Follow the Facts

Read a model of focused, careful research.

4.W.5 "Conduct research on a topic. Identify a specific question to address (e.g., What is the history of the Indy 500?). Use organizational features of print and digital sources to efficiently locate further information..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the research question, circle the tools or features used to find information, and number the two sources. Mark which source the writer trusted so you can explain that choice.

What a Beaver Dam Does

1. At the edge of a creek, I saw a beaver dam made of sticks and mud. I wanted to know, "How do beaver dams change streams?" I opened the National Park Service website and used its search box to find a page about beavers. I skimmed the page's headings to find the section about dams. This was faster than reading every word on the site.

2. I also found a post that claimed beaver dams always dry up nearby plants. The post gave no writer's name or evidence. I did not use that claim. The National Park Service explains that dams slow moving water, which can create ponds and wetlands. I trusted this source more because the park service studies and protects wildlife, and its information can be checked against other science sources.

3. For my poster, I wrote this summary in my own words: Beaver dams hold back water. Slower water can spread out and make wet places where other animals live. Under the summary, I wrote, "Source: National Park Service website, page about beavers." I put my research question at the top of the poster and my source at the bottom, so readers could see what I asked and where I found my facts.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why is the writer's research question more focused than the topic "beavers"?

2. How did the search box and the page headings each help the writer find information?

3. Why did the writer decide not to use the post about nearby plants?

4. In your own words, summarize what beaver dams do to streams. Name the source you would credit.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a topic other than beavers. In four sentences, write a focused research question, name a print or digital source and a feature you would use to find facts, explain how you would check the source, and tell how you would share your findings and give credit.

ANSWER KEY

Follow the Facts

GRADE 4 · 4.W.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the research question, circle the tools or features used to find information, and number the two sources. Mark which source the writer trusted so you can explain that choice. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is the writer's research question more focused than the topic "beavers"?	**It asks specifically how beaver dams change streams, rather than asking about beavers in general.**
2	How did the search box and the page headings each help the writer find information?	**The search box helped find a page about beavers. The headings helped locate the section about dams.**
3	Why did the writer decide not to use the post about nearby plants?	**The post gave no writer's name or evidence to support its claim.**
4	In your own words, summarize what beaver dams do to streams. Name the source you would credit.	**Beaver dams slow stream water and can help form ponds and wetlands. Credit the National Park Service website.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

How do honeybees make honey? I would use the index of *The Bee Book* by Charlotte Milner to find pages on honey. I would check the publisher and compare the facts with a science museum's website. I would share my findings on a poster and list the book's title and author under my summary.

Accept accurate paraphrases for the short answers. For Your Turn, look for a focused question, a usable source feature, a reasonable reliability check, and a plan to present and credit the source.