Evidence Under Lens

Evaluate what each source can show, and what it cannot.

10.R.1.C "Objectively evaluate primary and secondary sources for their credibility, reliability, accuracy, usefulness, and limitations, that includes identifying their main and supporting ideas, points of view, conflicting information..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each source's main claim. Circle details that show a source's strength, limitation, possible bias, or conflicting information, then number the two conflicting claims 1 and 2.

After the Quake

(1) After the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the city's destruction was documented by people with different purposes. In one letter dated April 20, a resident told her sister that "nearly every house" on her block had fallen. The letter is a primary source because the resident wrote it soon after the event. Her firsthand view makes it useful for learning what she saw, but it cannot prove conditions across the whole city. She may have been frightened, and she did not inspect every neighborhood. Her statement is evidence of one resident's experience, not a complete damage count.

(2) A 2019 museum article reaches a broader conclusion. Using fire maps, insurance records, and later research, it states that fires, rather than ground shaking, destroyed most buildings in San Francisco. This secondary source is useful because its writer compares many records and explains where each record came from. Yet the article's claim conflicts with the resident's description of houses that fell during the shaking. The conflict does not automatically make either source false. The resident described one block, while the article makes a citywide claim. Readers should check whether the article cites evidence for its conclusion and whether its maps include neighborhoods beyond downtown.

(3) A third item, a photograph taken by an unidentified visitor, shows people sleeping in a park beside tents. It is also a primary source, but it offers no date, location, or explanation of what happened before the picture was taken. A caption written decades later calls the scene "every survivor's condition," a sweeping claim the image cannot support. The caption may reflect a misconception that one striking image represents all residents. Together, the sources suggest a careful conclusion: the earthquake and fires disrupted many lives, but no single account can measure every kind of damage. Credibility depends on evidence, scope, purpose, and context, not on its label alone.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the main idea of the first paragraph? Give two details that support it.

2. What makes the museum article useful, and what should a reader check before fully accepting its citywide claim?

3. What information conflicts between the letter and the museum article? Why could both sources still contain accurate information?

4. Identify the misconception in the later photograph caption. What limitation of the photograph makes the caption unreliable?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a primary or secondary source about an issue you know. In 3 to 4 sentences, identify its main claim and source type, evaluate one strength and one limitation or possible bias, and name a second source that could check it.

ANSWER KEY

Evidence Under Lens

GRADE 10 · 10.R.1.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each source's main claim. Circle details that show a source's strength, limitation, possible bias, or conflicting information, then number the two conflicting claims 1 and 2. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the main idea of the first paragraph? Give two details that support it.	**The resident's letter is useful firsthand evidence, but it has a limited scope. It was written soon after the event and describes what the resident saw, but she saw only one block and did not inspect every neighborhood.**
2	What makes the museum article useful, and what should a reader check before fully accepting its citywide claim?	**It compares fire maps, insurance records, and later research, and it explains the origins of its records. A reader should check that it cites evidence and that its maps cover neighborhoods beyond downtown.**
3	What information conflicts between the letter and the museum article? Why could both sources still contain accurate information?	**The letter describes houses falling during the shaking, while the article says fires destroyed most buildings. Both could be accurate because the letter reports one block and the article makes a citywide claim.**
4	Identify the misconception in the later photograph caption. What limitation of the photograph makes the caption unreliable?	**The caption assumes one image shows every survivor's condition. The photograph has no date, location, or explanation, and it shows only one scene.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A school cafeteria manager's weekly waste log is a primary source. Its main claim, based on weights recorded each day, is that the cafeteria discarded 180 pounds of food in one week. It is useful for measuring that week, but the manager may want support for a composting plan, and a district waste audit from several weeks could check whether the total is typical.

Accept equivalent evaluations that use specific passage evidence. For the open task, accept varied topics if the response identifies a claim, correctly classifies the source, explains a strength and limitation or bias, and names a reasonable corroborating source.