Evidence Trail

Track how a researcher gathers useful, trustworthy information.

ELA.6.C.4 "Researching"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each detail Jordan could use to answer his research question. Circle words that show why a source is trustworthy or not trustworthy.

Jordan Studies Playground Shade

1 When the city planned a new playground, Jordan wondered, "Which shade materials stay coolest on hot days?" He turned the idea into a research question: How do trees, fabric canopies, and metal roofs affect surface temperatures at playgrounds? Jordan needed evidence, not just opinions. He listed words to search, including shade, surface temperature, playground, and heat. He also decided that sources should name who collected information, explain methods, and connect directly to his question clearly.

2 First, Jordan used a city parks report that described temperature readings taken at ten playgrounds during July afternoons. The report explained that workers used the same type of infrared thermometer and measured shaded and unshaded equipment. Next, he read an article from a university extension program. It summarized studies showing that tree shade can lower the temperature of nearby surfaces, although results vary with time of day and material. Both sources gave methods or evidence Jordan could examine.

3 Jordan found a social media post claiming that blue playground paint "stays cold all day." The post had no author, measurements, or links to research, so he did not use it as evidence. His notes showed strong information about shade but little about roofing materials. He narrowed his plan to compare trees and fabric canopies instead. To fill a gap, he emailed the parks department for local canopy maintenance records and looked for a manufacturer's technical sheet that listed testing conditions. His final answer would cite each source beside the information it supplied.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What focused research question guides Jordan's work?

2. Name two sources Jordan uses as strong evidence. What makes each source useful?

3. Why does Jordan decide not to use the social media post as evidence?

4. What information gap does Jordan find, and how does he refocus his research?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Source packet: fictional Oak Class maker station
These classroom-authored practice records are invented; use them for the question below, not as facts about a real school.

Source A: class schedule, October 9, 2026
The teacher's schedule lists maker time from 10:10 to 10:30 and clean-up from 2:20 to 2:30. Students may borrow scissors during either period only when the station is staffed.

Source B: maker-station staffing record, October 9, 2026
The station monitor's log shows an adult staffing the station from 10:00 to 10:35. No adult staffs it during afternoon clean-up. Scissors must be returned before maker time ends.

Research this question: During which Oak Class period can students borrow scissors? Read both records, write one relevant finding labeled A and one labeled B, and combine them into a supported answer. Explain why each dated record is useful for this question. Identify one question the packet cannot answer and what additional record would address it.

ANSWER KEY

Evidence Trail

GRADE 6 · ELA.6.C.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each detail Jordan could use to answer his research question. Circle words that show why a source is trustworthy or not trustworthy. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What focused research question guides Jordan's work?	**How do trees, fabric canopies, and metal roofs affect surface temperatures at playgrounds?**
2	Name two sources Jordan uses as strong evidence. What makes each source useful?	**The city parks report gives temperature readings and explains the measuring method. The university extension article summarizes studies about how tree shade affects nearby surface temperatures.**
3	Why does Jordan decide not to use the social media post as evidence?	**The post has no author, measurements, or links to research.**
4	What information gap does Jordan find, and how does he refocus his research?	**He finds little information about roofing materials. He narrows his research to compare trees and fabric canopies.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Source A permits borrowing during maker time, 10:10–10:30, or afternoon clean-up only if the station is staffed. Source B records staffing from 10:00–10:35 and none during clean-up. Students can borrow scissors during maker time and return them by 10:30. The teacher's dated schedule gives the allowed class periods, and the monitor's dated log directly supplies the staffing information needed to choose between them. Neither record says how many scissors are available, so an inventory would answer that remaining question.

Preserve equivalent evidence-based answers to the four Jordan questions. For Your Turn, require actual consulted source-labeled findings, a combined maker-time answer, and a supported explanation of source relevance and the remaining inventory gap. Independently check 10:10–10:30 lies within 10:00–10:35; afternoon clean-up is unstaffed. These are fictional practice records, valid only for the limited fictional scheduling inquiry; a date or named role alone does not guarantee all-source credibility. Support reading and notes as needed; a future plan alone is insufficient.