

Economics and Business 6

Chapter 3 — Skills: investigating, and interpreting data and information

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Asking strong questions about business, work and money

Curriculum code: VC2HE6S01 · Economics and Business · Levels 5–6 · Skills strand (Investigating)

For the teacher — VC2 codes: VC2HE6S01, .E01, .E02

This section is about **writing questions**. Every investigation begins the same way: someone asks a question worth chasing. Prices rise. A new law changes what shops can sell. A family tries to save for something big. Someone who thinks about money and business looks at these things and asks *why*, *how*, *for whom* and *what if*. You met the issues in Chapters 1 and 2 — scarcity (not enough of everything for everyone to have all they want), taxes and the goods and services tax (GST), what shapes the things we buy, and keeping money safe. Now you build the questions that set an investigation going.

Theory

Part 1 — Know what kind of issue you have

An *issue* is something worth asking about — a happening, a problem or a choice that people want to understand, fix or sort out. The content description names four kinds: economic, business, work and financial.

Four kinds of issues

The content description for this section names all four. One issue can fit in more than one box.

Economic	What it is about About money, prices, jobs, and sharing resources that are limited.	Met in this book Scarcity: not enough of everything, so choices must be made (Chapter 1A).
Business	What it is about About how businesses make, sell and deliver goods and services.	Met in this book How businesses start and grow, and the goods and services they sell (Chapter 1C).
Work	What it is about About jobs: who does them, what they are like, and what workers need.	Met in this book The kinds of jobs people do, and what each one needs (Chapter 1D).
Financial	What it is about About how people look after their money: saving, budgets and staying safe.	Met in this book Budgets, saving goals and keeping money safe (Chapter 2C).

Tip: say which kind of issue you have before you write questions about it - it helps you pick the right words.

Four kinds of issues — economic, business, work and financial — each with what it is about, an example, and where it was met in Chapters 1 and 2

One issue can sit in more than one box. A big rise in electricity prices is an **economic** issue (prices and scarcity), a **financial** issue (what it does to family budgets) and a **work** issue if it changes what businesses can pay for.

Part 2 — Four kinds of questions, four jobs

Different questions do different jobs. The curriculum names four kinds:

- **Probing questions** dig for details. They ask *what exactly, which one, how much, when*. Example: *How much did the price of a loaf of bread change over the past year?*
- **Open-ended questions** let many ideas flow. They have more than one possible answer. Example: *How could our class raise money for new sports equipment?*
- **Practical questions** guide doing. They ask what someone could make, try or do — the kind of question an entrepreneur asks. (An *entrepreneur* is a person who starts a business and takes on risk to make it work — Section 1C.) Example: *What app could we make to help students save their pocket money?*
- **Ethical questions** ask what is fair or right about a money choice. Two careful people can honestly disagree about them, so a good ethical question has strong reasons on each side. Example: *What is the fair way to share the cost of a class party?*

Four kinds of research questions

Different questions do different jobs. The curriculum's words name four kinds.

Probing

The job: digs for details.

Starters: what exactly...? which...? how much...?

Example: How much did the price of a loaf of bread change over the past year?

Open-ended

The job: lets many ideas flow.

Starters: how could...? what ways...?

Example: How could our class raise money for new sports equipment?

Practical

The job: guides doing. It points at something you could make or try.

Starters: what could we make...? how can we try...?

Example: What app could we make to help students save their pocket money?

Ethical

The job: asks what is fair or right; strong reasons on each side.

Starters: who should...? what is fair...?

Example: What is the fair way to share the cost of a class party?

An ethical question is not answered by yes or no - it is answered by reasons.

Four kinds of research questions — probing, open-ended, practical and ethical — with the job each one does, starter words, and an example

An ethical question might look like a yes-or-no question, but it really asks for reasons. *Who should pay when prices go up?* is not answered by yes or no — it is answered by reasons.

Part 3 — Strong questions pass four checks

1. **Open** — you cannot answer it with yes, no or one short fact.
2. **Clear** — it uses words everyone knows, and it holds one idea.
3. **Focused** — it is about one thing, one group or one place.
4. **Answerable with evidence** — you could find data, sources or people that help answer it. (*Evidence* is the information that backs up an answer: numbers, facts, or what people say.)

The four checks for a strong research question

A strong question meets all four before it leads an investigation.

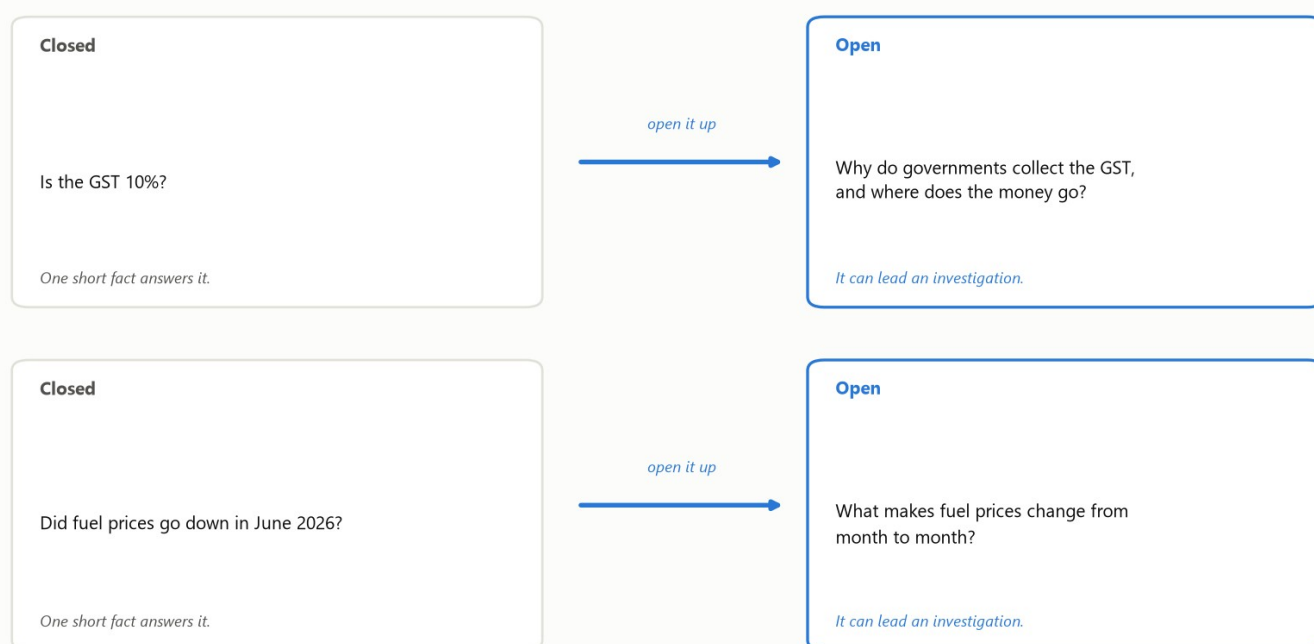
Check	What it means	Strong example	Weak example
Open	It cannot be answered with yes, no, or one short fact.	How do families cut the electricity they use at home?	Do families use too much electricity?
Clear	It uses words everyone knows, and it holds one idea.	How do ads on TV change what families buy?	What about the stuff on screens?
Focused	It is about one thing, one group or one place.	Why did housing prices go up more than transport prices?	Why is everything so expensive?
Answerable with evidence	Data, sources or people could help answer it.	Which class sport do students most want new gear for?	Is money more important than kindness?

Closed questions still matter - they check facts. But they cannot lead an investigation.

