Follow the Facts

A model for choosing and using research sources

3.W.6 "Conduct research on a topic. Identify a specific topic or question of interest (e.g., where did Benjamin Harrison grow up?). Locate information in reference texts, electronic resources, or through interviews..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Mina's research question. Circle the two sources she trusts, then number two facts she puts in her own words.

Mina Investigates Beaver Dams

1. Mina wanted to know, "How do beaver dams change a stream?" She first looked in a library wildlife book. Then she read a national park website about beavers. Both explained how beavers build dams from branches, mud, and stones. Mina wrote the names of the book and website beside her notes so she could find those facts again.

2. A page selling toy beavers claimed that every beaver dam is the same size. It gave no author or evidence. Mina did not use that claim. The wildlife book and national park website named who made them and described real beavers. Mina trusted those sources more. She knew that an ad was trying to sell something, not teach her about streams.

3. Mina closed the sources before she wrote her final notes. In her own words, she wrote, "A beaver dam holds back some water, making a pond. Water moves more slowly near the dam." She also noted that ponds can give frogs a place to live. For her class report, Mina chose a short paragraph instead of a poster because she wanted to explain how the stream changed.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What question did Mina choose to research? What makes it more focused than a question about beavers in general?

2. Which two sources gave Mina information she used in her research?

3. Why did Mina leave out the claim that every beaver dam is the same size?

4. How did Mina write her final notes, and why did she choose a paragraph for her report?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a topic other than beavers. Write a focused research question, name a source you could use and why you would trust it, and choose a way to share what you find.

ANSWER KEY

Follow the Facts

GRADE 3 · 3.W.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Mina's research question. Circle the two sources she trusts, then number two facts she puts in her own words. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What question did Mina choose to research? What makes it more focused than a question about beavers in general?	**She asked how beaver dams change a stream. Her question focuses on one thing beavers do and its effect on a stream.**
2	Which two sources gave Mina information she used in her research?	**A library wildlife book and a national park website.**
3	Why did Mina leave out the claim that every beaver dam is the same size?	**The claim came from an ad selling toys, and the page gave no author or evidence.**
4	How did Mina write her final notes, and why did she choose a paragraph for her report?	**She closed her sources and wrote the facts in her own words. She chose a paragraph to explain how the stream changed.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I want to learn how ants find food. My question is, "How do ants tell other ants where food is?" I could use a library book about insects that names its author and explains how scientists study ants. I would share what I find in a labeled poster so readers can follow the steps.

Accept other focused questions and suitable sources when students give a clear reason to trust the source. The sharing choice should fit what the student plans to explain.