Follow the Evidence

Trace how sources lead to a new research question

C.8.5 "Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating new avenues for inquiry."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read Nia's research story. Underline what each source contributes, circle a limit or unanswered question, and number the question Nia decides to investigate next.

The Puddle at Cedar Street

1. After a hard rain, water covered the crosswalk on Cedar Street, while the next block was nearly dry. Eighth grader Nia asked, "Why did water collect at this crossing?" She began a short research project instead of guessing from the puddle alone. A local weather office report recorded heavy rainfall in the area that afternoon. The report confirmed that a storm had passed through, but it did not explain why one block stayed wet. She needed evidence about the street itself.

2. Nia checked the city's storm-drain maintenance records. A crew had reported leaves packed against a grate beside the flooded crosswalk two days before the storm. The records did not say whether the leaves were still there when it rained. Next, she read a university extension guide explaining that pavement keeps rain from soaking into the ground, so water must run toward a drain or another low spot. Together, these sources suggested that blocked drainage and the street's slope might matter, but they did not prove which factor caused the puddle.

3. To test her explanation, Nia visited the crossing after another rain. She noticed water flowing toward the grate, but she could not see under it. She recorded her observation as a clue, not proof that the grate was blocked. Her new question was, "Does this crossing flood when the grate is clear?" She planned to ask the public works department for cleaning dates and compare them with reports of flooding after similar storms. That next step would help her separate a clogged drain from other possible causes, such as a low spot.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the weather report and the city maintenance records contribute different evidence to Nia's first question?

2. Why can't Nia claim that the maintenance records prove leaves caused the puddle?

3. How does the university extension guide help Nia interpret what she found, and what can't the guide prove?

4. What new question does Nia ask, and how could the records she plans to compare help answer it?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a new research question about reducing puddles at a school entrance, not about why Cedar Street flooded. In four or five sentences, use evidence from two different sources in the passage to suggest a possible answer, name a new source you would consult and what you would seek from it, and pose a follow-up question.

ANSWER KEY

Follow the Evidence

GRADE 8 · C.8.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Read Nia's research story. Underline what each source contributes, circle a limit or unanswered question, and number the question Nia decides to investigate next. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the weather report and the city maintenance records contribute different evidence to Nia's first question?	**The weather report confirms heavy rain in the area. The maintenance records show that leaves had been packed against a grate beside the crosswalk.**
2	Why can't Nia claim that the maintenance records prove leaves caused the puddle?	**The records do not say whether the leaves were still against the grate when it rained.**
3	How does the university extension guide help Nia interpret what she found, and what can't the guide prove?	**It explains that pavement sends rainwater toward drains or low spots. It cannot show whether a blocked drain or the street's slope caused this puddle.**
4	What new question does Nia ask, and how could the records she plans to compare help answer it?	**She asks whether the crossing floods when the grate is clear. Comparing cleaning dates with flooding reports after similar storms could show whether flooding also occurs after cleaning.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

How could a school reduce puddles near its front entrance? The university extension guide suggests that runoff from pavement needs a path to a drain, and the city maintenance records show that leaves collected at one grate. These clues suggest checking whether leaves block the school's entrance drain, though they do not show what happens there. I would request the school's drain-cleaning log to see when that drain was cleared; my follow-up question is whether puddles still form after cleaning.

Accept other supported explanations that distinguish what a source suggests from what it proves. For Part 3, look for an original question, evidence from two named passage sources, a new source with a purpose, and a follow-up question.