The four checks for a strong research question — open, clear, focused, and answerable with evidence — each with a strong example and a weak example

Closed questions still matter — they check facts. But a closed question cannot lead an investigation, because it runs out of road after one answer. Turn it open:

Turning a closed question into an open one



Closed questions check facts. Open questions lead investigations.

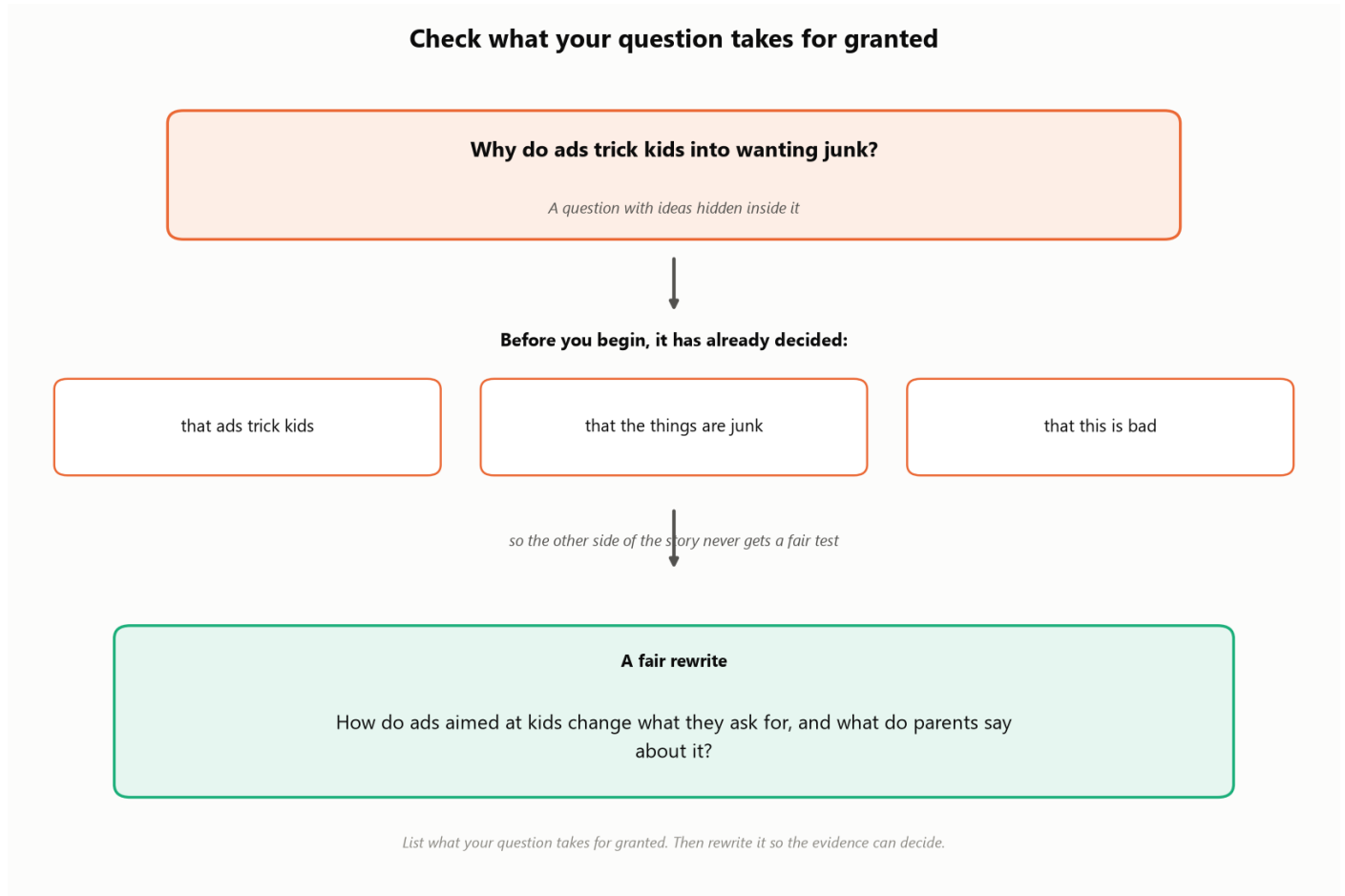
Two closed questions, each shown beside an open rewrite that could lead an investigation

Part 4 — Check what your question takes for granted

A question can sneak ideas inside itself before the investigation starts. Read this one:

“Why do ads trick kids into wanting junk?”

Before you begin, it has already decided three things: that ads trick kids, that the things are junk, and that this is bad. That is not fair to the other side of the story. List what your question takes for granted, then rewrite it so the evidence can decide.



A question with hidden ideas, the three ideas it takes for granted, and a fair rewrite that lets the evidence decide

Part 5 — Mind-map one idea into big questions

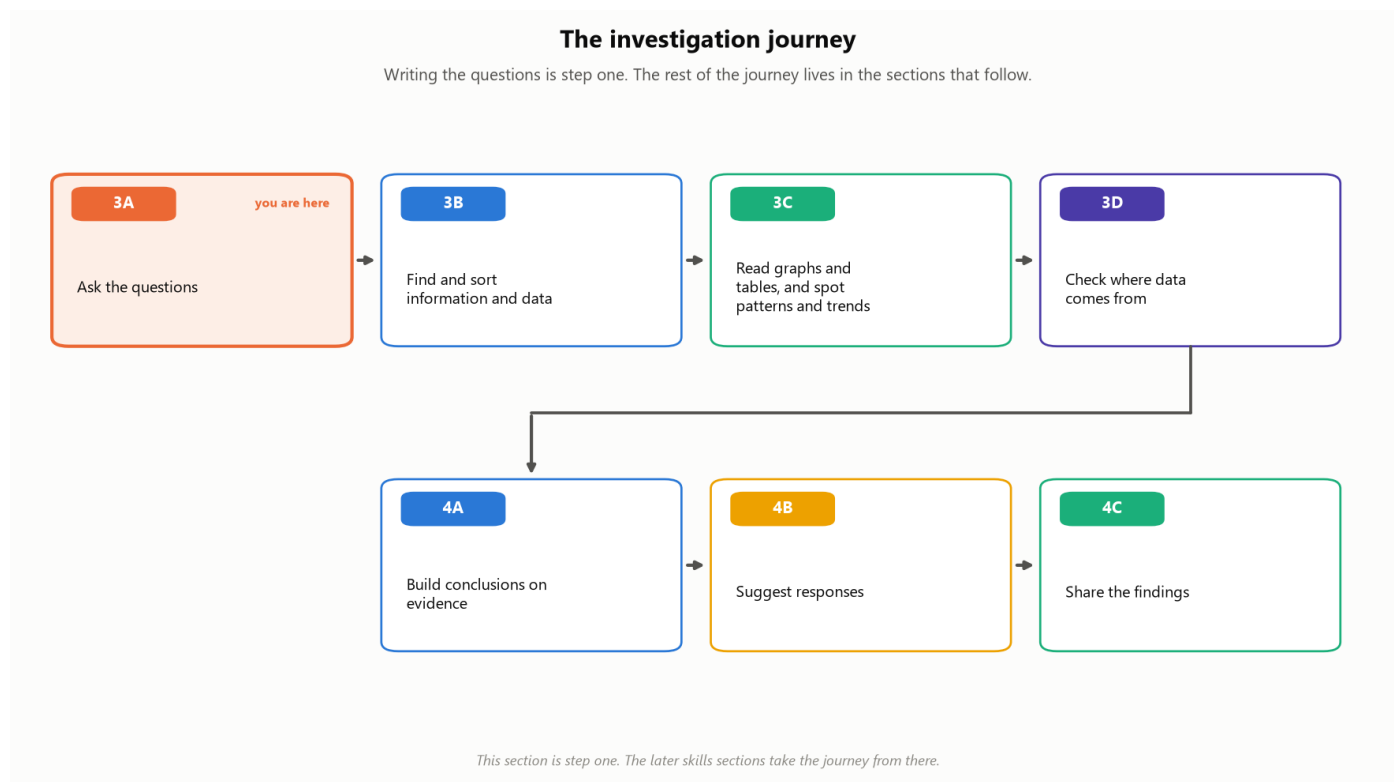
A *mind map* starts with one idea in the middle. Branches spread out, and questions sit at the ends of the branches. For this skill, the branches are three big systems that connect:

- the **economic system** — how money, jobs, businesses, buying and selling work together;
- the **government system** — laws, taxes and rules, and the people who make them (the curriculum calls this the political system);
- the **environment** — the natural world: the materials things are made from, and the waste left behind.

