Follow the Ash

Use records to investigate a geographic question

6.P.2.3.A "Answer geographic questions and conduct investigations by acquiring, organizing, and interpreting information about the modern world and historical events."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline clues about where the ash traveled or flights stopped, and circle the kinds of records used to investigate those places.

When Ash Stopped Flights

1. On April 14, 2010, a volcano beneath Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull glacier sent a cloud of ash into the sky. Iceland sits in the North Atlantic, northwest of mainland Europe. Winds carried the fine ash across the ocean toward European airspace. Ash can damage airplane engines, so airlines and officials stopped flights in places where the cloud might make flying unsafe. Travelers far from the volcano were stranded. One geographic question connects these events: Why did a volcano on an island disrupt travel across a much larger region?

2. To investigate, a student gathers three kinds of records from April 2010. Satellite reports record where the ash cloud was detected on different days. Weather station reports show which way winds blew at specific places and times. Airport records list when flights were canceled or airports closed. The student sorts each record by date and location, then checks whether the cloud's path and the flight disruptions line up. One record alone cannot explain every canceled flight, but comparing records can reveal a stronger connection.

3. For example, reports from April 15 placed ash over parts of northern Europe, and airport records showed many flight cancellations there. Some airports in southern Europe continued operating. This contrast suggests that location mattered, but it does not prove that ash caused every canceled flight. A storm or a problem at an airport could also delay a plane. To test a claim about one city, the student would compare that city's airport records with the ash reports and wind reports for the same date.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How should the student organize the three kinds of records before comparing them, and why?

2. Which two kinds of records would you compare to check whether winds carried ash toward Europe? What would each tell you?

3. What does the April 15 contrast between northern and southern Europe suggest about where flight disruptions occurred?

4. Why does the April 15 match between ash and cancellations not prove that ash caused every canceled flight?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A library says a snowstorm delayed its book deliveries last winter. Name two records you would gather, explain how you would sort them by date and place, and describe a pattern that would support the library's claim.

ANSWER KEY # Follow the Ash

GRADE 6 · 6.P.2.3.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline clues about where the ash traveled or flights stopped, and circle the kinds of records used to investigate those places. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How should the student organize the three kinds of records before comparing them, and why?	**Sort them by date and location so records about the same place and time can be compared.**
2	Which two kinds of records would you compare to check whether winds carried ash toward Europe? What would each tell you?	**Weather station reports show wind direction. Satellite reports show where the ash was detected.**
3	What does the April 15 contrast between northern and southern Europe suggest about where flight disruptions occurred?	**Many cancellations occurred in northern Europe, where ash was reported, while some airports in southern Europe kept operating.**
4	Why does the April 15 match between ash and cancellations not prove that ash caused every canceled flight?	**Other causes, such as a storm or an airport problem, could also have delayed flights.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would collect weather reports along the delivery route and shipping records with planned and actual arrival dates. I would sort both by date and location. If deliveries arrived late when snow covered the route but arrived on time on clear days, that pattern would support the claim.

Accept answers that compare records for matching dates and places. In Part 3, students should identify two useful records and describe a pattern, not claim that the pattern proves the cause.