



OBJECTIVES

Students will

- develop and demonstrate an understanding of the difference between a research topic and a research question.
- practice developing research questions from general topics and topics drawn from visual and written texts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Image courtesy of Renjith Krishnan.

FreeDigitalPhotos.net

“Migrants” from *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse.
Permission pending.

The Why of It All: Developing Research Questions

Grade 6-8

ABOUT THIS LESSON

One of the requirements for success in college is the understanding of and ability to conduct research. One of the reasons so many students struggle with research is that they do not begin their quest for information with a clear and focused research question. This lesson is designed to be a teacher-led discussion of research and ways to develop or refine a research question. The teaching suggestions include two approaches to address the demands of grade-level Common Core State Standards. Keeping the idea of discovery at the forefront of a classroom will help develop a culture of inquiry that will serve students as they move toward college or careers paths.

This lesson is included in the National Math and Science Initiative’s Laying the Foundation (LTF) Program in Module 12: *Special Topics—Mission Possible: Integrating Research into Routine Classroom Practice*.

TEXT COMPLEXITY

Passages for National Math + Science (NMSI) lessons are selected to challenge students, while lessons and activities make texts accessible. Because the text used in this lesson is in verse form, a readability measure cannot be applied to the text. However, the text itself includes sophisticated ideas, figurative language, and complex syntactical structures, making it appropriately complex for most middle grades students. Guided practice with challenging texts allows students to gain the proficiency necessary to read independently at or above grade level.

COGNITIVE RIGOR

ELA lessons for NMSI are designed to guide students through a continuum of increasingly complex thinking skills, including those outlined in taxonomies such as the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy and Webb’s Depth of Knowledge Levels. In this lesson, students identify patterns, summarize a text, and generate ideas for research questions (all DOK 2) while moving through the Create Level of Bloom’s.

CONNECTION TO COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The activities in this lesson allow teachers to address the following Common Core Standards:

Explicitly addressed in this lesson

- W.6.7:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
- W.7.7:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
- W.8.7:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

TEACHER PAGES

Implicitly addressed in this lesson

- RL.6.2:** Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- RL.7.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.8.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CONNECTIONS TO AP*

Because research skills are so widely utilized in both college and career experiences, it is imperative that students leave high school with a clear understanding of the research process. Research should be an expected and integral part of the AP classroom.

This lesson helps students begin at the correct step in the process by writing or refining a research question. By beginning early (middle grades), students should be able to develop a strong grasp of the process and importance of research.

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MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- copies of Student Activity
- teacher-created PowerPoint® with images of a researchable topic, such as the Dust Bowl

ASSESSMENTS

The following kind of formative assessment is embedded in this lesson:

- student-generated research questions

SCORING GUIDELINES FOR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Teachers should use the student-generated research questions to determine the level of understanding of what a research question is and should be. A successful student response will:

- be broad enough to require more than a one-sentence answer.
- be narrow enough to focus the student's search on a specific aspect of the topic.
- follow standard English conventions and use appropriate diction.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

As practice, you can have students develop research questions for almost anything they see or read in class, even if they do nothing further with these questions. Activities such as this allow you to help your students cultivate the idea of inquiry.

Suggestions for conducting lessons and activities are included below. Suggested responses to activity questions can be found in the Answers section of the Teacher Overview.

Activity One—Research Topics and Research Questions

This activity is very short and simple and can be used routinely to help students develop inquiry skills. It is important to show students the difference between a research topic and a research question so they can generate a specific question to guide their research. Too many times students try to research a topic and end up confused and frustrated because they have no guide for culling information to synthesize into a cohesive whole.

Activity: First discuss the idea of patterns with students and show students how to recognize patterns. Then, for less experienced students, complete the pattern activity as a whole class. For more experienced students, have students complete the activity individually or in pairs.

Discuss Questions 1 and 2 with students, making clear the distinction between a research topic and a research question and explaining the need for the more specific question to guide investigation.

One additional activity to help clarify the difference between a topic and a question for students would be to conduct side-by-side comparisons of the topics that also have questions. For example:

Technology's role in education

compared with

How can cell phones be used to help kids read?