Worked Example 2 builds a full mind map for the idea *the things my family buys*.

Part 6 — Where question-writing fits in an investigation

Writing the questions is step one. The rest of the journey lives in the sections that follow this one.



The investigation journey across this book's skills sections: 3A asks the questions, 3B finds and sorts information and data, 3C reads graphs and tables to spot patterns and trends, 3D checks where data comes from, 4A builds conclusions on evidence, 4B suggests responses, and 4C shares the findings

(A *trend* is the direction things keep moving in — like prices going up month after month.)

Worked examples

Example 1 — with support: four questions about a real price rise

The issue. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) tracks the prices of the things households buy. It publishes the Consumer Price Index. In the year to the June quarter 2026, electricity prices in Australia's capital cities went up 22.4% — more than any other big group the ABS tracks. The ABS said much of the rise happened because government help with electricity bills ended. (Source: ABS, *Consumer Price Index, Australia*, June quarter 2026, released 29 July 2026, checked 26 August 2026. The June quarter is the three months: April, May and June.)

Now ask four questions about it — one for each job from Part 2.

Kind of question	Question	The job it does
Probing	What exactly pushed electricity prices up, and how much did they rise in each state?	Digs for details: the reasons and the numbers behind them.
Open-ended	How could families cut the electricity they use at home?	Lets many ideas flow — there is no single right answer.
Practical	What product or service could a team of students make to help families use less electricity?	Guides doing — it points at something you could make or try.
Ethical	Who should help when electricity gets costly — families, businesses or governments — and why?	Asks what is fair; strong reasons exist on each side.

Why each one works:

- Each question is open, clear, focused on one thing (electricity and the people who use it), and answerable with evidence.
- The probing question starts with *what exactly* and asks for numbers — that is what probing does.
- The open-ended question invites many answers: shorter showers, lights off when rooms are empty, drying clothes outside.
- The practical question ends in something a student team could make or try.
- The ethical question has no settled answer. A family that struggles to pay its bill has one strong reason; a person who asks where the help money comes from has another. Both sides have reasons worth hearing.

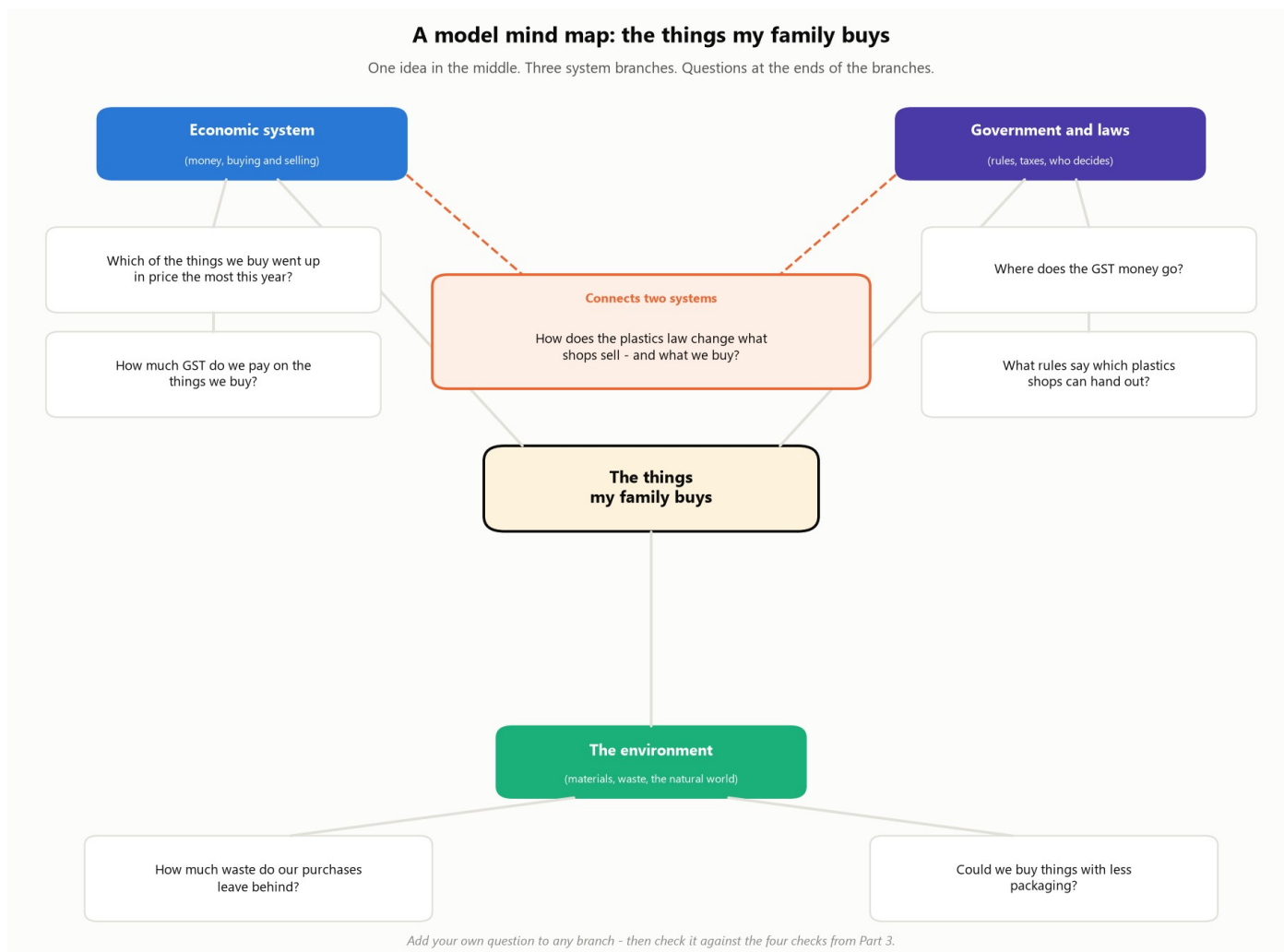
Example 2 — by yourself: a mind map that connects three systems

Three questions of the kind this skill aims at — each one connects systems:

- *How do the things my family buys affect the environment?*
- *Which laws help make sure the products we buy do not use up the Earth's resources?*
- *What can consumers do to make sure the things they buy are made in a fair way?*

(A *consumer* is a person who buys things — you are one, when you buy.)

Here is a complete model mind map for the idea **the things my family buys**. Your job is to check it, then add to it.



A completed mind map with 'The things my family buys' in the middle and three branches — economic system, government and laws, and the environment — each with questions at the end of the branch, plus one question that connects two branches

Facts used in the model:

- Most things we buy have 10% added to the price as the goods and services tax (GST). (The curriculum names the GST — Section 1B.)
- In Victoria, shops must not sell or give out some single-use plastics: drinking straws, cutlery, plates, drink stirrers and foam-style plastic food and drink containers. (Source: Victorian Government single-use plastics page, updated 8 May 2026, checked 26 August 2026.)

