Robin Research Trail

Follow a question through three sources.

4.6.R.1 "Students will conduct research to answer questions, including self-generated questions, and to build knowledge, using multiple sources (e.g., visual and text reference sources, electronic resources, and/or interviews)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Nia's research question and circle the three sources she uses. Number one detail from each source 1, 2, and 3 to track her evidence.

Robins After Rain

1 After a rainy morning, Nia watched a robin tug at the school lawn. She wondered, "Why do robins search the grass after rain?" Instead of guessing, she opened a bird guide from the library. The guide said robins eat earthworms and many insects. It also said robins use their eyes and ears to find food. Nia wrote down the guide's title beside her notes.

2 Next, Nia interviewed Mr. Lee, who cares for the school grounds. He said he often sees robins on the lawn after a shower. He has also seen earthworms on the nearby path when the ground is wet. "I cannot tell what every robin catches," he added. Nia recorded his words as an observation, not proof that all robins eat worms after rain.

3 Finally, Nia checked a wildlife museum's website. It explained that wet soil can make earthworms easier for birds to pull out. This helped her connect the guide's food list with Mr. Lee's observations. Her answer was careful: rain may help robins find worms, but a robin on the lawn might also be hunting insects. She saved the website name so others could check her sources.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do Mr. Lee's interview and the museum website work together to help answer Nia's question?

2. Which detail from the bird guide helps Nia avoid saying that every robin on the lawn is eating worms?

3. Why can't Nia use Mr. Lee's interview alone to prove what the robins caught?

4. Using the bird guide and the museum website, what careful answer can Nia give to her research question?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a new question about robins that Nia could research. Name two different kinds of sources she could use, and tell what she would look for in each. Do not answer your question.

ANSWER KEY # Robin Research Trail

GRADE 4 · 4.6.R.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Nia's research question and circle the three sources she uses. Number one detail from each source 1, 2, and 3 to track her evidence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do Mr. Lee's interview and the museum website work together to help answer Nia's question?	**Mr. Lee has seen robins on the lawn and worms nearby after rain. The website explains that wet soil can make worms easier to pull out.**
2	Which detail from the bird guide helps Nia avoid saying that every robin on the lawn is eating worms?	**The guide says robins eat insects as well as earthworms.**
3	Why can't Nia use Mr. Lee's interview alone to prove what the robins caught?	**He saw robins and worms after rain, but he could not tell what every robin caught.**
4	Using the bird guide and the museum website, what careful answer can Nia give to her research question?	**Rain may make worms easier for robins to pull from the soil, but robins might also be hunting insects.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Where do robins build nests near our school? I would check a bird guide for the places robins usually nest. I would interview the school groundskeeper to learn where nests have been seen on school grounds.

Accept answers that distinguish an observation from an explanation and avoid claiming that Nia knows what a particular robin caught. For Part 3, accept a new researchable question with two distinct source types and a clear purpose for each.