

LUNCHROOM FIGHT

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTIONS

Imagine that you are the principal of a school and you just found out that there was a fight in the lunchroom during lunch. You've asked many students and teachers who witnessed the fight what they saw so you can figure out who started it. Unfortunately, you have received many different accounts that disagree about who started the fight, who was involved, and when it started. It's important to remember that NO ONE is lying.

In your group, answer the following questions.

QUESTIONS

(1) How could there be *different stories* of the event if no one is lying?

(2) Who are the *different people* who might have seen this fight? (Example: friends of those involved; people who don't know the kids who were fighting; those who were fighting; teachers; students.)

(3) What might make one person's story *more believable* than another person's?

LUNCHROOM FIGHT: THE EVIDENCE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You are a principal who is trying to figure out the truth about a lunchroom fight. The fight was between Justin and Max. Justin is a new student. He is shy, quiet, and does not have many friends. He moved to town last month because his father was hired to take over the town's main business. Justin's father fired many people, including Max's parents, when he reorganized the business. Max is a popular student, who is known for his friendliness and good humor. In the past few weeks, however, he has been withdrawn and somewhat depressed.

THE SOURCES

Justin: "That kid started it. Max. I was just standing in line waiting to pay for my food, and he shoved me super hard. And, like, for no reason. He just freaked out on me. I don't even know the kid, and he's been weird to me ever since I started going to this school. He and his friends glare at me in English class for no reason."

Max: "That kid is psycho. He turned around and punched me out of nowhere. Me and my friends were standing in line just joking around, and he turned around and punched me for no reason. He's messed up and creepy. Ask anyone."

Eric (Max's good friend): "The new kid definitely started it. He really just attacked out of nowhere. He's a freak, and he seriously thinks he's better than everyone because of his dad."

Anthony (bystander): "I was pretty far back in the line, but Max and his friends were being kind of loud and joking around. I couldn't really hear what they were saying. And then all of a sudden I saw people pulling Justin and Max apart."

Megan (Max's girlfriend): "I wasn't there. All I can say is that Max has been really different lately and kind of mean. I don't know what's going on, but he's not himself."

Cafeteria worker: "The group of boys were pushing each other around. I think it was an accident, and one of them pushed into the new boy, and he took it the wrong way."

CONTINUE 

NAME:

DIRECTIONS

Max's mother: "Max would never start a fight. He's the sweetest boy. I know he's had a hard time lately with me and his dad losing our jobs, but he still would never start a fight with anyone. He's a mentor to the younger boys and helps out at church. You can ask anyone in this town."

Justin's father: "I can guarantee 100% that Justin would never lay a finger on anyone unless he was really provoked. Trust me. And I know because we've had to move around quite a bit in the last few years because of my job, so unfortunately, Justin knows what it's like to be the new kid. And I've watched him go through these adjustment periods at each new school. He just lies low, and pretty soon the other kids see what a great kid he is. So I know as a fact that Justin wouldn't stir up trouble. It's really not in his nature."

Jamie (student in English class with Max and Justin in the period right before lunch): "I wasn't in the cafeteria today, and I'm not friends with any of those guys, but I've seen Max and his friends be mean to Justin in the hallways and in class when the teacher isn't looking. Not physical or anything, but they'll like say jokes under their breath and then laugh and stuff like that. They make him uncomfortable."

English teacher: "To be completely honest with you, I'm not surprised that this happened. There has been a lot of tension in the school and in the town, in general, with the reorganization plan. A lot of people are very upset with the decisions of the new management to fire people, and I must say that I myself am very surprised that they've done this. It's a tremendous strain on the community, and I feel for all the boys."

LUNCHROOM FIGHT: EVIDENCE CONTEXT HANDOUT

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTIONS

Use the evidence from the Lunchroom Fight Evidence sheet to complete the table below. Each row in the table should have at least two pieces of evidence.

Town Context: What is happening in the town that might explain the lunchroom fight?	Who said this?	Explain if this source is reliable or not and why.

School Context: What has been happening in the rest of the school (for example, in English class)?	Who said this?	Explain if this source is reliable or not and why.

Cafeteria Context: What happened in the cafeteria?	Who said this?	Explain if this source is reliable or not and why.

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For each of the scenarios below, explain how each piece of evidence corroborates the initial account. Then choose the piece of evidence that would make a stronger case and explain your selection.

SCENARIO A

On the night before the big game between your school's team, the Panthers, and your biggest rivals, the Bears, the Bears' locker room was vandalized. Many of the players from the Bears are accusing members of your team of committing the vandalism. The Panthers say that they couldn't have vandalized the locker room because they were all out for pizza when the locker room was raided. Additional testimony:

Account A:

Statement by the Panther quarterback's older sister saying that she drove them to the pizza place on the night the locker room was vandalized.

Account B:

Statement from the Bears' running back saying that he saw the Panthers at the pizza place the night the locker room was vandalized.

QUESTIONS

(1) How do both Account A and Account B corroborate the Panthers' account?

(2) Which of the two pieces of testimony would make their case stronger? _____ Explain.



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SCENARIO B

You are a principal who is trying to figure out the truth about a lunchroom fight. The fight was between Justin and Max. Justin is a new student. He is shy and doesn't have many friends. Max is a popular student who is known for his friendliness.

Account A: Justin

"Max started it. I was just standing in line waiting to pay for my food, and he shoved me super hard. And for no reason! He just freaked out on me. I don't even know the kid, and he's been weird to me ever since I started going to this school. Him and his friends glare at me in English class for no reason."

Account B: Max

"That kid is psycho. He turned around and punched me out of nowhere. Me and my friends were standing in line just joking around, and he turned around and punched me for no reason. He's messed up and creepy. Ask anyone."

Account C: Jamie (student who has class with Max and Justin right before lunch)

"I wasn't in the cafeteria today, and I'm not friends with any of those guys, but I've seen Max and his friends be mean to Justin in the hallways and in class when the teacher isn't looking. Not physical or anything, but they'll like say jokes under their breath and then laugh and stuff like that. They make him uncomfortable."

(3) What does each account say about who started the fight?

(a) Account A: _____

(b) Account B: _____

(c) Account C: _____

(4) Based on these three accounts, can you determine who started the fight? (Circle One.)

(a) Yes

(b) No

(5) Explain your answer to question #4 (above):



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(6) What does each account say about how Max and his friends treat Justin?

(a) Account A: _____

(b) Account B: _____

(c) Account C: _____

(7) Based on these three accounts, can you determine how Max and his friends treat Justin?

(a) Yes

(b) No

(8) Explain your answer to question #7 (above):

(9) Why does Jamie's account (Account C) help you build a stronger case than if you just had Max's and Justin's accounts?

