Source Clue Detectives

Judge sources by who made them and what they explain.

3.T.RA.2.b "Determine what makes a source text credible and relevant and identify examples. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show a source may be trustworthy. Circle details that show whether a source can answer Elena's question about monarchs in winter.

Elena's Monarch Search

1. For a class display, Elena asks, "Where do monarch butterflies go in winter?" She finds a web page from Monarch Watch, a program at the University of Kansas. The page names Dr. Chip Taylor, lists the date it was updated, and shows a map made from tagged-butterfly reports. It explains that many eastern monarchs travel to mountain forests in central Mexico.

2. Next, Elena opens a post called "Butterfly Fun Facts." It has colorful photos and says monarchs sleep in clouds. The post does not name a writer, show a date, or tell where its information came from. It talks mostly about butterfly colors, garden decorations, and a cartoon character. Elena also notices an advertisement for a store that sells butterfly toys.

3. At the library, Elena finds a 2024 book from a state university press. A biologist wrote the book, and its last pages list other books and science articles. One chapter describes monarch migration, including the forests in Mexico and the spring trip north. Another chapter explains how to plant a butterfly garden. Elena needs facts for her display question, not directions for growing flowers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Name one source Elena could use for her display question. Give two details that show why it may be trustworthy and useful.

2. What three important details are missing from the "Butterfly Fun Facts" post?

3. Why do the colorful photos and toy-store advertisement not prove that the post can answer Elena's question?

4. Which chapter of the university press book should Elena use, and which chapter should she not use? Explain why.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you need to learn why bees visit flowers. Write two sentences about a source you would use. Name who made it, tell one detail that would show it is trustworthy, and tell one detail that would make it useful for your question.

ANSWER KEY

Source Clue Detectives

GRADE 3 · 3.T.RA.2.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that show a source may be trustworthy. Circle details that show whether a source can answer Elena's question about monarchs in winter. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name one source Elena could use for her display question. Give two details that show why it may be trustworthy and useful.	**Answers may name the Monarch Watch web page, which names Dr. Chip Taylor, has an update date, uses tagged-butterfly reports, and explains winter forests in Mexico. Answers may also name the university press book, written by a biologist with listed sources and a chapter about monarch migration.**
2	What three important details are missing from the "Butterfly Fun Facts" post?	**It does not name a writer, show a date, or tell where its information came from.**
3	Why do the colorful photos and toy-store advertisement not prove that the post can answer Elena's question?	**They do not give facts about where monarchs go in winter. The post mostly discusses colors, decorations, and a cartoon character.**
4	Which chapter of the university press book should Elena use, and which chapter should she not use? Explain why.	**She should use the chapter about monarch migration because it describes the forests in Mexico and the trip north. She should not use the butterfly-garden chapter because it gives planting directions, not winter migration facts.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would use a webpage from a state university bee research center, written by a scientist and dated this year. It would be useful if it explained why bees visit flowers and listed where the facts came from.

Accept different source choices in Question 1 when students use passage details to support both trustworthiness and usefulness. In Part 3, accept reasonable sources that name a creator and include one trustworthiness clue and one clue that matches the bee question.