Choose Evidence for a School Water Decision

Evaluate sources, paraphrase evidence, and cite it in MLA style

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 1 - Read the source set

Research question: Should Riverside Middle School add bottle-filling stations to reduce single-use bottle waste? Read all three sources. All three are fictional instructional source simulations created for this activity.

Source A - District pilot report

Riverside Unified School District Facilities Department. “Bottle-Filling Station Pilot Report.” February 12, 2026. Fictional instructional source simulation. https://example.edu/riverside-usd/facilities/bottle-station-pilot

Facilities staff conducted lunch-bin waste audits at four middle schools. They counted single-use bottles during 20 school days before stations were installed and 20 school days after installation. The average number of bottles found per school day fell from 62 to 39. The report says the change occurred while stations were available, but the audits cannot prove that stations alone caused the decrease because other school actions may have affected waste.

Source B - School observation record

Riverside Middle School Green Team. “Two-Week Bottle Station Tally.” May 16, 2026. Fictional instructional source simulation. https://example.edu/riverside/green-team/bottle-tally

Students counted discarded single-use bottles in six lunch bins during two five-day periods with the same lunch schedule. Before a borrowed bottle-filling station was available, they counted 184 bottles and 37 refills. During the later five-day period with the station, they counted 83 bottles and 261 refills. The team noted that one school and two weeks are a limited sample.

Source C - Social-media claim

SplashTruth99. “Reusable Bottles Are Worse Than 1,000 Disposable Bottles.” April 3, 2026. Fictional instructional source simulation. https://example.edu/posts/splashtruth99-bottles

The post says students should never use reusable bottles. It gives no author name, data, links, study, or explanation for its number.

MLA reminder: In your paragraph, put a source name in parentheses after evidence, such as *(Riverside Unified School District Facilities Department)*. In Works Cited, list the creator, title, date, and URL.

Choose Evidence for a School Water Decision

Evaluate sources, paraphrase evidence, and cite it in MLA style

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 2 - Evaluate the sources

1. Evaluate each source. In each box, name one credibility strength or concern. Then decide whether it is useful for this research question.

Source	Strength or concern	Useful? Why?
A		
B		
C		

Before you write: Choose evidence from at least two credible sources. Put each source's idea into your own words. Do not copy a source sentence.

Choose Evidence for a School Water Decision

Evaluate sources, paraphrase evidence, and cite it in MLA style

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 3 - Write and cite

2. Write an 80-110 word answer. State a claim. Paraphrase evidence from at least two credible sources. Explain why Source C should or should not affect the decision. Use parenthetical citations.

3. Works Cited Write MLA-style entries for the two sources you used. Use the source details in Part 1.

Choose Evidence for a School Water Decision

Evaluate sources, paraphrase evidence, and cite it in MLA style

Teacher notes and answer key - Part 1

Supplied materials: student worksheet pages and pencils. **Additionally needed:** none. Sources are printed on the student pages; no internet access is needed.

Exact setup: Print and supply all student pages, keeping teacher-key pages separate. Students should keep the source set from Part 1 available while completing Parts 2 and 3. Allow about 8 minutes to read, 7 minutes for the evaluation grid, and 15 minutes to draft and cite.

Teaching script: “Today you will make one school recommendation from a small source set. A credible source names its creator and gives evidence or a method. Credible does not mean perfect: a limited school tally can still be useful if you identify a strength or concern. Put ideas into your own words, and show readers where each idea came from. Do not copy sentences from the sources.”

Observation method: As students work, check that each student (1) identifies a credibility strength or concern for each source, (2) identifies the missing evidence in Source C, (3) uses two parenthetical citations, and (4) writes two traceable Works Cited entries. Prompt only with: “Which source detail supports that judgment?” Record each item as observed/not yet observed.

1. Evaluation answers: A: useful because a named district department reports a method, comparison periods, and a limitation. Its audit supports an association between station availability and fewer bottles, but cannot prove cause. B: useful direct, named school observation with a stated method and counts; its one-school, two-week sample limits certainty. C: not reliable/useful as evidence because the unidentified post provides no data, links, author, or method. Students may make equivalent evidence-based judgments.

Scoring for Item 1: Award 1 point each for three supported source evaluations. A response earns the point when it identifies a relevant strength, limitation, or concern and makes a reasonable usefulness judgment. Total: 3 points.

Choose Evidence for a School Water Decision

Evaluate sources, paraphrase evidence, and cite it in MLA style

Teacher notes and answer key - Part 2

2. Sample response within the required range: Riverside Middle School should add bottle-filling stations. A district pilot report found that schools with stations had fewer single-use bottles in their waste audits; however, the report says that the audit cannot prove the stations alone caused the change (Riverside Unified School District Facilities Department). At Riverside, the Green Team counted 101 fewer discarded bottles when comparing the five-day period before the station with the five-day period when it was available (Riverside Middle School Green Team). This is a limited sample, so the school should continue to track results. Source C should not guide the decision because it gives no author, evidence, or method.

3. Sample Works Cited entries:

Riverside Middle School Green Team. “Two-Week Bottle Station Tally.” 16 May 2026. Fictional instructional source simulation. https://example.edu/riverside/green-team/bottle-tally

Riverside Unified School District Facilities Department. “Bottle-Filling Station Pilot Report.” 12 Feb. 2026. Fictional instructional source simulation. https://example.edu/riverside-usd/facilities/bottle-station-pilot

Scoring for Items 2-3: Award 2 points for a clear claim and relevant paraphrased evidence; 1 point for explaining Source C; 2 points for two accurate parenthetical citations; and 2 points for two complete, traceable MLA-style entries. Total: 7 points. Accept reasonable punctuation or line-wrap differences in citations.

Source credit: Sources A, B, and C are clearly labeled fictional instructional source simulations created for this worksheet. Source A models a district facilities report with a described audit method; Source B models a student-created local observation record; Source C models an unsupported social-media claim.