Rights on Paper

Trace how research supports and limits a claim.

TOT.P.4.2 "Engage in authentic research to acquire, refine, and share knowledge through written presentations and products. Develop self-generated theses or claims related to independent research and investigations using credible and relevant..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the writer's claim, number the two sentences that summarize different sources, and box the short quotation. Use your marks to trace how the writer builds an argument from evidence.

A Right and Its Reach

1. At a school forum about voting, someone says the Nineteenth Amendment gave every American woman the ballot. That statement leaves out an important distinction: changing the Constitution did not remove every barrier to voting. My claim is that a legal right to vote means little when people cannot use it in practice. The National Archives' account of the Nineteenth Amendment explains that its ratification in 1920 barred denying the vote because of sex, yet discriminatory laws and practices still kept many women of color from voting. This summary separates the amendment's promise from actual access.

2. A second source helps explain why access changed decades later. The U.S. Department of Justice's History of Federal Voting Rights Laws explains that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 targeted voting rules and practices that had denied Black Americans the vote, especially in the South. This summary does not imply that the law ended every obstacle. For a brief quotation from a primary source, the amendment itself says the vote cannot be denied "on account of sex." Those four words specify one forbidden reason for denial; they do not say that every voter could register without interference.

3. For students preparing a school exhibit, the useful question is not simply, "When did women gain the vote?" Ask instead which women could exercise that right, in which places, and under what conditions. The two sources support a narrower, more defensible claim about the gap between law and access. They do not establish that voting conditions were identical across states or communities. Before publishing the exhibit, I would seek firsthand accounts from a specific place and time, check who collected them, and name each source beside the evidence it provides. That research could sharpen or change my claim.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the writer's claim, and how does it challenge the statement made at the school forum?

2. How does each source summary contribute different evidence to the writer's claim?

3. Which words does the writer quote from the amendment, and what point does the writer make using those words?

4. What can the two sources not establish about voting access, and what evidence does the writer propose seeking next?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a local or national issue other than voting, and consult two credible sources you find yourself. Write a 90 to 110 word mini-exhibit for classmates with your own arguable claim, an attributed short quotation from one source, an attributed paraphrase from the other, a reason each source is credible, and one sentence explaining what further evidence would test your claim.

Rights on Paper

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the writer's claim, number the two sentences that summarize different sources, and box the short quotation. Use your marks to trace how the writer builds an argument from evidence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the writer's claim, and how does it challenge the statement made at the school forum?	**The claim is that a legal right means little if people cannot use it. It challenges the idea that the Nineteenth Amendment gave every American woman practical access to voting.**
2	How does each source summary contribute different evidence to the writer's claim?	**The National Archives summary distinguishes the amendment's legal protection from barriers many women of color still faced. The Justice Department summary shows that a later law targeted practices that had denied Black Americans the vote.**
3	Which words does the writer quote from the amendment, and what point does the writer make using those words?	**The writer quotes "on account of sex" and uses the words to show what the amendment prohibited, while noting that the amendment did not remove every barrier to registration.**
4	What can the two sources not establish about voting access, and what evidence does the writer propose seeking next?	**They cannot establish that conditions were identical across communities. The writer proposes seeking firsthand accounts from a specific place and time and checking who collected them.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Public buses should be judged by whether riders with disabilities can actually use them, not only by whether access rules exist. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, published by the U.S. Department of Justice, prohibits excluding people from public services "by reason of such disability." Federal Transit Administration guidance, issued by the agency overseeing public transit, explains that transit agencies must make their services accessible to riders with disabilities. Together, these government sources support a legal duty, but neither shows how reliably ramps work on my city's buses. Interviews with local riders and bus repair records would test whether the service meets that duty.

Accept claims that distinguish a legal protection from people's ability to use it. For Part 3, check the student's actual sources and quotation, as well as whether the paraphrase is in the student's own words and supports the claim.