Your checks:

1. Name the three systems the branches stand for.
 2. One question on the map connects two systems. Which question, and which two systems?
 3. Add one more question to the environment branch.
 4. Pick any question from the map and run it through the four checks from Part 3. Does it pass?
-

Practice questions

With support

(With-support questions give you steps or a frame to work in. By-yourself ones you build on your own.)

Q1. Sort each question into one of the four kinds: probing, open-ended, practical or ethical. The first one is done for you. (a) *How much did the price of a loaf of bread change over the past year?* — probing (it digs for a detail: a number) (b) *How could our class raise money for new sports equipment?* (c) *What app could we make to help students save their pocket money?* (d) *What is the fair way to share the cost of a class party?* (e) *Who decides how much the school canteen charges for lunch?* (f) *What rules should our canteen follow about the food it sells, and why?*

Q2. These questions are closed — each one can be answered with yes, no or one short fact. Rewrite each one as an open question that could lead an investigation. The first one is done for you. (a) *Is the GST 10%?* → *Why do governments collect the GST, and where does the money go?* (b) *Did fuel prices go down in June 2026?* (c) *Do ads change what people buy?*

Q3. Run each question through the four checks (open, clear, focused, answerable with evidence). Say which checks pass and which fail, then fix the failures. (a) *Why is everything so expensive?* (b) *Is it true that families spend more on food than on fun?* (c) *How do ads on TV change what families choose at the supermarket?*

Q4. Find the hidden ideas. For each question, list what it takes for granted. Then rewrite one of them so the evidence can decide. (a) *Why do ads trick kids into wanting junk?* (b) *How can we stop families wasting money on things they don't need?*

Q5. Complete this mind map for the idea **our school canteen**. The three branches are given. Write one question at the end of each branch, then tick any question that connects two branches. - Branch 1 — economic system (money, prices, jobs): ... - Branch 2 — school rules and laws: ... - Branch 3 — environment (materials, waste): ...

Q6. Fix a fuzzy question. A student wrote: *“What should we do about money?”* It fails two of the four checks. Name them, then rewrite it as a strong question using this frame: *Who ... what ... by when ...*

By yourself

Q7. Choose one issue you met in Chapters 1 or 2 (for example: scarcity and choice; taxes and the GST; what shapes the things we buy; saving and budgets). Write four questions about it — one probing, one open-ended, one practical, one ethical. Label each one.

Q8. Draw your own mind map. Choose one idea: *the shops on our street, our family's electricity bill, our class fundraiser* — or an idea of your own. Make three branches: economic system, government and laws, environment. Write one question at the end of each branch, and underline one question that connects two branches.

Q9. Use this table of real ABS numbers. Write two questions the data can answer, and one question the data cannot answer. For the third question, say what extra information you would need.

Group	How much prices changed over the year to the June quarter 2026
Food and drinks (not alcohol)	+3.3%
Clothing and footwear	+4.9%
Housing (includes electricity and rents)	+6.8%
Health	+3.7%
Transport	+0.1%
Education	+4.8%

(Source: ABS, *Consumer Price Index, Australia*, June quarter 2026, released 29 July 2026, checked 26 August 2026.)

Q10. Write an ethical question about a money choice a Year 6 student might face — pocket money, saving for something you want, or sharing costs with friends. Then give one strong reason someone could answer one way, and one strong reason someone careful could answer the other way. Both reasons must be strong — that is how you test a question about what is fair.

Source-based inquiry task

Run the question stage of a real investigation. The numbers below are real. They come from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The Consumer Price Index tracks how the prices of the things households buy change over time.

Source A — prices across Australia, over the year to the June quarter 2026. The table and the chart show the same numbers: how much each group of things went up (or almost stood still) over one year.

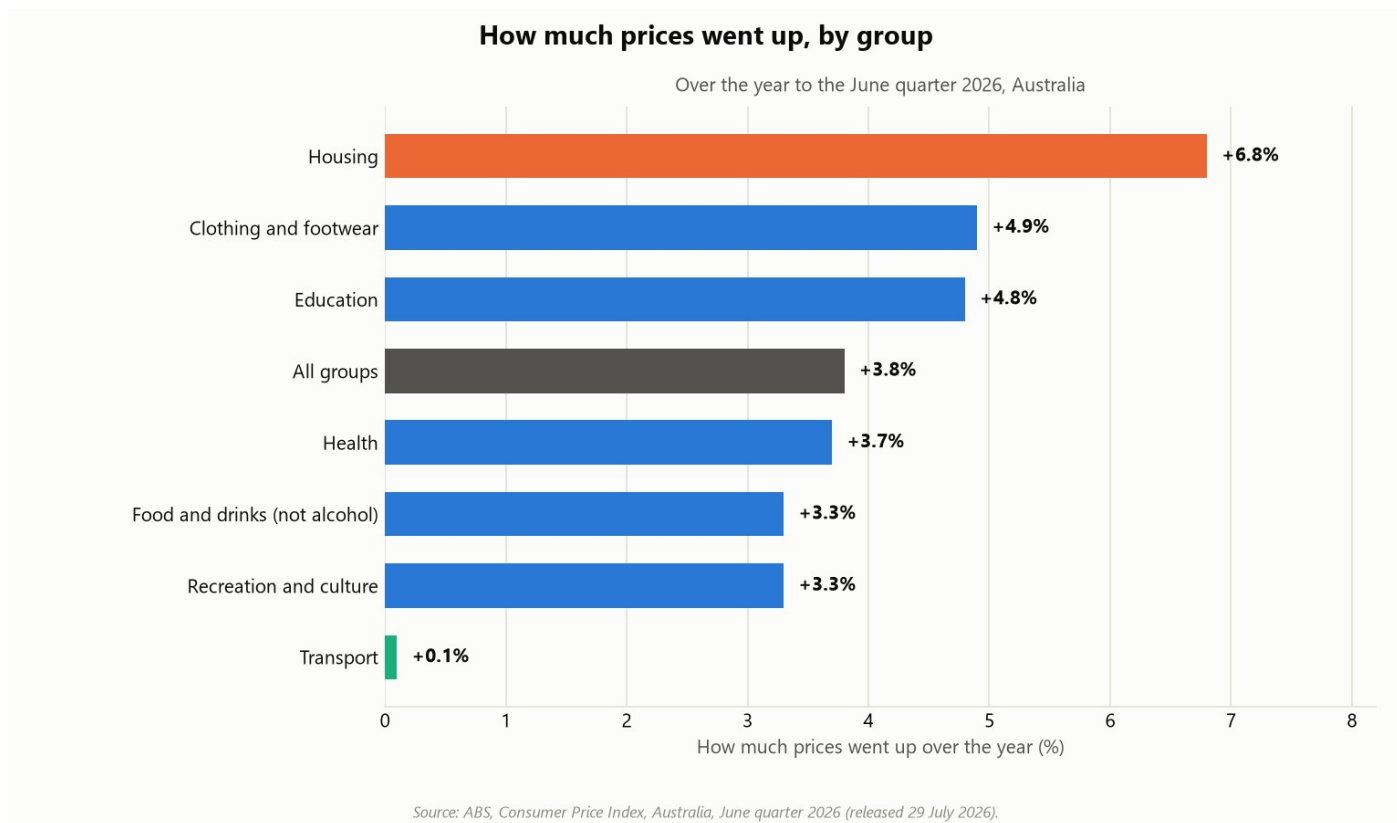
How much prices changed, by group

Over the year to the June quarter 2026 - things households buy

Group	How much prices changed
All groups	+3.8%
Food and drinks (not alcohol)	+3.3%
Clothing and footwear	+4.9%
Housing (includes electricity and rents)	+6.8%
Health	+3.7%
Transport	+0.1%
Education	+4.8%
Recreation and culture	+3.3%

