1.2 Sources, method and analysis

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS source • reliability • method • analysis • primary source • secondary source • peer review

Objective

Gather and use evidence well: find good **sources**, judge their **reliability**, choose a suitable **method** (library research, experiment, survey, text analysis), and **analyse** rather than describe.

You must be able to:

- find academic and primary sources
- evaluate a source's reliability and relevance
- choose a method that fits the subject and question
- analyse data and texts, not just report them
- record notes and sources as you go

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

Sources

type	examples	value
primary	original data, documents, interviews, your own experiment	direct evidence
secondary	scholarly books and journal articles	expert analysis
tertiary	encyclopedias, textbooks	background only

Judging a source

Who wrote it, and what expertise do they have? When? Was it peer-reviewed? What is its purpose? Does it give evidence and references? Is it relevant to *your* question?

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■ Methods by subject

Sciences: controlled experiments or databases (with variables and repeats). Economics: data and theory applied to a real market. History: documents evaluated for origin and purpose. Literature: close reading with critical views. Your method must fit the **subject guidance**.

■ Analysis, not description

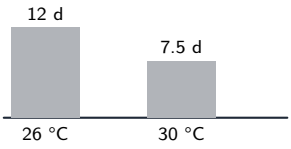
Description: "The data show prices rose." **Analysis**: "Prices rose by 18 % after the tax, more than the 10 % tax itself, which suggests that…". Analysis explains **why**, compares, weighs and links to the question.

Worked example. In a biology experiment, mean bleaching time fell from 12.0 days at 26 °C to 7.5 days at 30 °C. Change $= (7.5 - 12.0)/12.0 \times 100 = -37.5\,\%$. Analysis then asks whether the difference is larger than the variation between repeats.

2 Practice

2.1 Distinguish **primary** from **secondary** sources, with an example of each for a history EE. [2]

2.2 In an experiment, mean time fell from 12.0 to 7.5 days. Calculate the percentage change, and explain **one** further step needed before concluding that temperature caused the change. [3]



2.3 Explain **four** questions a student should ask to judge whether a website source is reliable. [4]

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2.4 Rewrite this descriptive sentence as **analysis**: "In the novel, it rains a lot." Then explain what makes your version analytical. [6]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(EE planning.)* For your proposed research question, explain your **method** and **sources**, and evaluate **two** limitations of the method. [10]



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3.2 Explain why the EE should mostly use **secondary** and **primary** sources rather than **tertiary** ones. [5]

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