Activity Two—Developing a Research Question from Images

Research topics can be generated by almost anything presented in the classroom. This activity models how to help students generate research questions by viewing images.

Activity: Using a PowerPoint® or other slide show medium, present several images with a common subject, such as the Dust Bowl. Give students the topic before the presentation begins; students should write questions that arise as they are viewing the slides.

This type of activity provides opportunities for students to see and understand that inquiry is an ongoing process.

For 6th grade students, you might provide generic research questions and have the students refine those questions based on the images in the slideshow.

Classroom application: One way to incorporate this activity into the curriculum is to have students find and present images that reflect either subjects or themes being studied in class; students could then develop a research question generated by the image.

Activity Three—Developing a Research Question from a Text

This activity is similar to the previous except it uses a written text, an excerpt from a longer work, to help students generate research questions. One of the advantages of this type of inquiry is that students get to generate research questions that may be of more interest to them than those assigned by a teacher.

Activity: Have students complete the activity. Then discuss specifically how their interests can be developed into research questions. Take some student questions from the class and help students develop a specific research question from each.

Classroom application: One way to incorporate this activity into the curriculum is to have students develop research questions around any texts they read for class. This could be done for novels, nonfiction, and even poetry.

Additional Extensions:

- Give students a list of topics that connect to a longer work being studied and have students generate research questions.
- Throughout the year, as you present text or media, have students brainstorm research topics and generate research questions suggested by the text or media.
- Give students a list of poorly focused research questions and have students revise the questions until they are more suitable as a guide for research.
- Using newspaper articles, magazine articles, or blogs, have students read the first paragraph of the article and turn the thesis into a research question.

The Why of It All: Developing Research Questions

Activity One—Research Topics and Research Questions

Look at the list below and find two patterns. Highlight one pattern in one color and the other pattern in a different color.

How does a carbon footprint affect the environment

Eli Manning’s football career

What is the effect of a puppy mill on dogs

Justin Bieber’s musical career

Soccer’s greatest players

Beauty pageants for young children

How can cell phones be used to help kids read

Libraries in the United States

Video games for adults

Dogs as working animals

Fashion for teenagers

Fast food menus and nutrition

What influences help create Eli Manning’s football career

The environment and the future

Technology’s role in education

What is the effect of beauty pageants on children younger than 8 years old

1. What helped you “define” the patterns you noticed?

2. Which pattern would give you a better guide to finding specific information?

Activity Two—Developing a Research Question from Images

As you watch the slideshow on the Dust Bowl, write down questions that are suggested by the images.

The topic is “The Dust Bowl.”

What questions do you have as you view the images?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Activity Three—Developing a Research Question from a Text

Read the excerpt below from *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse. Then write a summary of the poem.

Dust and Rain

On Sunday,
winds came,
bringing a red dust
like a prairie fire,
hot and peppery,
searing the inside of my nose,
the whites of my eyes.
Roaring dust,
turning the day from sunlight to midnight.

And as the dust left,
rain came.
Rain that was no blessing.
it came too hard,
too fast,
and washed the soil away,
washed the wheat away with it.

Now
little remains of Daddy’s hard work.
And the only choice he has
is to give up or
start all over again.

At the Strong ranch
they didn’t get a single drop.
So who fared better?

Ma looks out the window at her apple trees.
Hard green balls have dropped to the ground.
But there are enough left;
enough
for a small harvest,
if we lost no more.

June 1934

Summary: _____

What are some questions you have about what is described in the poem? What would you like to know more about? _____



OBJECTIVES

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- practice developing research questions from general topics and topics drawn from visual and written texts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Image courtesy of Renjith Krishnan.

FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*. Fair Use.

Kenney, Anne. “The Path of People in Flight.”
Cornell University Blog: The Grapes of Wrath.
August 18, 2009. Permission Pending

The Why of It All: Developing Research Questions

Grade 9-10

ABOUT THIS LESSON

One of the requirements for success in college is the understanding of and ability to conduct research. One of the reasons so many students struggle with research is that they do not begin their quest for information with a clear and focused research question. This lesson is designed to instruct students on the difference between a research topic and a research question and ways to develop a research question from a text.