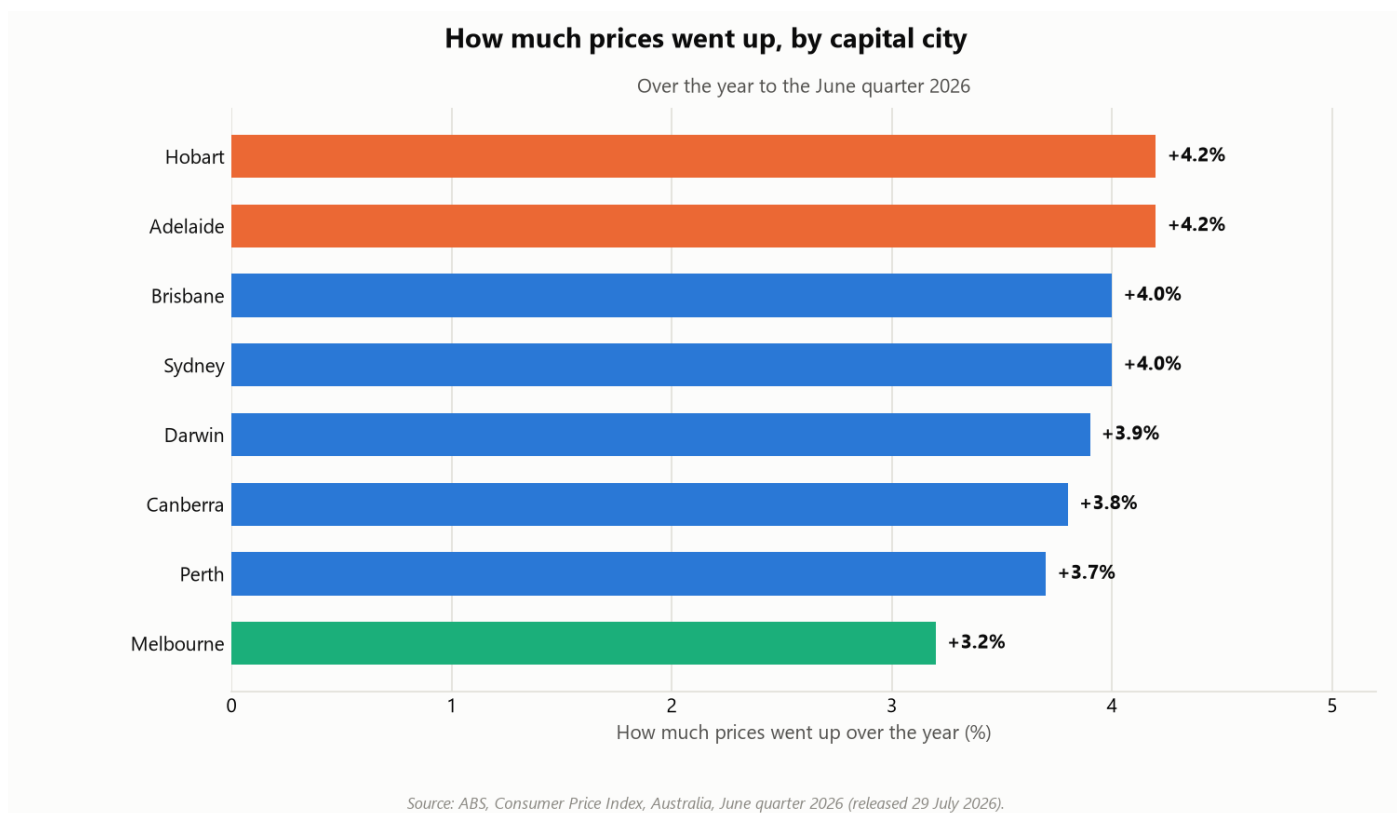
Source: ABS, Consumer Price Index, Australia, June quarter 2026 (released 29 July 2026).

A table of real ABS data showing how much prices changed over the year to the June quarter 2026 for eight groups: all groups, food and drinks, clothing and footwear, housing, health, transport, education, and recreation and culture



A bar chart of the same ABS data: housing went up the most at 6.8 per cent and transport went up the least at 0.1 per cent

Source B — prices in each capital city, over the same year.



A bar chart of ABS data for eight capital cities showing how much prices went up over the year to the June quarter 2026, from Melbourne at 3.2 per cent up to Adelaide and Hobart at 4.2 per cent

(Source for A and B: ABS, *Consumer Price Index, Australia*, June quarter 2026, released 29 July 2026, checked 26 August 2026.)

Some things to notice first:

- Housing went up the most (+6.8%). Inside housing, electricity went up 22.4%.
- Transport almost stood still (+0.1%) — fuel prices went down over the year.
- Melbourne's prices went up 3.2% — the least of the eight capital cities. Adelaide and Hobart went up the most, at 4.2%.

Your task:

1. From Source A, write four questions — one probing, one open-ended, one practical, one ethical. Label each one.
2. Choose your strongest question. Run it through the four checks, and list what it takes for granted. Rewrite it if you need to.
3. Break your question into three smaller questions. For each one, say what information or data would answer it, and where you would look. (Section 3B teaches you how to find and sort sources.)
4. Say why your issue matters, and who it affects.

5. Keep your work in one place using the planner below.

Inquiry planner - section 3A

Keep all your work for this section in one place.

1. The issue I will investigate:

2. My four questions (one of each kind):

☐

Probing

☐

Open-ended

☐

Practical

☐

Ethical

3. My strongest question:

4. My strongest question meets the four checks:

☐

Open

☐

Clear

☐

Focused

☐

Answerable with evidence

5. What my question takes for granted:

6. Three smaller questions, and how I will answer each one:

Smaller question	The data it needs	Where I will look

7. Why this issue matters, and who it affects:

Section 3B shows you how to find and sort the sources you list here.

A blank fill-in inquiry planner with space for the issue, four labelled questions, the strongest question with the four checks and the taken-for-granted list, three smaller questions with the data each one needs and where to look, and why the issue matters

Answers

A1. (b) open-ended; (c) practical; (d) ethical; (e) probing; (f) ethical. If you sorted one another way and gave a reason, your answer can still earn the mark — say which kind and why.

A2. Models: (b) *What makes fuel prices change from month to month?* (c) *How do ads change what people choose to buy, and how can we find out?* Any open rewrite earns the mark.

A3. (a) Fails **focused** and **clear** — “everything” is too big to investigate, and “so expensive” is a feeling, not something you can measure. Fix: *Why did housing prices go up more than transport prices over the year to June 2026?* (b) Fails **open** — it can be answered yes or no. Fix: *How do families split their spending between food and fun, and why?* (c) It meets all four checks.

A4. (a) Takes for granted: that ads trick kids, that the things are junk, and that this is bad. (b) Takes for granted: that families waste money, that the things were not needed, and that someone should stop them. Model rewrite for (a): *How do ads aimed at kids change what they ask for, and what do parents say about it?*

A5. Models: Branch 1 — *How much money does the canteen take each week, and what does it spend it on?* Branch 2 — *What rules must the canteen follow about the food it sells?* Branch 3 — *How much packaging does the canteen throw away each week, and could it be less?* A question connecting two branches: *Should the canteen use less plastic even if it costs more?* (environment + economic system).

