

Behind the Claim

Analyze why sources share product information and how to check it.

SS.8.FL.2.2 “Analyze a source’s incentives in providing information about a good or service, and how a consumer can better assess the quality and usefulness of the information.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that reveal a source's possible incentive. Circle evidence or actions that can help a consumer assess whether information is useful.

Choosing Wireless Earbuds

- ① When Maya searched for wireless earbuds, she found a video titled “The Only Earbuds You Need.” The presenter said the SoundBeat Pro pair had “perfect sound” and would last all day. Near the end, small text stated that the company had sent the presenter a free pair and paid for the video. The presenter might still give an honest opinion, but payment and free products give the presenter a reason to emphasize benefits and avoid criticizing problems.
- ② On a store website, Maya also read reviews from people labeled “verified buyers.” One review praised the earbuds after using them during two workouts. Another said the left earbud stopped charging after three weeks and included a photo of the charging case. These reviews can be useful because they describe specific experiences, yet they are not a complete test. A buyer may use earbuds differently, misunderstand a feature, or post a review after only a short time.
- ③ Before buying, Maya compared several kinds of information. She read the product specifications to check battery-life claims, looked for a return policy, and read reviews from more than one website. She also searched for a test by a consumer organization that buys products rather than accepting payment from brands. No single source could guarantee that the earbuds would suit her. By checking who provided information, what evidence appeared, and whether other sources agreed, Maya could judge which claims were most useful.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What incentive might the video presenter have for emphasizing the earbuds' benefits and avoiding problems?

2 What two details make the review about the charging problem more useful than a general statement of praise?

3 Why might Maya find a test from a consumer organization especially useful?

4 Name two actions Maya took to assess the earbuds information. Explain how each action could help her decide.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a good or service you might buy. Fill in the table for three sources, explaining each source's possible incentive and one specific way you would check whether its information is useful.

SOURCE AND INFORMATION	POSSIBLE INCENTIVE	HOW I WOULD CHECK USEFULNESS

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that reveal a source's possible incentive. Circle evidence or actions that can help a consumer assess whether information is useful. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What incentive might the video presenter have for emphasizing the earbuds' benefits and avoiding problems?	The company gave the presenter free earbuds and paid for the video, so the presenter had a reason to make the product sound favorable.
2	What two details make the review about the charging problem more useful than a general statement of praise?	It gives a specific problem, the left earbud stopped charging after three weeks, and includes a photo of the charging case.
3	Why might Maya find a test from a consumer organization especially useful?	The organization buys products instead of accepting payment from brands, so it may have less incentive to favor a brand.
4	Name two actions Maya took to assess the earbuds information. Explain how each action could help her decide.	Answers may include checking specifications against battery-life claims, reading reviews from more than one website, looking for a return policy, or finding a consumer organization test. Each action adds evidence or allows comparison among sources.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

SOURCE AND INFORMATION	POSSIBLE INCENTIVE	HOW I WOULD CHECK USEFULNESS
Running-shoe brand website says its shoes have extra cushioning.	The brand wants to sell its shoes.	Compare the stated cushioning materials with independent wear tests.
Fitness influencer recommends the shoes and posts a purchase link.	The influencer may earn money when followers buy through the link.	Check whether the post identifies sponsorship and compare reviews from other runners.
Consumer magazine test rates the shoes for durability.	The magazine wants reliable information so readers trust it.	Read how many shoes it tested and compare its results with another independent test.

Accept reasonable incentives when they fit the source, including sales, advertising income, affiliate income, sponsorship, or building audience trust. Strong checking methods use evidence, identify sponsorship or funding, compare independent sources, examine specific details, or consider return policies and testing methods.