

# Evidence Has a Job

Use research details to support a clear central point.

**6.21.B** “incorporate main and supporting ideas in verbal and written communication based on research;”

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** In each paragraph, underline the first sentence, which states that paragraph's main idea. Circle exactly two later sentences that support the main idea with evidence or explanation.

### Researching the Dust Bowl

- ① Research on the Dust Bowl shows that farming choices and drought worked together to damage the Great Plains in the 1930s. For years, many farmers removed deep-rooted prairie grasses and planted crops across wide fields. When a severe drought dried the soil, strong winds lifted loose topsoil into huge dust clouds. Newspaper reports and photographs documented storms that darkened daytime skies. These sources help researchers explain why the disaster was not caused by weather alone.
- ② Government research led to soil-conservation programs that helped reduce future erosion. In 1935, Congress created the Soil Conservation Service, now called the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Its workers taught farmers methods such as contour plowing, which follows the land's natural curves. They also promoted planting cover crops and shelterbelts of trees. These practices slow wind and water, helping soil stay in place. Historical records show that communities used research findings to change how they cared for the land.
- ③ Sharing research clearly can help a community make informed decisions about land use. A speaker could state the main finding first, then give evidence from drought records, farm reports, and photographs. In writing, headings and topic sentences can keep the main idea easy to find. Specific details should explain or prove the main idea instead of distracting from it. By connecting each detail to a central point, people can communicate research responsibly in public settings.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

**1** What main idea does the first paragraph communicate about the Dust Bowl?

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**2** Name one farming choice in paragraph 1 and explain how it supported the paragraph's main idea.

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**3** What main idea does paragraph 2 communicate, and name one practice that supported it?

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**4** According to paragraph 3, how should a writer use specific details when sharing research?

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**3 YOUR TURN** \_\_\_\_\_ Your own words

Using a social studies topic you have researched, write 3 or 4 sentences. State one main idea, then use at least two specific research details that explain or support it.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

In each paragraph, underline the first sentence, which states that paragraph's main idea. Circle exactly two later sentences that support the main idea with evidence or explanation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                       | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | What main idea does the first paragraph communicate about the Dust Bowl?                       | <b>Farming choices and drought worked together to damage the Great Plains during the 1930s.</b>                                                                               |
| 2 | Name one farming choice in paragraph 1 and explain how it supported the paragraph's main idea. | <b>Farmers removed deep-rooted prairie grasses and planted crops across wide fields. This left soil more vulnerable when drought and wind occurred.</b>                       |
| 3 | What main idea does paragraph 2 communicate, and name one practice that supported it?          | <b>Government research led to programs that reduced future erosion. One supporting practice was contour plowing, planting cover crops, or planting shelterbelts of trees.</b> |
| 4 | According to paragraph 3, how should a writer use specific details when sharing research?      | <b>Specific details should explain or prove the main idea instead of distracting from it.</b>                                                                                 |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

Research shows that the transcontinental railroad connected distant parts of the United States and changed trade and travel. The Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads met at Promontory Summit, Utah, in 1869. The railroad reduced the time needed to cross the country compared with wagon travel. It also encouraged settlement and business along rail lines.

Accept equivalent statements of each paragraph's central idea and accurately cited supporting details from the passage. For the open response, look for one clear main idea and at least two accurate, relevant research details.