Question Trail

Learn to ask questions that guide research.

3.T.RA.1.a "Generate questions about a self-selected topic of interest to be researched, formulating additional questions to clarify or deepen understanding. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Mila's first research question. Circle each question she asks later, then number the later questions 1, 2, and 3 to show how she clarifies or deepens her research.

Mila Studies Sea Otters

(1) Mila chose sea otters as her research topic after seeing one float on its back in a video. She started with a big question: "How do sea otters stay warm in cold ocean water?" This question named her topic and gave her a place to begin. Mila planned to use library books and a trusted animal website to find facts.

(2) Her sources explained that sea otters have very thick fur. The fur traps air near their skin, which helps keep them warm. Mila then wrote a follow-up question: "How does trapped air in fur help an otter stay warm?" She also wondered, "What happens if an otter's fur gets covered with oil?" These questions would help Mila learn more about her first question.

(3) Mila noticed that her first question was broad. To focus her research, she added, "How often do sea otters clean their fur, and why?" She could look for this answer in a book about otter behavior. When researchers ask a new question after finding a fact, they can clear up an idea or explore it more deeply. Mila's questions gave her a useful plan for research.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Mila turn her topic into a starting point for research?

2. Which question did Mila ask after learning that otter fur traps air? How does that question help her research?

3. Copy one of Mila's other follow-up questions. Tell how it could help her learn more about sea otters.

4. Why did Mila add more questions after her first question?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a topic you want to research. Write one starting question about it, then write three more questions that would help you clarify or deepen your research.

ANSWER KEY

Question Trail

GRADE 3 · 3.T.RA.1.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Mila's first research question. Circle each question she asks later, then number the later questions 1, 2, and 3 to show how she clarifies or deepens her research. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Mila turn her topic into a starting point for research?	**She chose sea otters and asked, "How do sea otters stay warm in cold ocean water?"**
2	Which question did Mila ask after learning that otter fur traps air? How does that question help her research?	**"How does trapped air in fur help an otter stay warm?" It helps her understand how trapped air keeps an otter warm.**
3	Copy one of Mila's other follow-up questions. Tell how it could help her learn more about sea otters.	**Answers may include: "What happens if an otter's fur gets covered with oil?" It explores a problem that could affect the fur. Or, "How often do sea otters clean their fur, and why?" It explores otter grooming behavior.**
4	Why did Mila add more questions after her first question?	**Her first question was broad, and more questions could clarify ideas or help her explore the topic more deeply.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Topic: frogs. Starting question: How do frogs grow from eggs into adults? More questions: What changes happen when a tadpole grows legs? Why do tadpoles lose their tails? What do young frogs eat after they leave the water?

Accept any topic and questions that could be researched. The starting question should name or connect clearly to the topic, and the three added questions should explore details, causes, changes, or related ideas.