Keeping the idea of discovery at the forefront of a classroom will help develop a culture of inquiry that will serve students as they move toward college or careers.

This lesson is included in the National Math and Science Initiative’s Laying the Foundation (LTF) Program in Module 12: *Special Topics—Mission Possible: Integrating Research into Routine Classroom Practice*.

TEXT COMPLEXITY

Passages for National Math + Science (NMSI) lessons are selected to challenge students, while lessons and activities make texts accessible. The excerpt from *Grapes of Wrath* included in this lesson is sufficiently complex for grades 9-10. Guided practice with challenging texts allows students to gain the proficiency necessary to read independently at or above grade level.

COGNITIVE RIGOR

ELA lessons for NMSI are designed to guide students through a continuum of increasingly complex thinking skills, including those outlined in taxonomies such as the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy and Webb’s Depth of Knowledge Levels. In this lesson, students identify patterns, summarize a text, and generate ideas for research questions (all DOK 2) while moving through the Create Level of Bloom’s.

CONNECTION TO COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The activities in this lesson allow teachers to address the following Common Core Standards:

Explicitly addressed in this lesson

W.9-10.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question, (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

W.11-12.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Implicitly addressed in this lesson

RI.9-10.2: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.9-10.7: Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

CONNECTIONS TO AP*

Because research skills are so widely utilized in both college and career experiences, it is imperative that students leave high school with a clear understanding of the research process. Research should be an expected and integral part of the AP classroom.

This lesson helps students begin at the correct step in the process by writing or refining a research question.

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TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

As practice, you can have students develop research questions for almost anything they see or read in class, even if they do nothing further with them. Activities such as this will allow you to help students cultivate the idea of inquiry.

Suggestions for conducting lessons and activities are included below. Suggested responses to activity questions can be found in the Answers section of the Teacher Overview.

Activity One—Research Topics and Research Questions

This activity is very short and simple and can be used routinely to help students develop inquiry skills. It is important to show students the difference between a research topic and a research question so they can generate a specific question to guide their research. Too many times students try to research a topic and end up confused and frustrated because they have no guide for culling information to synthesize into a cohesive whole.

Activity: Read through the information on page one with students, stopping to discuss and explain as needed. Students should then complete the practice. You may want to let students come up with topics, or you may want to give students topics as a starting point.

Activity Two—Developing a Research Question from Images

Research topics can be generated by almost anything presented in the classroom. This activity models how to help students generate research questions by viewing images.

Activity: Using a PowerPoint® or other slide show medium, present several images with a common subject, such as the Dust Bowl. Give students the topic before the presentation; they should write questions that arise as they are viewing the slides.

This type of activity provides opportunities for students to see and understand that inquiry is an ongoing process.

Classroom application: One way to incorporate this activity into the curriculum is to have students find and present images that reflect either subjects or themes being studied in class; students could then develop a research question generated by the image.

Activity Three—Developing a Research Question from a Text

This activity is similar to the previous except it uses a written text, an excerpt from a longer work, to help students generate research questions. One of the advantages of this type of inquiry is that students get to generate research questions that may be of more interest to them than those assigned by a teacher.

Activity: Students should read the excerpt provided, or an excerpt from any text being studied, and write a summary of the excerpt. The summary can then guide the development of a research question.

Classroom application: One way to incorporate this activity into the curriculum is to have students develop research questions around any texts they read for class. This could be done for novels, nonfiction, and even poetry.

Activity Four—Expanding or Narrowing Your Research Question

This activity helps raise awareness in students that not all questions are appropriate as research questions and that questions may need to be refined to narrow or broaden the focus of their research.

Activity: Read through the information in the box with students, stopping to discuss and explain as needed. Then students should practice refining previously written research questions

Classroom application: One way to incorporate this activity into the curriculum is to have students refine research questions developed in the previously listed activities.

Activity Five—Creating Research Questions from Claims

Students should be conducting preliminary explorations about a topic before they finalize their research question. One way for students to find a direction for their research is through this preliminary reading. Students should be able to identify claims in the informational texts they read on their topic. If they find the claim intriguing, they can turn that claim into a research question.

