GRADE 7 / ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

NORTH CAROLINA | RI.7.1

Informational Text Evidence

FREE SAMPLE

A complete reading selection, one focused task, and matching teacher guidance.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Complete source reading selection
- Focused task with response space
- Teacher guidance and source notes
- Published Saint Pierre license

2017 NC ELA SCOS | In use for 2026-27

Supplemental practice for the named skill. Print-ready PDF.

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FICTIONAL SCENARIO | READING PRACTICE

Organizer: Evidence, Meaning and Inference

Learning target: I can support a reading response with relevant details.

Essential question: How do details support a defensible reading response?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Sample directions: Read and annotate the complete selection. Then complete the included focused task.

A Study of Street Trees

When Isaac first heard that the downtown tree canopy in Riverton could change forever, the announcement sounded straightforward. At a public meeting, officials described a street-widening project as a necessary response to a real problem. Some residents agreed immediately; others remembered why the place mattered. Isaac noticed that speakers used the same words—improvement, access, and responsibility—yet seemed to mean different things by them. Rather than choosing a side before listening, Isaac wrote a question at the top of a notebook: What would people need to know to make a responsible decision?

The site had never served just one purpose. During ordinary weeks, people passed the downtown tree canopy without stopping; during unusual ones, they gathered there, traded information, and helped neighbors. Isaac heard one resident call it an outdated space and another call it the heart of Riverton. Neither description solved the practical problem. A useful answer, Isaac decided, would have to recognize the conflict between history and present needs without pretending that either side could disappear.

The next day, Isaac visited the location with a notebook and a friend. The entrance showed years of use, and the sound of nearby traffic made conversation difficult. They counted who passed through, where people paused, and what physical barriers complicated access. These were observations, not proof of a final plan, but they changed the discussion from a contest of opinions to a search for testable details. Isaac crossed out the word "obviously" in the notes: something important should not need an exaggerated word to make it true.

A volunteer brought forward temperature readings under trees. At first, it seemed like material that only a few specialists would examine. But close inspection revealed dates, names, and repeated entries showing how residents once responded to a shared need. Isaac copied one detail and asked where the records came from. The volunteer explained the origin of the materials and cautioned that memory and documentation are not identical. That warning stayed with Isaac: a meaningful story can begin a question, but reliable evidence must help answer it.

At a planning session, city maintenance staff explained why the proposed change appealed to some families. The existing arrangement created delays, inconvenience, and uncertainty for people trying to complete everyday tasks. Isaac listened without interrupting, then repeated the concern in different words to check understanding. One member nodded and said, "That is exactly the problem we keep describing." This small agreement did not settle the debate. It established that people who disagreed about a solution could at least agree about the question.

Back home, Isaac spread the notes across a table and separated them into three groups: what was directly observed, what others reported, and what still needed checking. A dramatic claim about the site’s future went into the final group because no measurements supported it. The record supplied historical context, but did not predict next year’s costs or use. To avoid confusing possibility with certainty, Isaac changed "This plan will work" to "This approach is worth testing." The second sentence sounded less impressive, yet it was more defensible.

Isaac drafted a proposal for a redesigned road preserving shade. The draft began with the difficulty people faced now, not with a complaint about the officials who had suggested the change. Next came evidence from observations and temperature readings under trees, followed by a question about cost and access. The proposal did not demand a permanent commitment. It recommended a limited trial with specific measures and a public review. A reader could disagree with the recommendation and still see how each step followed from the evidence.

During a rehearsal, a classmate said the draft gave the history too much space and the practical concerns too little. Another thought that numbers alone would erase the experience of residents who depended on the site. Isaac revised the order instead of choosing one criticism to ignore. The new version placed an account from city maintenance staff beside a carefully described observation, then included a clear explanation of what neither source could establish. The revision made the proposal longer by one sentence but clearer by several ideas.

At the final meeting, questions came quickly. Could a redesigned road preserving shade be affordable? Would it help enough people? What might happen if the town waited? Isaac answered the questions that the notes supported and openly identified the ones that required additional research. One official suggested adding a progress report; a volunteer offered to gather more observations. Even a person who favored a street-widening project agreed that the public should see the results of any trial. The room remained divided, but the discussion had become more specific.

The group voted to collect additional evidence before approving an irreversible change. The decision was not a declaration that Isaac had won. It was a promise to return to the question with better information. On the way home, Isaac passed the downtown tree canopy and saw the same problems that had started the debate. The place had not changed overnight, and the disagreement had not vanished. What had changed was the willingness to test claims, listen carefully, and let evidence shape the next decision.

RI.7.1 | Focused lesson

Support an analysis of an informational text with several details.

Companion material

Companion informational text: How to Evaluate a Public-Space Proposal

1. Define the question. A useful public-space review separates a current problem from a preferred solution. A proposal can preserve a valued place and still fail to solve an access difficulty. Explaining the practical question first helps readers understand what evidence matters.

2. Match evidence to claims. A dated record can explain earlier community use. A direct count describes what observers saw during a specified period. Neither alone establishes future repair costs or proves that a new plan will work. Evidence is useful when its scope matches the claim it supports.

3. Listen and test. People may agree on a problem while favoring different responses. Restating another person's concern gives that person a chance to correct a misunderstanding. A limited trial can test an idea before a permanent decision, but a trial also needs a time limit, fair measures and a review of its cost.

4. Report limits. A clear report distinguishes observations, reported views and unanswered questions. It places a recommendation beside relevant evidence and acknowledges what is still unknown. Calling an idea "promising" identifies potential; calling it "guaranteed" asserts certainty that the available information may not support.

Original explanatory article for this edition. It explains a method; it is not a report of a real town or a scientific study.

Completed model

Claim: the article advises caution before a permanent change. It limits what records can prove, recommends bounded trials, and separates unknowns from observations.

Scope note: The preserved narrative is a fictional case study. The companion explanatory text supplies informational reading practice.

RI.7.1 | Task 1

Use three details from different sections to explain why a popular proposal still needs investigation.

Name: _____ Date: _____

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RI.7.1 | Sample teacher guidance

Task 1

Section 1 separates problem/solution, Section 2 limits evidence, Section 3 tests before commitment, and Section 4 reports uncertainty. Any three accurately connected details suffice.

The full packet includes retained comprehension questions and keys, all three focused tasks, and further teacher guidance.

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