Trust the Source?

Read research notes and weigh evidence for a school decision.

6.W.8.a "Assess the credibility of each source."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that make a source more trustworthy, and circle two details that make you question a source. Number Sources A, B, and C from most to least useful for answering the student council's question.

Did the Refill Station Reduce Bottle Waste?

1. At Brookside Middle School, the student council wants to know whether a new water refill station has reduced the number of disposable bottles in the trash. Source A is a record kept by Ms. Ortiz, the school custodian, in September 2025. For five school days before the station opened, she counted 210 disposable drink bottles in the cafeteria bins. For five school days after it opened, she counted 145. Her record names the dates, the bins, and her counting method. It does not say whether attendance changed.

2. Source B is a post on the website of QuickSip, a company that sells reusable bottles. The post says, "Almost everyone at Brookside stopped buying disposable bottles after the station opened." It gives no date, writer's name, survey, or count. A button below the post invites readers to buy a QuickSip bottle. The post includes one comment from a student who likes using the new station, but it does not explain how that student was chosen or whether other students disagree.

3. Source C is an October 2025 message from Brookside's principal to families. It reports that the station's display showed 1,800 refills during its first month. The principal says the number came from the station's built-in counter and names the date the counter was checked. She also notes that the counter tracks refills, not the number of bottles thrown away. A refill might replace a disposable bottle, but a student might also refill a bottle that was already in use.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How trustworthy is Source A for finding out whether bottle waste decreased? Use one strength and one limit from the record.

2. Why should the council question Source B's claim about “almost everyone”? Give two reasons.

3. What can Source C support, and what can it not prove about bottle waste?

4. Which is stronger evidence for the council's question, Source A or Source C? Explain your choice.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A town library wants to know how often people use its new book drop. An unsigned online post says, “Everyone uses it,” but gives no count or date. In three or four sentences, judge this source and describe two pieces of information you would seek to check its claim.

ANSWER KEY

Trust the Source?

GRADE 6 · 6.W.8.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that make a source more trustworthy, and circle two details that make you question a source. Number Sources A, B, and C from most to least useful for answering the student council's question. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How trustworthy is Source A for finding out whether bottle waste decreased? Use one strength and one limit from the record.	**It is fairly trustworthy because Ms. Ortiz counted bottles in named bins over two five-day periods. It is limited because the record does not say whether attendance changed.**
2	Why should the council question Source B's claim about "almost everyone"? Give two reasons.	**QuickSip sells reusable bottles and may benefit from the claim. The post gives no survey or count to support "almost everyone."**
3	What can Source C support, and what can it not prove about bottle waste?	**The counter reading supports that the station recorded 1,800 refills. It cannot prove how many disposable bottles were kept out of the trash.**
4	Which is stronger evidence for the council's question, Source A or Source C? Explain your choice.	**Source A is stronger because it counts disposable bottles in the trash before and after the station opened. Source C counts refills, which do not necessarily replace disposable bottles.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The post is weak evidence because the writer is unknown and "everyone" is not supported by a count. I would ask the library for dated records of books returned through the drop. Those records could show how often it is used. I would also ask for the total number of books returned on those dates, so I could judge what share came through the drop.

Accept other supported judgments that distinguish what a source directly measures from what it merely claims. For the open task, look for two specific ways to check the claim, not just a request for "more information."