This activity is practice for turning claims into research questions. Depending on the proficiency of your class, you may want to do the first one or two samples together as a whole class, modeling the thinking involved.

Additional Extensions:

- Give students a list of topics that connect to a longer work being studied and have them generate research questions.
- Throughout the year, as you present text or media, have students brainstorm research topics and generate research questions raised by the text or media.
- Give students a list of poorly focused research questions and have students revise the questions until they are more suitable as a guide for research.
- Using newspaper articles, magazine articles, or blogs, have students read the first paragraph of the article and turn the thesis into a research question.

The Why of It All: Developing Research Questions

Activity One—Research Topics and Research Questions

What is the difference between a research **topic** and a research **question**?

A **topic** is a broad subject that can be researched. For instance, these are all examples of topics:

1. women’s suffrage struggles
2. the history of the Tudors in England
3. the Romantic poets

Topics help you identify possible sources of information. They give you ideas about key terms that you can use to begin your information search.

A research question is **what you want to know about the topic**.

For instance, these are all **questions** about the topics listed above:

1. What was the effect of hunger strikes on the passing of the 19th Amendment?
2. How did the religion of Mary I affect the reign of Elizabeth I?
3. Why was the Romantic period of English literature so short?

Questions help focus your search and give you clues as to what to pay attention to in the sources. They can also point the way to the kinds of primary sources that will be useful. For instance, if you are interested in the effects of hunger strikes in the Suffrage movement, then newspaper accounts and memoirs written during that time period might be good primary sources.

Practice: Write down two topics of interest that you might want to research. Then create two research questions for each topic.

Topic 1 – _____

Question 1 – _____

Question 2 – _____

Topic 2 – _____

Question 1 – _____

Question 2 – _____

Activity Two—Developing a Research Question from Images

As you watch the slideshow on the Dust Bowl, write down questions that are created by the images.

The topic is the Dust Bowl.

Possible research questions

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

Activity Three—Developing a Research Question from a Text

Read the excerpt below. Then write a summary of the passage.

from Chapter 1 of *The Grapes of Wrath*
by John Steinbeck

When June was half gone, the big clouds moved up out of Texas and the Gulf, high heavy clouds, rain-heads. The men in the fields looked up at the clouds and sniffed at them and held wet fingers up to sense the wind. And the horses were nervous while the clouds were up. The rain-heads dropped a little spattering and hurried on to some other country. Behind them the sky was pale again and the sun flared. In the dust there were drop craters where the rain had fallen, and there were clean splashes on the corn, and that was all.

A gentle wind followed the rain clouds, driving them on northward, a wind that softly clashed the drying corn. A day went by and the wind increased, steady, unbroken by gusts. The dust from the roads fluffed up and spread out and fell on the weeds beside the fields, and fell into the fields a little way. Now the wind grew strong and hard and it worked at the rain crust in the corn fields. Little by little the sky was darkened by the mixing dust, and the wind felt over the earth, loosened the dust, and carried it away. The wind grew stronger. The rain crust broke and the dust lifted up out of the fields and drove gray plumes into the air like sluggish smoke. The corn threshed the wind and made a dry, rushing sound. The finest dust did

not settle back to earth now, but disappeared into the darkening sky.

The wind grew stronger, whisked under stones, carried up straws and old leaves, and even little clods, marking its course as it sailed across the fields. The air and the sky darkened and through them the sun shone redly, and there was a raw sting in the air. During a night the wind raced faster over the land, dug cunningly among the rootlets of the corn, and the corn fought the wind with its weakened leaves until the roots were freed by the prying wind and then each stalk settled wearily sideways toward the earth and pointed the direction of the wind.

The dawn came, but no day. In the gray sky a red sun appeared, a dim red circle that gave a little light, like dusk; and as that day advanced, the dusk slipped back toward darkness, and the wind cried and whimpered over the fallen corn.

Men and women huddled in their houses, and they tied handkerchiefs over their noses when they went out, and wore goggles to protect their eyes.

