From Question to Brief

Trace a three-day research project and its week-long extension

7.6.W.4 "Students will create research papers and/or projects independently for shorter timeframes (e.g., two or three days) and over extended periods of time (e.g., one week)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the research question, circle the two source names, number the main research action on each day from 1 to 3, and box the extra evidence planned for a week-long project.

A Cooler Place to Wait

1. On Monday, I began a three-day research brief with one question: How can trees make a paved bus stop less hot? I needed a claim I could support, not just a list of tree facts. For my first source, I read the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's page on trees and heat islands. The EPA explains that tree leaves provide shade, so less sunlight strikes the ground beneath them. This evidence suggested that a shaded sidewalk could stay cooler than exposed pavement, but one source did not explain everything.

2. On Tuesday, I checked NASA Earth Observatory's explanation of urban heat islands. NASA reports that pavement can absorb sunlight and become hotter than vegetation. That helped me explain why shade matters at a bus stop. I also returned to the EPA page and found another process: trees release water vapor, which can cool nearby air. I placed each fact beside its source in my notes. Since surface heat and air temperature are different, I did not claim that one tree would lower both by the same amount.

3. On Wednesday, I finished my brief: Trees can make a paved bus stop more comfortable by shading the ground and helping cool nearby air. The EPA supports both processes, while NASA helps explain why exposed pavement heats up. I checked that each claim matched its source before turning in my paragraph and a two-source list. With a full week instead of three days, I would add observations from two bus stops, one shaded and one unshaded. I would visit at the same time each day and record the weather.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What question guided the three-day brief, and which source did the writer read first to investigate it?

2. Which fact from NASA and which fact from the EPA helped the writer explain two different ways trees may affect a bus stop?

3. What did the writer do on Wednesday to turn research notes into a finished brief?

4. What extra evidence would a full week allow the writer to gather, and how would the writer make the observations more comparable?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Independently write a five- or six-sentence research brief answering this new question: Should a school plant trees beside an exposed blacktop play area? Use a fact from each named source in the passage, name both sources, and end with evidence you would gather if your project lasted a week instead of three days.

ANSWER KEY

From Question to Brief

GRADE 7 · 7.6.W.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the research question, circle the two source names, number the main research action on each day from 1 to 3, and box the extra evidence planned for a week-long project. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What question guided the three-day brief, and which source did the writer read first to investigate it?	**The writer asked how trees can make a paved bus stop less hot and first read a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency page on trees and heat islands.**
2	Which fact from NASA and which fact from the EPA helped the writer explain two different ways trees may affect a bus stop?	**NASA reports that pavement can absorb sunlight and become hotter than vegetation. The EPA explains that trees provide shade and release water vapor that can cool nearby air.**
3	What did the writer do on Wednesday to turn research notes into a finished brief?	**The writer stated a claim about shade and nearby air, checked that each claim matched its source, and turned in a paragraph with a two-source list.**
4	What extra evidence would a full week allow the writer to gather, and how would the writer make the observations more comparable?	**The writer would observe one shaded and one unshaded bus stop, visiting at the same time each day and recording the weather.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The school should consider planting trees beside the exposed blacktop to add shade. The EPA explains that tree leaves block some sunlight from reaching the ground. NASA Earth Observatory reports that pavement absorbs sunlight and can become hotter than vegetation. Together, these findings suggest that shade could help keep the play area's surface cooler. Trees may also cool nearby air by releasing water vapor, according to the EPA. In a one-week project, I would compare shaded and unshaded parts of the play area at the same time each day and record the weather.

Accept accurate paraphrases of the two sources and reasonable week-long observation plans. The research brief should make an original recommendation supported by both named sources, not claim a specific temperature change the sources do not provide.