Falcon Research Trail

Trace how a short research project uses evidence and leads to new questions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.7 "Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the main research question, underline each source and the evidence it adds, and number the two focused questions for a next investigation to trace how research grows.

Following the Falcon Evidence

1. Question: How did peregrine falcons return to many North American cities after their numbers dropped? A student research team began with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website, which explains that DDT caused eggshells to become thin. The team then checked a National Park Service article describing the 1972 U.S. ban on DDT. These sources helped the team connect a chemical, a law, and the birds' recovery. Still, the team needed evidence about what happened in particular cities.

2. To investigate city recovery, the team used a 1984 newspaper report from the Chicago Tribune and a 1990 report from the New York Times. The Chicago report described biologists releasing captive-bred young falcons near tall buildings. The New York report noted nesting pairs on bridges and skyscrapers. Because newspapers can contain errors or leave out details, the team compared both reports with a state wildlife agency's records. The records listed nest sites and yearly counts, adding data to the reports.

3. After reading, the team answered its main question: DDT restrictions, captive breeding, and suitable tall structures all supported peregrine recovery. The answer came from several sources, not from one source alone. The team also wrote focused questions for a next project: Which Chicago release sites produced nesting adults? How have the number of nesting pairs changed in New York City since 1990? These questions are narrow enough to guide a search for release records, nest surveys, and recent wildlife reports.

INQUIRY PACKET: ORIGINAL FICTIONAL SCHOOL RECORDS, NOT REAL SURVEY FINDINGS

Source	Record	Limit
A: Grounds planting record	Three trees were planted beside the east walkway in 2018. No trees were planted beside the west walkway.	No canopy measurements.
B: Noon observation log, one sunny day	Six pupils used shade on the east walkway; two stood in sun there. The west walkway was entirely sunny.	One day; no temperatures recorded.
C: Pupil comment cards	Four cards requested more shade on the west walkway; two requested a bench on the east walkway.	Six voluntary cards, not all pupils.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What main research question did the team investigate?

2. Give one fact from each of two different sources that helped the team investigate peregrine recovery.

3. Why did the team compare the newspaper reports with state wildlife agency records?

4. What makes the two final questions focused enough for a new research project?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a wildlife, environmental, or city-history topic connected to your school or community. Write one research question, name three sources you would use and the specific information each could provide, then write two related focused questions for further research. Next carry out an inquiry with the supplied A/B/C records: How could this school improve its shaded resting places? Read all three, record one source-labeled finding and limit from each on another sheet, then write a three-sentence supported answer. Finish with two related, focused questions leading to different next evidence. Treat the records as fictional practice evidence; do not claim temperatures or all pupils' preferences.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 7 · W.7.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the main research question, underline each source and the evidence it adds, and number the two focused questions for a next investigation to trace how research grows. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What main research question did the team investigate?	**How did peregrine falcons return to many North American cities after their numbers dropped?**
2	Give one fact from each of two different sources that helped the team investigate peregrine recovery.	**Answers vary. Examples: The Cornell Lab explained that DDT thinned eggshells, and the National Park Service described the 1972 U.S. ban on DDT.**
3	Why did the team compare the newspaper reports with state wildlife agency records?	**Newspapers can contain errors or leave out details, while agency records added nest-site and yearly-count data.**
4	What makes the two final questions focused enough for a new research project?	**Each question names a specific place or subject and a clear detail to investigate, such as Chicago release sites or New York City nesting pairs since 1990.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A lists three trees on the east walkway and none on the west. B records six pupils choosing east shade, and C includes four requests for west shade, so I suggest investigating shade for the west walkway while considering the east bench requests. These small records do not establish temperatures or everyone's preferences.

Next questions: How much noon shade covers each walkway on several days? What resting-place improvements do pupils across all classes prefer?

Accept equivalent descriptions of the evidence and reasonable explanations based on the passage. For Part 3, accept topics and sources that fit the question, as long as the student includes three sources with purposes and two narrow follow-up questions. For the actual inquiry, inspect A/B/C-labeled notes with findings and limitations, a three-sentence supported answer, and two focused follow-up questions using different evidence paths. Possible sources alone are incomplete. Accept defensible recommendations without claiming causation or generalizing a voluntary six-card sample.