Source Sleuth Sort

Look for clues that show whether a source can support your research.

6.R "The student will conduct research and read a series of conceptually related texts on selected topics to build knowledge on grade-six content and texts, solve problems, and support cross-curricular learning..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

STRONGER STARTING CLUES

These cards describe stronger starting clues for credibility, but every claim still needs an evidence and relevance check. RELIABLE here is provisional, not a guarantee.

A community archive identifies its curator and displays scanned town council records.

UNRELIABLE SOURCE

An unreliable source hides who made it, makes claims without evidence, or repeats rumors. Missing attribution or evidence is a reason to investigate, not proof that every claim is false.

A flashy ad promises that a magnetic ring will make homework effortless, yet it identifies no company or testing.

1 SORT

8 items

For each source card, circle RELIABLE or UNRELIABLE, then choose two cards and explain which clues helped you sort them.

1.	A university science center page names its author, date, and sources.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE
2.	A newspaper article quotes two named emergency managers and links to a public report.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE
3.	An unsigned post says, "Everyone knows this is true," and gives no evidence.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE
4.	A state health agency fact sheet shows its update date and lists research links.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE
5.	A video claims a new diet cures every illness, but it gives no creator or sources.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE
6.	A social media account reposts a rumor without naming where it began.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE
7.	A book from the National Park Service explains erosion and includes a bibliography.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE
8.	A public library database article names an expert author and includes works cited.	RELIABLE UNRELIABLE

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 · Actual Inquiry — attach source notes

Conduct a short inquiry on a teacher-approved question using two actual sources. On an attached page record: source title/author/date/location, one accurate paraphrase from each, one brief exact quotation with location, and a relevance/credibility limitation. Explain whether each source directly records evidence or interprets other evidence. Write a short answer combining both sources and credit every quoted or paraphrased idea. Share it with a partner.

Source 1 notes _____

Source 2 notes _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one UNRELIABLE card. Write two specific details you would need to check before you could use it for research.

ANSWER KEY

Source Sleuth Sort

GRADE 6 · 6.R

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A university science center page names its author, date, and sources.	**RELIABLE**	It identifies the creator and provides dated, checkable evidence.
2	A newspaper article quotes two named emergency managers and links to a public report.	**RELIABLE**	It uses named experts and links to supporting information.
3	An unsigned post says, "Everyone knows this is true," and gives no evidence.	**UNRELIABLE**	It has no identified creator or supporting evidence.
4	A state health agency fact sheet shows its update date and lists research links.	**RELIABLE**	It is from an accountable agency and provides current, checkable research.
5	A video claims a new diet cures every illness, but it gives no creator or sources.	**UNRELIABLE**	It makes an extreme claim without identifying a creator or evidence.
6	A social media account reposts a rumor without naming where it began.	**UNRELIABLE**	It repeats an untraceable rumor rather than evidence.
7	A book from the National Park Service explains erosion and includes a bibliography.	**RELIABLE**	It comes from an accountable organization and includes a list of sources.
8	A public library database article names an expert author and includes works cited.	**RELIABLE**	It identifies a qualified author and provides sources that can be checked.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **RELIABLE**: Actual notes must be traceable to sources the student read; correct quotations preserve wording and meaning.
- **UNRELIABLE**: Synthesis combines evidence from both sources and includes source titles/authors/dates/locations; no fabricated citation is acceptable.

Challenge: For item 6, I would check who first reported the rumor and whether a government agency or expert source confirms it.

In Part 2, students should name a concrete clue, such as a named creator, cited evidence, an unsupported claim, or an untraceable rumor. Sorting is preparation only. Supply or help locate two accessible sources; check all notes, quotations, locations and source-type/credibility explanations. Require a credited synthesis and sharing. The attached inquiry may take a separate lesson.