Source Trail

Track how a researcher gathers and checks information.

4.T.RA.1.b "Conduct research by locating, gathering, curating, and integrating information from multiple credible sources, including print, digital, and personal communication, about a self-selected topic. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each source Jada uses. Circle details that show why a source is strong or what fact Jada gathered, so you can see how she builds an answer from several sources.

Jada Studies Monarchs

1. Jada wanted to learn why monarch butterflies travel so far each fall. She began with a library book from a science publisher. The book explained that monarchs east of the Rocky Mountains often fly to mountain forests in central Mexico. Jada wrote the book title, author, and page number on a note card. She also copied only the facts that answered her question.

2. Next, Jada used the website of Monarch Watch, a university-based education program. She checked the date and looked for the group that created the page. The site said monarchs need nectar from flowers during migration. Jada saved the web address and added the fact to a chart. In a video call, her aunt in Texas described seeing monarchs on blooming wildflowers.

3. Jada compared her sources before she used them. The book came from a science publisher, and Monarch Watch is a university-based program, so she treated them as strong sources. Her aunt's observation was useful, but it showed what happened in one place. Jada's chart kept the source, the fact, and a note about how each fact could help answer her question.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Name Jada's print source, digital source, and personal communication source.

2. What three details did Jada write down about her library book?

3. Why did Jada treat the book and the Monarch Watch website as stronger sources than her aunt's observation?

4. How did Jada's chart help her combine information from her sources?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a topic you want to investigate. Write a research question, then gather one fact each from a print source, a credible digital source, and a personal communication with someone who knows about the topic. Include source details for each, then write exactly two sentences that combine facts from at least two sources to answer your question.

ANSWER KEY

Source Trail

GRADE 4 · 4.T.RA.1.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each source Jada uses. Circle details that show why a source is strong or what fact Jada gathered, so you can see how she builds an answer from several sources. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name Jada's print source, digital source, and personal communication source.	**Print: a library book from a science publisher. Digital: the Monarch Watch website. Personal communication: a video call with her aunt in Texas.**
2	What three details did Jada write down about her library book?	**The book title, the author, and the page number.**
3	Why did Jada treat the book and the Monarch Watch website as stronger sources than her aunt's observation?	**The book came from a science publisher, and Monarch Watch is a university-based program. Her aunt's observation showed what happened in only one place.**
4	How did Jada's chart help her combine information from her sources?	**It kept each source, the fact from it, and a note about how the fact could help answer her question.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Question: How do earthworms help a garden? Print source: National Geographic Readers: Worms by Melissa Stewart. Fact: Earthworms burrow through soil. Digital source: University of Illinois Extension webpage, "Earthworms." Fact: Worm tunnels can help air and water move through soil. Personal communication: Interview with Mr. Diaz, a community garden manager, May 3. Fact: He sees more worms in moist garden beds after rain. Answer: Earthworms help garden soil by making tunnels that let air and water move through it. The book and the Extension website support this idea, and Mr. Diaz's observation gives an example from his garden.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the three source types and clear references to passage details. For the open task, accept a focused question, three identified sources with useful facts, and exactly two synthesis sentences that use information from at least two sources.