When the night came again it was black night, for the stars could not pierce the dust to get down, and the window lights could not even spread beyond their own yards. Now the dust was evenly mixed with the air, an emulsion of dust and air. Houses were shut tight, and cloth wedged around doors and windows, but the dust came in so thinly that it could not be seen in the air, and it settled like pollen on the chairs and tables, on the dishes. The people brushed it from their shoulders. Little lines of dust lay at the door sills.

In the middle of that night the wind passed on and left the land quiet. The dust-filled air muffled sound more completely than fog does. The people, lying in their beds, heard the wind stop. They awakened when the rushing wind was gone. They lay quietly and listened deep into the stillness. Then the roosters crowed, and their voices were muffled, and the people stirred restlessly in their beds and wanted the morning. They knew it would take a long time for the dust to settle out of the air. In the morning the dust hung like fog, and the sun was as red as ripe new blood. All day the dust sifted down from the sky, and the next day it sifted down. An even blanket covered the earth. It settled on the corn, piled up on the tops of the fence posts, piled up on the wire; it settled on roofs, blanketed the weeds and trees.

The people came out of their houses and smelled the hot stinging air and covered their noses from it. And the children came out of the houses, but they did not run or shout as they would have done after a rain. Men stood by their fences and looked at the ruined corn, drying fast now, only a little green showing through the film of dust. The men were silent and they did not move often. And the women came out of the houses to stand beside their men—to feel whether this time the men would break. The women studied the men’s faces secretly, for the corn could go, as long as something else remained. The children stood near by, drawing figures in the dust with bare toes, and the children sent exploring senses out to see whether men and women would break. The children peeked at the faces of the men and women, and then drew careful lines in the dust with their toes. Horses came to the watering troughs and nuzzled the water to clear the surface dust. After a while the faces of the watching men lost their bemused perplexity and became hard and angry and resistant.

Summary: _____

The topic of this passage is Oklahoma during the time of the Dust Bowl. That might be a **topic** for research. But now we have to develop an idea about what we want to know about the Dust Bowl, so we have to create a research question.

What are some ideas or questions that might call for further research?

For example, many times the passage mentions the people who lived through this event. I might like to research: How did the Dust Bowl affect the people who lived through it?

Consider what you've just read and the summary you wrote and write two or three questions about the Dust Bowl that you might be interested in learning more about.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Activity Four—Expanding or Narrowing Your Research Question

Sometimes research questions have to be refined to make them more appropriate or more manageable.

1. Take, for example, this research question:

How did the Dust Bowl affect Oklahoma?

Even though this is a question, the answer could fill an entire book, so it needs to be refined and narrowed. On what specific effect of the Dust Bowl should the research be focused—the economy? population? farming?

Revised:

How did the Dust Bowl affect the emigration of people from Oklahoma?

Often a research question can't successfully be narrowed until some preliminary research has been done.

2. Not all questions are broad enough to be the basis for a research project. If a question can be answered with a one or two sentence answer, it will not provide a good basis for research.

For example:

How much dust was dumped on Cimarron County, Oklahoma, on Black Sunday?

This question is so specific that it could be answered in one sentence. There is no opportunity to make a claim about the question.

A better question would be:

How did the dust affect the living conditions of the people who lived in Cimarron County, Oklahoma?

3. However, it might be difficult to find information on the living conditions of just the people of Cimarron County; the question might need to be expanded to read something like this:

How did the dust affect the living conditions of the people who lived in the areas affected by the Dust Bowl?

As research progresses, there is always an opportunity to refine the research question.

Look back at the possible research questions you have written. Are any too broad? Too narrow? If so, try refining those questions as modeled above.

Activity Five—Creating Research Questions from Claims

As you read sources to find initial information on your topic, you should keep in mind the claims made in those sources: How do those claims give you a direction for your research? How can the claim affect or change your research question? Read the excerpts below, which are opening sentences or paragraphs from the sources listed. Identify the claim made and then write a research question based on that claim. The first one is done for you as an example.

Article from *The Independent* online

The jam jar sitting on John Vannatta’s kitchen table appears to be filled with coffee, until he shows you the label on the lid. The preserve inside is history, saved from a time when black blizzards filled the sky, turning day into night; a time when Americans starved. “Pure 1930s Blow Dirt,” it reads. It might also say: don’t forget, lest it happens again.

