Field Note Sort

What was observed, and what is only possible?

6-8.RST.8 "Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, bias, and speculation in a text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

FACT

A fact reports something that can be checked through an observation, measurement, or record.

During a test, an ice cube melted in four minutes.

SPECULATION

Speculation suggests what might happen or why something happened without evidence confirming it.

A new battery might make the toy car travel farther.

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle the category that fits each field note; for Part 2, choose one item from each category and explain the clue that helped you sort it.

1. On Monday, the soil thermometer read 16°C. FACT GUESS

2. Three earthworms were seen under one rock. FACT GUESS

3. The worms may move deeper when it gets hotter. FACT GUESS

4. A ruler showed that one seedling was 8 cm tall. FACT GUESS

5. The seedling will probably double in height by Friday. FACT GUESS

6. The shaded soil could stay wet longer than the sunny soil. FACT GUESS

7. At noon, the sunny soil felt dry to the touch. FACT GUESS

8. The rain gauge collected 5 mm of water overnight. FACT GUESS

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 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

For Part 3, write one new fact and one new speculation that could appear in notes from a science investigation.

FACT _____

GUESS _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences about one science investigation: first report an observation, then make a speculation based on it. Label each sentence Fact or Speculation.

ANSWER KEY

Field Note Sort

GRADES 6-8 · 6-8.RST.8

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	On Monday, the soil thermometer read 16°C.	**FACT**	Reports a recorded measurement.
2	Three earthworms were seen under one rock.	**FACT**	Reports a count from an observation.
3	The worms may move deeper when it gets hotter.	**GUESS**	Suggests a possible behavior that these notes do not confirm.
4	A ruler showed that one seedling was 8 cm tall.	**FACT**	Reports a measured height.
5	The seedling will probably double in height by Friday.	**GUESS**	Predicts growth that has not yet been measured.
6	The shaded soil could stay wet longer than the sunny soil.	**GUESS**	Suggests a possible result without reporting a comparison.
7	At noon, the sunny soil felt dry to the touch.	**FACT**	Reports an observation.
8	The rain gauge collected 5 mm of water overnight.	**FACT**	Reports a recorded measurement.

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)

- **FACT**: A stopwatch measured 14 seconds for a marble to roll down the ramp.
- **GUESS**: Speculation: The marble might roll faster on a steeper ramp.

Challenge: Fact: In our test, a paper airplane flew 4 meters. Speculation: Wider wings might help it fly farther.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify a reported observation or measurement for the fact and an unconfirmed possibility for the speculation. For example, item 2 gives a count of worms seen, while item 5 predicts growth that has not been measured.