A6. It fails **clear** and **focused** — “we” could be anyone, and “money” could mean anything. Model fix: *How can Year 6 students save enough pocket money to buy something they want by the end of term?* Check: open (many ways), clear, focused (Year 6 students, pocket money, one term), answerable with evidence (a class survey and a budget).

A7–A10. Answers will vary. A pass needs: for Q7, four questions, one of each kind, all about the one issue; for Q8, three branches (economic system, government and laws, environment) with one question each and one connecting question underlined; for Q9, two questions the data can answer (for example *Which group went up the most?*), one it cannot answer (for example *Why did clothing prices go up?*), with the extra information named; for Q10, an ethical question with one strong reason on each side, and the two reasons must not knock each other down.

Inquiry task. Assess against the five steps: four questions, one of each kind, each labelled; a strongest question checked four ways with its taken-for-granted ideas listed; three smaller questions, each with the information it needs and a place to look; a why-it-matters that names who is affected; a complete planner.

Worked solutions

Q4 — how to find the hidden ideas. Step 1: read the question and ask *what has this already decided?* In (a), the word “trick” decides the ads are not honest before you start, and “junk” decides the things are bad. In (b), “wasting” decides the money was spent badly, and “don’t need” decides the things were not needed. Step 2: list those hidden ideas one by one. Step 3: rewrite without them, so the evidence can decide — *How do ads aimed at kids change what they ask for?* decides nothing in advance. Now an investigation can find out, and either answer will be a fair one.

Q6 — from fuzzy to focused. *What should we do about money?* has no who, no what and no when, so no investigation could answer it. Fix it with the frame: who (Year 6 students), what (save pocket money), by when (the end of term). Result: *How can Year 6 students save enough pocket money to buy something they want by the end of term?* Now recheck all four: open (there are many ways), clear, focused, answerable with evidence (survey the class, try a budget). Pass.

Q9 — what data can and cannot answer. The table tells you how much each group changed — so it can answer *Which group went up the most?* (housing, +6.8%) and *Which group went up the least?* (transport, +0.1%). It cannot answer *why* anything changed — the numbers show how much, not the cause. So *Why did clothing prices go up 4.9%?* needs extra information: the ABS release names one reason — accessories, which went up 17.1% — and you could also ask the shops themselves.

Inquiry task — a model planner. Issue: prices of the things families buy. Four labelled questions (models): probing — *Which group went up the most over the year to June 2026?*; open-ended — *How might families change their spending if prices keep going up?*; practical — *What budget plan could a family use when housing costs more each year?*; ethical — *Who should help when prices rise most for the families with the least money?* Strongest question: *Why do prices change at different speeds, and what does that mean for a family's budget?* Checks: open (it needs reasons), clear, focused (prices and family budgets), answerable with evidence (ABS data, family surveys). Takes for granted: that prices will keep going up, and that a family budget feels the rises. Three smaller questions: (1) Which groups went up most? — answered by the ABS table (Source A). (2) Why did those groups go up? — the notes in the ABS release; Section 3B shows how to find and check them. (3) What can families do about it? — a class survey of family budgets and ideas. Why it matters: every family buys these things, and when a need like a home goes up fastest, families with the least money feel it first.

Sources for this section (all checked 26 August 2026):

- Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Consumer Price Index, Australia*, June quarter 2026 (released 29 July 2026)
- Victorian Government, single-use plastics information page (updated 8 May 2026)
- The 10% rate of the goods and services tax (GST) is named in the Victorian Curriculum's own words for Levels 5 and 6 (VC2HE6K02), so it needs no outside source.

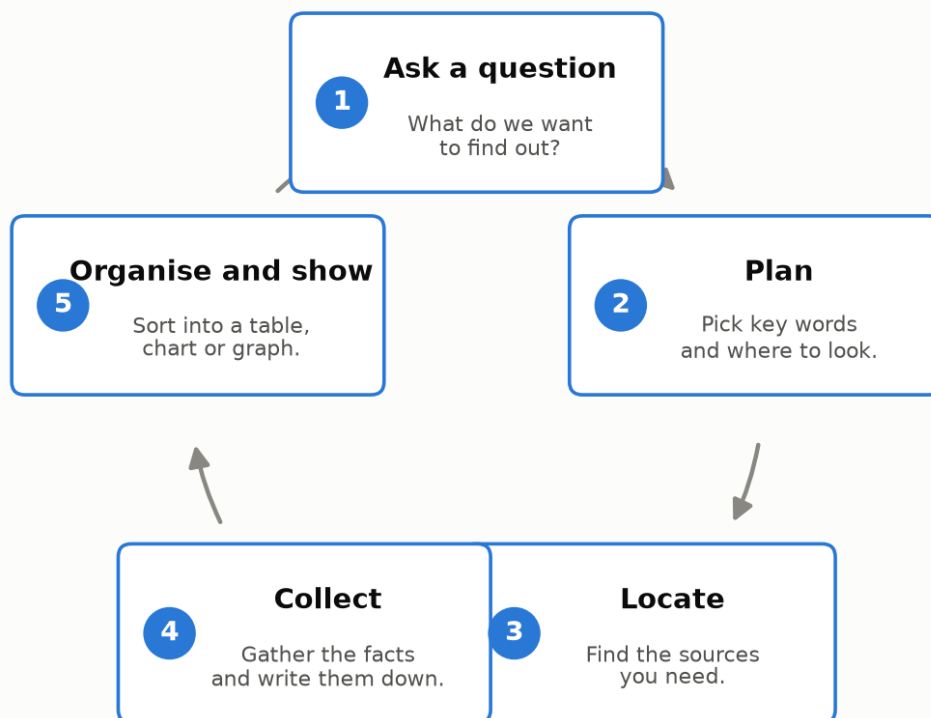
Where to look, what to gather, how to sort it

Curriculum: VC2HE6S02 — This section follows elaborations .E01 .E02 .E03 .E04.

Theory

In economics and business we are always finding things out: what a product costs at different sellers (→ Section 1C), what advertisements do (→ Section 2A), what banking products offer (→ Section 2B), and how a successful entrepreneur built a business (→ Section 2C). People who do this well follow a simple cycle.

