

Evidence Trail

Track how a researcher gathers useful, trustworthy information.

ELA.6.C.4 "Researching"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each detail Jordan could use to answer his research question. Circle words that show why a source is trustworthy or not trustworthy.

Jordan Studies Playground Shade

- ① When the city planned a new playground, Jordan wondered, "Which shade materials stay coolest on hot days?" He turned the idea into a research question: How do trees, fabric canopies, and metal roofs affect surface temperatures at playgrounds? Jordan needed evidence, not just opinions. He listed words to search, including shade, surface temperature, playground, and heat. He also decided that sources should name who collected information, explain methods, and connect directly to his question clearly.
- ② First, Jordan used a city parks report that described temperature readings taken at ten playgrounds during July afternoons. The report explained that workers used the same type of infrared thermometer and measured shaded and unshaded equipment. Next, he read an article from a university extension program. It summarized studies showing that tree shade can lower the temperature of nearby surfaces, although results vary with time of day and material. Both sources gave methods or evidence Jordan could examine.
- ③ Jordan found a social media post claiming that blue playground paint "stays cold all day." The post had no author, measurements, or links to research, so he did not use it as evidence. His notes showed strong information about shade but little about roofing materials. He narrowed his plan to compare trees and fabric canopies instead. To fill a gap, he emailed the parks department for local canopy maintenance records and looked for a manufacturer's technical sheet that listed testing conditions. His final answer would cite each source beside the information it supplied.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What focused research question guides Jordan's work?

2 Name two sources Jordan uses as strong evidence. What makes each source useful?

3 Why does Jordan decide not to use the social media post as evidence?

4 What information gap does Jordan find, and how does he refocus his research?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose a school or community topic. Write one focused research question, name two different sources you would use, and tell one specific detail you would check to decide whether each source is trustworthy and useful.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each detail Jordan could use to answer his research question. Circle words that show why a source is trustworthy or not trustworthy. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What focused research question guides Jordan's work?	How do trees, fabric canopies, and metal roofs affect surface temperatures at playgrounds?
2	Name two sources Jordan uses as strong evidence. What makes each source useful?	The city parks report gives temperature readings and explains the measuring method. The university extension article summarizes studies about how tree shade affects nearby surface temperatures.
3	Why does Jordan decide not to use the social media post as evidence?	The post has no author, measurements, or links to research.
4	What information gap does Jordan find, and how does he refocus his research?	He finds little information about roofing materials. He narrows his research to compare trees and fabric canopies.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

How could our school reduce the amount of water used on its fields? I would use the school's water bills to find monthly use and a university agriculture extension guide to learn irrigation methods; I would check that the bills cover recent months and that the guide names experts, sources, and its publication date.

Accept equivalent wording for the passage questions when the response identifies the correct source, evidence, or research decision. For the open task, accept varied topics if the question is focused and the student explains how each source would be checked for usefulness or trustworthiness.