Track the Evidence

Choose sources that fit a research question.

5.W.5.b "Identify and acquire information through reliable primary and secondary sources."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two sources Maya could use, circle the clues that help her judge whether to trust them, and cross out the source she rejects.

Researching an Earthquake

1. Maya wants to learn how people responded to the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. She looks for a diary written by someone who was there. A dated diary in a museum collection could show what one family saw and did during the shaking. Before using it, Maya would check who wrote it and when. One person's account cannot show what happened on every street in the city.

2. Maya also finds an article from the U.S. Geological Survey written long after the earthquake. The article uses records from the time to explain how the earthquake affected the region. It could give Maya a broader view than one person's diary. Before using it, she checks for the agency's name, a publication date, and references to the records the article used.

3. Another web post claims that every building in San Francisco fell. It has no author and lists no evidence. Maya decides not to use it. Instead, she plans to compare a dated eyewitness account with the agency article. If they disagree about an important detail, she will look for another named, dated source before adding that detail to her report.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which source could help Maya learn what one family experienced? Why is it a primary source?

2. Which source could give Maya a broader view of the earthquake? Why is it a secondary source?

3. What two clues tell Maya not to trust the web post?

4. If the eyewitness account and the agency article disagree, how should Maya check the detail before using it?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a different event to research. Name one primary source and one secondary source you would look for, explain what each could tell you, and describe one check you would make before using them.

ANSWER KEY

Track the Evidence

GRADE 5 · 5.W.5.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the two sources Maya could use, circle the clues that help her judge whether to trust them, and cross out the source she rejects. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which source could help Maya learn what one family experienced? Why is it a primary source?	**The diary could help. It is a primary source because someone who was there wrote it.**
2	Which source could give Maya a broader view of the earthquake? Why is it a secondary source?	**The U.S. Geological Survey article could help. It is a secondary source because it was written later using records from the time.**
3	What two clues tell Maya not to trust the web post?	**It has no author and lists no evidence.**
4	If the eyewitness account and the agency article disagree, how should Maya check the detail before using it?	**She should look for another named, dated source.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For a report on the 1969 Moon landing, I would look for a recording of an astronaut describing the trip. This primary source could tell me what the astronaut experienced. I would also find a museum history article that uses mission records. This secondary source could explain the mission more broadly. I would check the recording's date and the article's author before using them.

Accept other firsthand records as primary sources and later accounts based on earlier evidence as secondary sources. Students should name a check that helps establish a source's reliability, such as its author, date, or supporting evidence.