A research cycle: locate, collect, organise



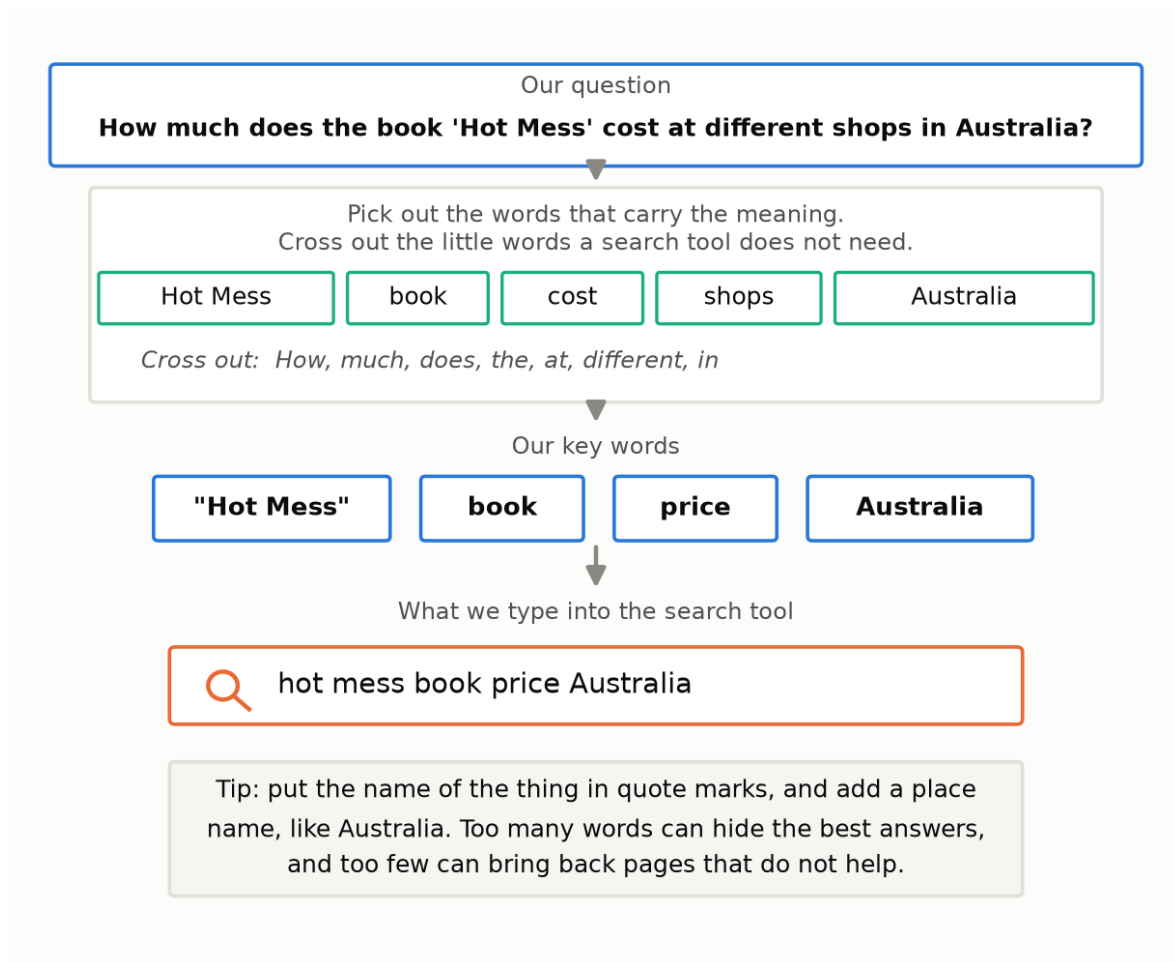
You can go around the cycle again when a new question comes up.

A five-step research cycle: ask a question, plan, locate, collect, then organise and show, with arrows joining the steps in a loop

Step 1 — Ask a question. A good question tells us where to look. Useful questions to ask before any project include:

- Which people could help us get this project done?
- Which rules do we have to keep to for this project?
- What materials or equipment do we need to run it?
- Where could we find good information?

Step 2 — Pick key words and where to look. Library catalogues, indexes and search engines all work better with short key words. Pick out the words that carry the meaning, cross out the little words a search tool does not need, and put names in quote marks.



A research question about the price of the book Hot Mess turned into key words, then into a short search to type into a search tool

When you find a website, look at the end of its address. That ending is called the **domain**, and it is a clue about who put the information there.

What a domain name ending tells you

The end of a web address is a clue about who put it there.

.gov.au / .gov

an Australian government body - official information

.edu / .edu.au

an education body, like a school or university

.com.au

a business or group registered in Australia

.com

anyone, from any place - often a business, not always

.org

a club or community group - check who runs it

A domain ending helps you spot where information comes from - but always check the site itself too.

Five web address endings and the kind of publisher behind each: an Australian government body, an education body, a business registered in Australia, anyone from any place, or a club or community group

Step 3 — Collect carefully. A **source** is where a piece of information comes from — a website, a book, a table of numbers, or a person you ask. Every time you collect a fact, keep a source for it.

Keep a source for every fact

Check each box as you collect information and data.



Where does it come from?

Write the name of the site, book or person.



When was it written or updated?

Look for a date on the page or the book.



When did I find it?

Write today's date next to the fact.



Did I copy it exactly?

Numbers and names must match the source.

A list of your sources lets anyone - including you - find each fact again. Section 3D shows how to check them.

A checklist card: keep a source for every fact, noting where it comes from, when it was written or updated, when you found it, and that you copied it exactly

Step 4 — Organise and show. Raw notes are hard to compare. Sorting the same facts into a table, chart or graph makes them easier to read and compare. (Section 3C shows how to read what tables and charts tell us.)

Organising the same information three ways

1. Notes as you find them

hot mess \$16.99 harry hartog

qbd cheaper, \$9.99

cover says 16.99

wimpy kid 19, jeff kinney

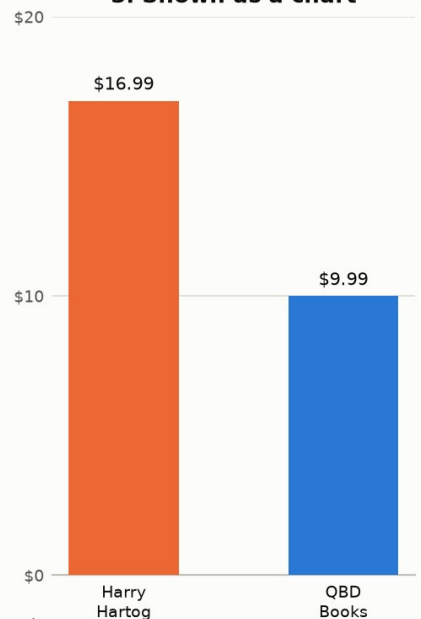
qbd sells other ones cheaper too?

harry hartog again: yep 16.99

2. Sorted into a table

Seller	Price
Harry Hartog	\$16.99
QBD Books	\$9.99
Printed price	\$16.99

3. Shown as a chart



Same facts each time - but each step makes them easier to read and compare.

The same price facts shown three ways: notes as you find them, a sorted table, and a column chart

