agency records?

4 What makes the two final questions focused enough for a new research project?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose a wildlife, environmental, or city-history topic connected to your school or community. Write one research question, name three sources you would use and the specific information each could provide, then write two related focused questions for further research.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle the main research question, underline each source and the evidence it adds, and number the two focused questions for a next investigation to trace how research grows. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What main research question did the team investigate?	How did peregrine falcons return to many North American cities after their numbers dropped?
2	Give one fact from each of two different sources that helped the team investigate peregrine recovery.	Answers vary. Examples: The Cornell Lab explained that DDT thinned eggshells, and the National Park Service described the 1972 U.S. ban on DDT.
3	Why did the team compare the newspaper reports with state wildlife agency records?	Newspapers can contain errors or leave out details, while agency records added nest-site and yearly-count data.
4	What makes the two final questions focused enough for a new research project?	Each question names a specific place or subject and a clear detail to investigate, such as Chicago release sites or New York City nesting pairs since 1990.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Research question: How has tree planting changed shade on my school grounds since 2018? Sources: aerial photos from 2018 and today, to compare shaded areas; district planting records, to identify tree locations and dates; and student map observations, to show which walkways are shaded at lunch. Further questions: Which trees planted since 2018 now shade the busiest walkways? Which areas still have little shade during lunch?

Accept equivalent descriptions of the evidence and reasonable explanations based on the passage. For Part 3, accept topics and sources that fit the question, as long as the student includes three sources with purposes and two narrow follow-up questions.