Count the Evidence

Compare a data table, an interview, and an online claim

9-10.SL.2 "Evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally). Evaluate the credibility and accuracy of each source. Integrate multiple sources of information when presenting."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the online claim and the custodian's observation, circle the table values you need to check the claim, and number two details that limit what the sources can prove.

Did the Refill Station Reduce Waste?

(1) At Northgate High, a new water refill station opened beside the cafeteria. A student environmental club wanted to know whether fewer disposable bottles ended up in cafeteria trash. Two club members counted bottles in the same four bins at the end of lunch on two Mondays and two Tuesdays. Their counts appear below.

BOTTLES COUNTED IN FOUR CAFETERIA BINS AT THE END OF LUNCH

Lunch	Bottles counted
Monday, before station opened	50
Tuesday, before station opened	40
Monday, after station opened	30
Tuesday, after station opened	24

(2) A recorded interview offers a different kind of evidence. A custodian said, "I saw recycling volunteers empty some of those bins before lunch ended on one day after the station opened." The custodian witnessed that collection but did not count bottles. If volunteers removed bottles early, the club's later counts might not represent all bottles discarded during lunch.

(3) The student council then posted online, "The refill station reduced cafeteria bottle waste by 80 percent!" The post did not explain its calculation or mention the early collection. The club's figures cover only four lunches and four bins, not all school trash. Together, the sources suggest a drop in bottles counted, but they cannot establish what caused it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Combine the counts before and after the station opened. What percent did the count decrease, and how does that compare with the online post?

2. What makes the club's table useful evidence, and what limits its accuracy as a count of bottles discarded during lunch?

3. What can the custodian's recorded interview help verify, and what can it not prove?

4. If you used both the table and the interview in a presentation, what could you responsibly say instead of repeating the online post?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence script for an update to the principal. Use the table, interview, and online post to evaluate the claim, then propose a specific way to test the station's impact more fairly.

ANSWER KEY

Count the Evidence

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the online claim and the custodian's observation, circle the table values you need to check the claim, and number two details that limit what the sources can prove. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Combine the counts before and after the station opened. What percent did the count decrease, and how does that compare with the online post?	**The count fell from 90 to 54, a decrease of 36 out of 90, or 40 percent. The post's 80 percent figure is incorrect.**
2	What makes the club's table useful evidence, and what limits its accuracy as a count of bottles discarded during lunch?	**The club counted the same four bins at the end of each lunch. The counts cover only four days, and volunteers emptied some bins early on one later day, so the table may miss bottles discarded then.**
3	What can the custodian's recorded interview help verify, and what can it not prove?	**The custodian witnessed volunteers empty some bins early on one day. That observation does not prove how many bottles were discarded or whether the refill station changed students' behavior.**
4	If you used both the table and the interview in a presentation, what could you responsibly say instead of repeating the online post?	**The club counted fewer bottles after the station opened, but early bin collection may have affected the counts. The sources do not establish that the station caused a drop in waste.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The club counted 90 bottles before the station opened and 54 afterward, a 40 percent decrease rather than the 80 percent claimed in the student council post. Using the same bins makes the club's table useful, but it covers only four lunches. In a recorded interview, the custodian said volunteers emptied some bins early on one later day, which could make that day's count misleading. I recommend counting bottles for several weeks before any bins are emptied and recording when recycling volunteers collect them before crediting the station.

Accept responses that distinguish a decrease in bottles counted from a proven decrease in waste caused by the station. For the open task, look for accurate use of all three sources and a testing plan that addresses the early collection.