Schools Stayed Open

Investigate a decision made during the 1918 influenza pandemic

6.P.1.2.D "Demonstrate understanding of social studies content through the development of self-driven inquiries and the completion of authentic tasks and assessments."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the class's inquiry, circle three possible sources, and number two limits of those sources. Use your marks to plan a trustworthy museum label.

A School Decision in 1918

1 In the fall of 1918, an influenza pandemic spread across the United States. Many cities closed schools to slow the spread, but New York City kept its public schools open. City leaders argued that children could be watched by teachers and checked by health workers at school. Staying home might leave some children in crowded rooms without care. A sixth-grade class wants to know how city leaders explained this choice, not whether every child was safe. That narrower question can guide a search for evidence.

2 The class begins with sources from 1918. A school board record could show what officials said at a meeting. A newspaper from the same month could report public reactions. Neither source tells exactly how every family felt. Attendance records might show how many students came to school, but they cannot explain each absence. Students should note who made each source and what it can and cannot show. They can compare a board statement with a newspaper report to see whether the reasons match. If the sources disagree, the difference becomes a new question to investigate.

3 After gathering sources, the class plans a short museum label for visitors. It will state a claim about the school decision, name the evidence behind it, and explain one limit of that evidence. For example, a meeting record can report a leader's reason but cannot speak for every parent. Visitors should be able to tell which statements come from records and which are the students' interpretations. If the class still lacks family voices, it can name that gap and propose a next source to seek.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Write a focused question about what families thought of New York City's decision. Which source in the passage could offer a clue?

2. To check whether a newspaper accurately reports officials' reasons, which other source would you compare it with? Why?

3. A student says attendance records prove that every absent child had influenza. Why is that claim not supported?

4. Write a one-sentence museum label about the city's decision using facts from the passage. Then name a source you would check to verify a reason for that decision.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a question about how one group experienced New York City's open schools in 1918. Write a four-sentence proposal for a museum label that states your question, names two different sources you would seek, explains what each might reveal, and identifies one limit to keep in mind.

ANSWER KEY

Schools Stayed Open

GRADE 6 · 6.P.1.2.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the class's inquiry, circle three possible sources, and number two limits of those sources. Use your marks to plan a trustworthy museum label. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Write a focused question about what families thought of New York City's decision. Which source in the passage could offer a clue?	**What did families think about keeping schools open in 1918? A newspaper from that month could offer a clue by reporting public reactions.**
2	To check whether a newspaper accurately reports officials' reasons, which other source would you compare it with? Why?	**Compare it with a school board record, which could show what officials said at a meeting.**
3	A student says attendance records prove that every absent child had influenza. Why is that claim not supported?	**Attendance records might show who was absent, but they cannot explain each student's absence.**
4	Write a one-sentence museum label about the city's decision using facts from the passage. Then name a source you would check to verify a reason for that decision.	**New York City kept its schools open in 1918 while many cities closed theirs. Check a school board record to verify officials' stated reasons.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

How did teachers experience New York City's open schools during the 1918 influenza pandemic? I would seek a teacher's diary to learn about classroom challenges and a health worker's report to learn what school visits involved. I would use both accounts to plan a museum label about daily life at school. A single diary would not represent every teacher.

Accept focused questions and reasonable source choices grounded in what the passage says each source might show. For the proposal, look for a question about one group, two distinct sources with explained purposes, and a valid source limit.