

Short Research Project

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

A short research project starts with a **FOCUSED QUESTION**, draws on **SEVERAL SOURCES**, and answers the question in your own words. Stay on topic — only keep information that helps answer your question.

PRACTICE

Choose or write the **BEST** answer for each item.

1. You want to research bees. Which is the **MOST FOCUSED** research question?
 - A. Bees and other insects.
 - B. Are bees important?
 - C. How do honeybees communicate the location of flowers to their hive?
 - D. How do honeybees do everything they do in their lives?
2. Which research question is **TOO BROAD** for a short research project?
 - A. How does the Great Horned Owl raise its young?
 - B. How does life work on Earth?
 - C. Why do beavers build dams across streams instead of just digging holes?
 - D. How do polar bears stay warm in Arctic winters?
3. Which source would be the **MOST TRUSTWORTHY** for a report on volcanoes?
 - A. a tenth-grader's homework essay shared on social media
 - B. a USGS (United States Geological Survey) web page about volcanoes
 - C. an unsigned blog post titled "Mountains and Lava" with no date
 - D. a comic book about a hero who can turn into magma
4. You find a website with **NO** author, **NO** date, lots of pop-up ads, and frequent spelling errors. You should —
 - A. copy facts from it directly into your report.
 - B. trust it because the page looks colorful and busy.
 - C. use it only — searching for more sources is a waste of time.
 - D. be cautious — look for a more reliable, current source.



- 5. Your research question is: *How do honeybees communicate?* Which fact is the MOST RELEVANT?
 - A. Honeybees do a “waggle dance” to share the direction and distance of flowers with hive members.
 - B. Honey is sweet because it contains a mix of glucose and fructose.
 - C. Some people are allergic to bee stings and carry medicine for it.
 - D. Honeybees have six legs, like all insects.
- 6. Which fact is LEAST RELEVANT to a research question about how penguins KEEP WARM?
 - A. Emperor penguins huddle together in large groups during blizzards.
 - B. Penguins have a thick layer of fat called blubber under their skin.
 - C. Penguins' feathers overlap tightly to block wind and water.
 - D. Many penguin species lay only one egg at a time.
- 7. Which is the BEST way to check whether a fact is RELIABLE?
 - A. compare it across two or more independent sources that agree
 - B. trust the first source you read because reading more is slow
 - C. trust your own guess about what sounds true
 - D. trust a meme or short video you've seen before
- 8. Which step of a short research project usually comes LAST?
 - A. picking a focused question
 - B. gathering notes from several sources
 - C. deciding on a general topic
 - D. drafting and sharing your answer in your own words
- 9. Pick a topic that interests you. Write a FOCUSED research question (one sentence) that cannot be answered with just **yes** or **no**.

- 10. Name TWO DIFFERENT KINDS of sources you could use to answer your question, and tell why each would help.



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9
- 10

Explanations

1. C	C is OPEN-ENDED, FOCUSED on one behavior, and answerable through sources. A is just a topic, not a question. B is yes/no. D is too broad — it asks about a bee's whole life.
2. B	B covers ALL LIFE — far too broad for a short project. A, C, and D each focus on one animal and one specific behavior, which can be answered with a few sources.
3. B	USGS is a government science agency with named scientists and dated pages. A is a student paper, not a vetted source. C has no author or date. D is fiction.
4. D	Missing author, missing date, and many errors are all warning signs. A leads to copied unreliable text, B treats appearance as evidence, and C drops the habit of cross-checking.
5. A	A directly answers HOW bees communicate. B is about honey chemistry, C is about allergies, and D is a general insect fact — none of these answer the question.
6. D	D is about REPRODUCTION, not warmth. A (huddling), B (blubber), and C (feathers) all directly answer how penguins stay warm.
7. A	Cross-checking independent sources is the gold-standard way to verify a fact. B skips verification, C substitutes guessing for evidence, and D treats viral content as evidence.
8. D	Drafting and sharing the final answer happens at the end. C (pick topic), A (focused question), and B (gather notes) all come before drafting.
9.	Answer: Examples: (1) How do sea turtles find their way back to the beach where they hatched? (2) Why do some volcanoes erupt slowly while others explode? (3) How did the bicycle change daily life in American cities? Accept any open-ended, focused question on a real topic. NOT acceptable: a yes/no question (<i>Are bees important?</i>), a topic word without a question (<i>Volcanoes.</i>), or a too-broad question (<i>How does life work?</i>).
10.	Answer: Examples: (1) A children's nonfiction book from the library — it gives an organized overview written for my age. (2) A National Geographic Kids article online — it offers up-to-date examples and photographs. (3) An interview with a science teacher — she can answer my follow-up questions in person. Accept any two DISTINCT, reasonable source types with a short reason for each. NOT acceptable: naming the same kind twice (<i>two websites</i>) without distinguishing them, or naming weak sources (<i>my friend, a meme</i>) without explaining why they'd help.



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