

Source Smart

Grades 6-8: check real sources and combine evidence responsibly.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8 "Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB This grades 6-8 activity applies the K-12 anchor standard in the header. Read printed Source A, then open Source B using the address below. Digital access is required for this activity. Underline one relevant recommendation in A; record exact section names when taking notes from B.

Sources for a Pollinator Garden

- ① Source A (printed adaptation): Different pollinators use different plants. Some seek nectar in long tubular flowers, while others feed at more open flowers. Locally native plants developed alongside local pollinators and fit the region's conditions. A garden should include varied flowering plants and plants that feed butterfly or moth caterpillars, not just adult visitors. Adapted by Lesson Maker Pro from Susan Reel, Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden Using Native Plants, USDA Forest Service, Lolo National Forest, printed pages 1 and 7. Original: fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/pollinators/documents/AttractingPollinatorsV5.pdf. The booklet focuses on Montana; local recommendations still need checking.
- ② Source B (read online): Courtney Celley and Tina Shaw, "Top plants for your pollinator garden," U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Open fws.gov/story/top-plants-your-pollinator-garden. Read the introduction and the section for your region; record the section heading and access date. This page identifies its writers and publisher, gives regional plant lists, and warns readers to check local growing conditions. Do not assume that a listed plant suits every site in a region. If access is unavailable, complete the activity later with a teacher-provided saved digital copy of that page.

- ③ Research question: How should a school choose plants to support pollinators? Separate your notes from your draft. For each source, record a relevant fact, a reason to trust it for this question, and a limitation. Check a claim by comparing the sources, not just by recognizing an agency name. Paraphrase ideas accurately; changing a few words is not enough. Cite each source used. Put any exact borrowed wording in quotation marks and identify its source.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① From printed Source A, record one relevant recommendation in your own words and its locator. Explain how it answers the research question.

- ② Read Source B's introduction and your regional section. Record one relevant detail in your own words, the section heading, and today's access date.

- ③ Assess both sources: give a credibility reason and a limitation for each. Evaluate relevance and checkable detail, not just the agency names.

- ④ Compare the two sources on plant choice. State one agreement, one additional idea contributed by B, and one detail you would still verify locally. Give source locators.

Your own words

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

References and accuracy check

For A, identify Susan Reel, the booklet title, USDA Forest Service, printed pages 1 and 7, and that you used the printed adaptation. For B, record both writers, page title, publisher, URL, your regional section and access date. Compare your draft with both sources; fix any unsupported or copied wording.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

This grades 6-8 activity applies the K-12 anchor standard in the header. Read printed Source A, then open Source B using the address below. Digital access is required for this activity. Underline one relevant recommendation in A; record exact section names when taking notes from B. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	From printed Source A, record one relevant recommendation in your own words and its locator. Explain how it answers the research question.	Example: include plants that feed caterpillars as well as adult insects (Source A, printed adaptation; original printed p. 7). This addresses food needs at different life stages.
2	Read Source B's introduction and your regional section. Record one relevant detail in your own words, the section heading, and today's access date.	Example: choose varieties with different bloom seasons (introduction); Northeast Region lists spring, summer and fall plants. A valid answer names the student's actual region, accurate detail and access date.
3	Assess both sources: give a credibility reason and a limitation for each. Evaluate relevance and checkable detail, not just the agency names.	A has an identified writer and concrete biological examples, but is an adaptation of a Montana-focused guide and cannot establish every local plant choice. B has named writers, regional lists and a stated site-condition caveat; its broad regions cannot guarantee suitability at a specific school.
4	Compare the two sources on plant choice. State one agreement, one additional idea contributed by B, and one detail you would still verify locally. Give source locators.	Both recommend regionally native plants. B's introduction adds matching bloom seasons and checking specific growing conditions. Verify the proposed species' suitability at the school with a local native-plant specialist. Accept other accurate comparisons with locators.

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A school garden should meet more than one kind of pollinator need. Reel's printed adaptation explains that plant choices should support caterpillars as well as adult visitors (A). Celley and Shaw recommend selecting bloom times that keep flowers available across seasons (B, introduction). Together, these ideas suggest planning for different life stages and different times of year. The school should still check each proposed plant's fit with its own growing conditions, because a broad regional recommendation does not guarantee success at every site (B, introduction).

A: Reel, Susan. Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden Using Native Plants. USDA Forest Service, Lolo National Forest, printed pp. 1 and 7; printed adaptation by Lesson Maker Pro. B: Celley, Courtney, and Tina Shaw. "Top plants for your pollinator garden." U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, fws.gov/story/top-plants-your-pollinator-garden, introduction and student's regional section; actual access date.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

This grades 6-8 research task requires real reading of the identified digital page in addition to printed Source A. Do not award completion for proposed sources or invented details. Verify student locators against the actual materials. The source dates are not invented; students record access dates and use n.d. if a publication date is unavailable. Source A is explicitly an adaptation, not a direct quotation. Agency identity alone does not establish accuracy. Accept accurate evidence combinations, meaningful limitations and consistent citations; check paraphrase fidelity against each original idea. Question-refinement example: How can a school garden support pollinators across different life stages and bloom seasons? Accept another focused question arising from the gathered evidence, with a synthesis that answers it.