Evidence, Not Assumptions

Notice how a field report presents evidence with precision.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.2e "Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline phrases that limit or qualify a claim, and circle science terms that make the report precise. These choices help create a formal, objective tone.

Mapping City Heat

1. On July 18, student researchers measured air temperature at twelve locations in Riverton between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. They used the same digital thermometer at each site and recorded conditions in a data table. Pavement near the bus station averaged 4.6 degrees Celsius warmer than the shaded grass beside Lake Park. The comparison does not show that pavement alone caused the difference, because shade, wind, and nearby buildings may also have affected the measurements.

2. To examine the pattern, the group entered its results into a map with color-coded temperature ranges. Seven of the eight warmest readings came from places with broad asphalt surfaces, including parking lots and sidewalks. However, one sidewalk reading was lower than several others because trees covered part of the route. This exception indicates that surface type should be considered with other local conditions. The results support a possible relationship, rather than a final conclusion about every location in the city.

3. City planners can use studies like this one when deciding where to add shade structures or plant trees. Before making changes, they would need measurements from additional days and seasons, since weather varies over time. They could also compare surface temperatures, which may differ from air temperatures. A careful report would identify the methods, state the limits of the evidence, and avoid claiming that one afternoon of data proves a citywide effect. Such precision allows readers to judge the study's usefulness.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which conclusion does paragraph 1 avoid, and what three factors could affect the measurements?

2. What observation is called an exception in paragraph 2?

3. Which phrase in paragraph 2 presents the finding as limited rather than certain?

4. According to paragraph 3, what three actions should a careful report take?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence mini-report about a school observation. Include one measured or observed detail, one discipline-specific term, and one sentence that states a limit on the evidence. Use formal, objective language.

Evidence, Not Assumptions

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline phrases that limit or qualify a claim, and circle science terms that make the report precise. These choices help create a formal, objective tone. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which conclusion does paragraph 1 avoid, and what three factors could affect the measurements?	**It avoids saying pavement alone caused the temperature difference. Shade, wind, and nearby buildings could also affect the measurements.**
2	What observation is called an exception in paragraph 2?	**One sidewalk reading was lower than several others because trees covered part of the route.**
3	Which phrase in paragraph 2 presents the finding as limited rather than certain?	**"a possible relationship, rather than a final conclusion"**
4	According to paragraph 3, what three actions should a careful report take?	**It should identify the methods, state the limits of the evidence, and avoid unsupported claims.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During lunch, observers counted 18 students using the east stairwell during a five-minute interval. The tally suggests that this route received frequent traffic at that time. Because the observation occurred on one day, additional intervals would be needed to describe typical use.

Accept answers that accurately quote or paraphrase the passage's cautious claims and precise terms. For the writing task, accept three formal, objective sentences that include an observation, an appropriate academic term, and a clear limitation.