Source: “Return of the Dust Bowl: The parched prairies of the Midwest are facing a natural disaster not seen since the ‘dusters’ of the 1930s” by David Usborn. Keyes, Oklahoma, Saturday 11 August 2012

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/nature/return-of-the-dust-bowl-8031932.html>

What is the claim made in this excerpt? *The Dust Bowl of the 1930s could potentially occur again.*

Write a research question that could be used to research information to support that claim. *What situations of the current day might suggest or predict a recurrence of a Dust Bowl?*

Blog from the Cornell University website

It's no secret that *The Grapes of Wrath* was chosen in large part for its relevance to today's economic recession. The book vividly explores the consequences of depression, drought, dust storms, and degradation through the lives of an Oklahoma farm family, the Joads. They, like hundreds of thousands of others, were forced off their land and took to the road. In rereading *The Grapes of Wrath*, I was most struck by that theme of upheaval. I kept imagining a country in motion, much like a wave moving across the top of Cayuga Lake, a terra fluida.

Source: "The path of people in flight" by guest blogger Anne Kenney, Cornell Carl A. Kroch University Librarian August 18, 2009

http://cornellreading.typepad.com/grapes_of_wrath/2009/08/guest-author-anne-kenney-cornell-carl-a-kroch-university-librarian—its-no-secret-thatthe-grapes-ofwrathwas-chosen-in-la.html

What is the claim made in this excerpt? _____

Write a research question that could be used to research information to support that claim. _____

Article from *Modern American Poetry* online

The Dust Bowl of the 1930s lasted about a decade. Its primary area of impact was on the southern Plains. The northern Plains were not so badly affected, but nonetheless, the drought, windblown dust and agricultural decline were no strangers to the north. In fact the agricultural devastation helped to lengthen the Depression whose effects were felt worldwide. The movement of people on the Plains was also profound.

Source: "About the Dust Bowl," <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/dustbowl.htm>

What is the claim made in this excerpt? _____

Write a research question that could be used to research information to support that claim. _____

Blog on EH.net (owned and operated by the Economic History Association)**What Was “The Dust Bowl”?**

The phrase “Dust Bowl” holds a powerful place in the American imagination. It connotes a confusing mixture of concepts. Is the Dust Bowl a place? Was it an event? An era? American popular culture employs the term in all three ways. Ask most people about the Dust Bowl and they can place it in the Middle West, though in the imagination it wanders widely, from the Rocky Mountains, through the Great Plains, to Illinois and Indiana. Many people can situate the event in the 1930s. Ask what happened then, and a variety of stories emerge. A combination of severe drought and economic depression created destitution among farmers. Millions of desperate people took to the roads, seeking relief in California where they became exploited itinerant farm laborers. Farmers plowed up a pristine wilderness for profit, and suffered ecological collapse because of their recklessness. Dust Bowl stories, like its definitions, are legion, and now approach the mythological.

Source: “The Dust Bowl,” Posted Thu, 2010-02-04 18:19 by backend; Geoff Cunfer, Southwest Minnesota State University

<http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/cunfer.dustbowl>

What is the claim made in this excerpt? _____

Write a research question that could be used to research information to support that claim. _____

Article from *Helium* online

The Dust Bowl was brought about by several unfortunate circumstances working together.

Source: Causes of the Dust Bowl by Mary Vance. January 12, 2008

<http://www.helium.com/items/791036-causes-of-the-dust-bowl>

What is the claim made in this excerpt? _____

Write a research question that could be used to research information to support that claim. _____

From a paper written for the National Bureau for Economic Research at the University of Arizona

The Dust Bowl of the 1930s was one of the most severe environmental crises in North America in the 20th Century. Severe drought and damaging wind erosion hit in the Great Plains in 1930 and lasted through 1940. Sustained strong winds blew away an average of 480 tons per acre of topsoil.

Source: “Small Farms, Externalities, and the Dust Bowl of the 1930s” by Gary D. Libecap, January 29, 2002.

<http://www.law.yale.edu/documents/pdf/libecap.pdf>

What is the claim made in this excerpt? _____

Write a research question that could be used to research information to support that claim. _____
