

Source Trail

Read how one researcher gathers and combines trustworthy information.

5.T.RA.1.b "Conduct research by locating, gathering, curating, and integrating information from multiple credible sources, including print, digital, and personal communication, about a self-selected topic. (I)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read this fictional account of a researcher. Underline the print, digital and personal-communication sources. Circle a check Maya made before using information. The account models the process; you will locate and use your own sources for the research task.

Maya Researches Pollinators

Maya wanted to learn how city gardens help pollinators. She began with a book from the public library about native plants. The book listed its author, publisher, and publication date, so Maya could check who created it and when. She wrote the title and page numbers on note cards. She copied only short facts, then used her own words to explain each idea.

Next, Maya used a university website to find a chart about bees and flowers. She looked for the writer's name, the date, and links to studies before trusting the chart. A website from a university can still contain old information, so she checked the date. Maya saved the web address and made a note that the chart showed which flowers bees visited.

Finally, Maya interviewed Mr. Ortiz, a gardener at a neighborhood garden. She asked how he knew which plants attracted bees. He described what he had observed, but Maya treated his answer as one person's experience. Her notes grouped facts by topic: plant choices, bee visits, and garden care. In her report, she combined the book, website, and interview, and named each source near the information it supported.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did Maya record and check her print and digital sources?

2 Why did Maya treat the gardener's answer as one person's experience?

3 How did Maya organize and combine her research?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Conduct research on a topic you choose. Use a print source, a different digital source and a real conversation with a knowledgeable person. Check credibility, select useful facts and combine all three sources in your answer. Your teacher will provide research time and help arrange access.

1. Focus your research

Choose a topic and write a focused question you want to answer. Ask your teacher to help arrange source access and a knowledgeable person.

2. Locate, read and record two sources

Use the upper half for print: title, author, date, pages, relevant expertise or evidence, and two facts in your own words. Use the lower half for digital: title, author/organization, URL, date, relevant expertise/evidence, and two facts. Explain whether the digital information is current enough. Compare one fact across the sources.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

3. Personal communication

With teacher help, speak with someone knowledgeable. Record their name, relevant experience and conversation date. Ask a focused question and a follow-up; record both questions and actual answers. Note one limit of their knowledge.

4. Curate and integrate

Star the most relevant fact from each source and cross out one less useful note, explaining why. Write a connected answer using all three sources, naming each beside its information. Explain an agreement, difference or remaining uncertainty.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Read this fictional account of a researcher. Underline the print, digital and personal-communication sources. Circle a check Maya made before using information. The account models the process; you will locate and use your own sources for the research task. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Maya record and check her print and digital sources?	For the book, she recorded title and pages and checked author, publisher and date. For the website, she saved its address and checked the writer, date and links to studies.
2	Why did Maya treat the gardener's answer as one person's experience?	He described his own observations, which may not represent every garden.
3	How did Maya organize and combine her research?	She grouped notes by topic, combined information from the three sources and named each source beside its information.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Illustrative records: fictional school research

Question: how can our class organize a book swap? Print: Library Event Guide, librarian Ms. Chen, this school year, p. 2. She runs our library events. It says to use a return table for donated books and sort by reading interest. It also lists last year's poster colors; I leave those out because colors do not explain the swap process.

Digital: Book Swap Notice, school library, class learning portal, posted September 1. The librarian's current event notice says the swap uses the library on September 20 and each participant may choose one book. The school library sets these local rules. This source adds current limits to the print guide's general routine.

Conversation: Ms. Chen, September 3. I asked how to manage arrivals; she said to send groups of five to the return table. I asked how to help someone who cannot choose; she said a helper can ask about reading interests. She knows our library but cannot describe every school's swap.

Selected evidence and connected answer

I starred the guide's return table, the notice's one-book rule and Ms. Chen's groups-of-five advice. We can set up the return table described in the Library Event Guide and send five students at a time, as Ms. Chen advised in our conversation. At the choosing stage, we should follow the school library's current notice: one book per person. These sources cover different steps of the same process. The guide and interview agree on using the return table. We still need to ask what happens if someone brings no book.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

Provide time, print/digital access and help arranging a real conversation. Students choose the topic; a future research plan or copied model is incomplete. Require distinct print and digital sources plus actual personal communication, traceable source details, relevant credibility reasoning, accurate notes, curation and an integrated answer using all three. A date or institutional name alone does not prove credibility. Use actual available source dates; record undated if none is given. A digital source needs its real URL or accessible class link. The model's school, sources, dates and interview are invented to demonstrate the record and reasoning; they are not sources to cite as real evidence. Its class portal is an illustrative location only. Learners must supply the actual locator for their own digital source. Accept other supported syntheses and unresolved questions; do not reward fabricated interviews.