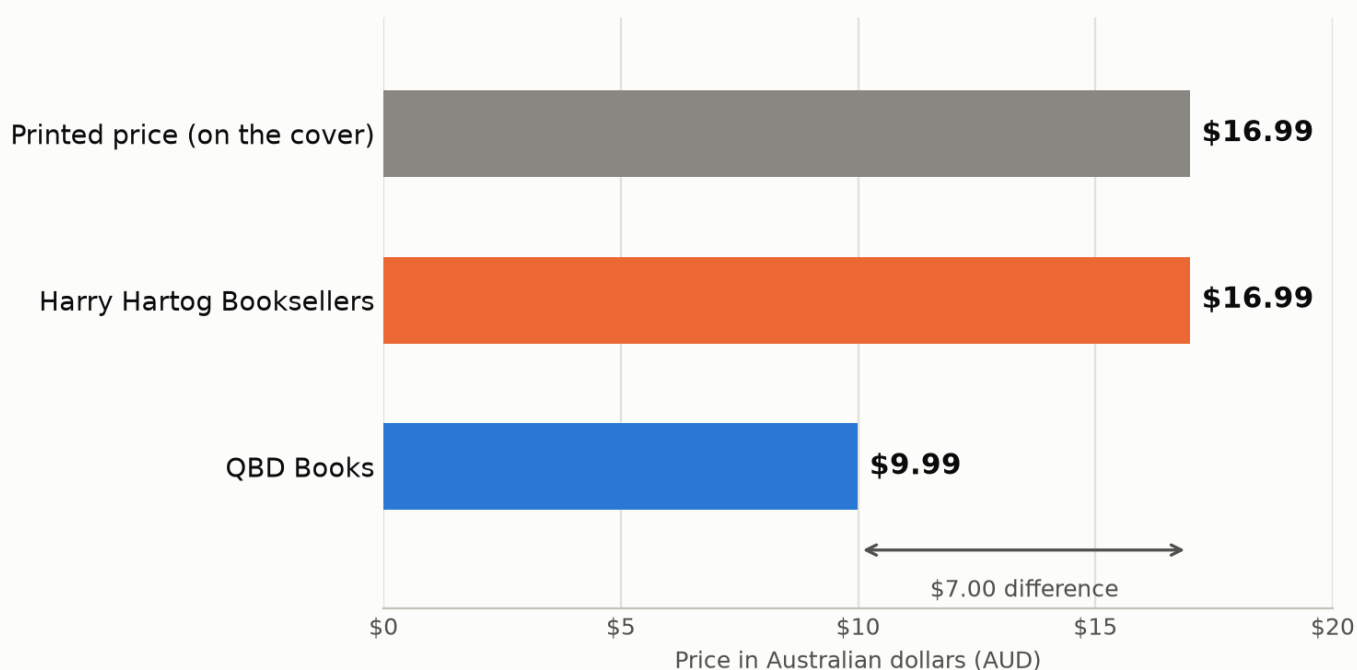
Worked examples

Example 1 — with help (E01)

How much does *Diary of a Wimpy Kid 19: Hot Mess* (paperback) cost at different Australian sellers?

Working	Comment
1. Key words: “Hot Mess” book price Australia.	Quote marks around the name of the book; little words crossed out.
2. Collect: QBD Books \$9.99 (qbd.com.au); Harry Hartog Booksellers \$16.99 (harryhartog.com.au); price printed on the cover \$16.99. All found on 26 August 2026.	Every fact keeps its source and its date.
3. Organise: sort the facts into a table, then draw a bar chart.	See the chart below.
4. What we found out: QBD Books is \$7.00 cheaper than the printed price, and Harry Hartog sells at the printed price. A class set of 5 copies costs $5 \times \$9.99 = \$49.95$ from QBD Books, against $5 \times \$16.99 = \$84.95$ at the printed price — that is \$35.00 saved.	Organised data makes the difference easy to see and easy to check.

Price of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid 19: Hot Mess* (paperback) at different sellers, 26 August 2026



Source: qbd.com.au and harryhartog.com.au, retrieved 26 August 2026. The printed price is the price on the cover of the book.

A bar chart comparing the price of the *Hot Mess* paperback at QBD Books, at Harry Hartog Booksellers and on the cover of the book, with the seven dollar difference marked

Example 2 — with help (E01)

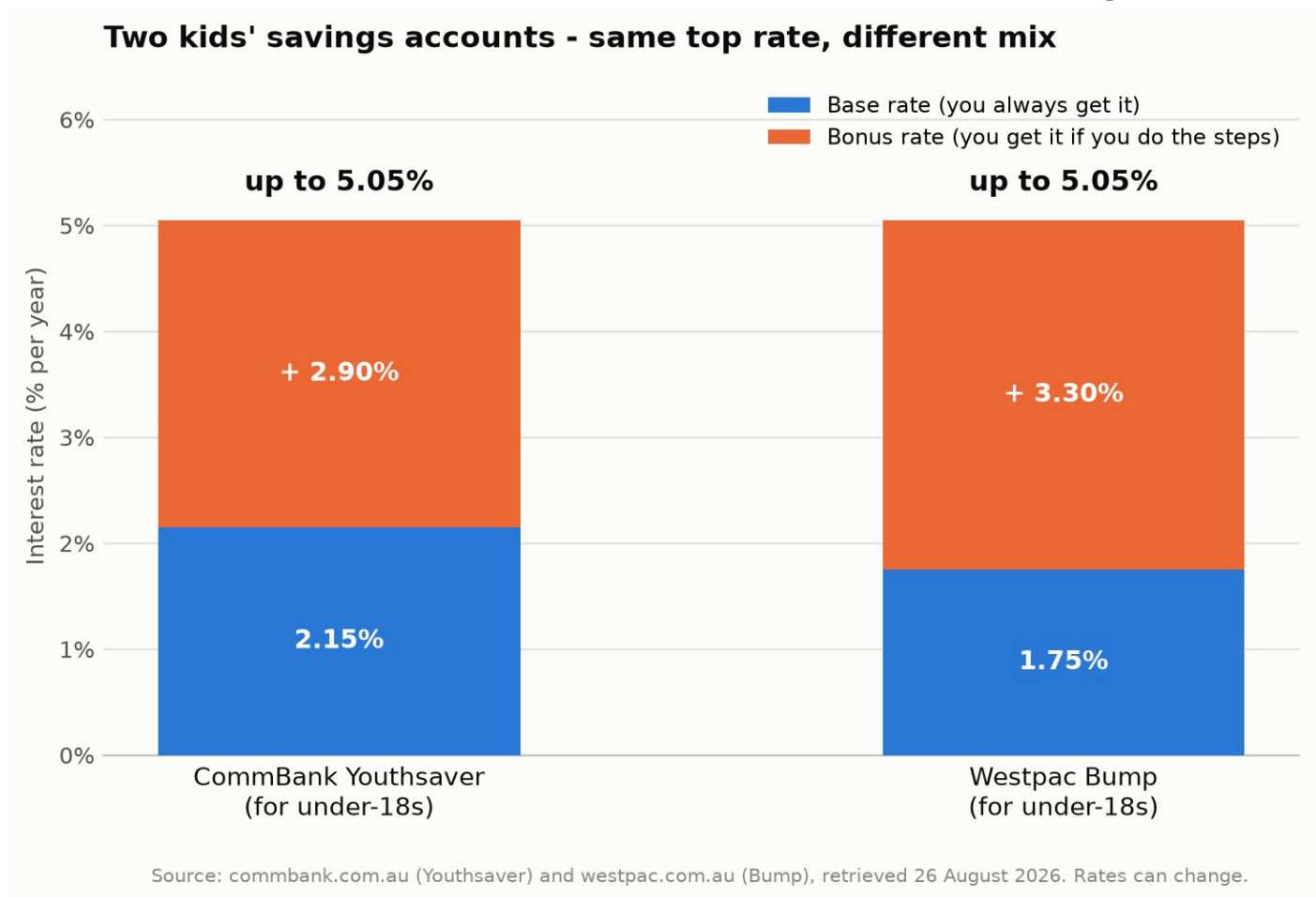
Which kids' savings account pays the most, and what must you do to get the top rate?

Working	Comment
1. Collect from the banks' own websites, 26 August 2026.	See the table below.
2. Organise: draw a bar chart that stacks the base rate and the bonus rate.	See the chart below.

3. What we found out: both accounts reach 5.05% a year, but the mix is different. Youthsaver starts from a higher base rate (2.15%), while Bump has the bigger bonus (3.30%) — and the bonus always comes with steps to do.

Comparing the parts, not just the top number, is the skill.

Account	Bank	Base rate	Bonus rate	Top rate	Steps for the bonus
Youthsaver	CommBank	2.15%	2.90%	5.05%	deposit money at least once each month
Bump	Westpac	1.75%	3.30%	5.05%	do three small steps each month



A stacked bar chart of two kids' savings accounts, each with a base rate and a bonus rate that add up to 5.05 percent a year

Rates can change, so a good researcher always writes the date on every fact.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Here is a research question: *Where could we find good information about starting a small business in Victoria?* Pick out the key words, and list the little words you would cross out.

Q2. Match each web address ending to who most likely put it there: (a) .gov.au (b) .com.au (c) .edu.au (d) .org — choices: a school or university; an Australian government body; a club or community group; a business registered in Australia.

Q3. Your group is planning a project: a shop that sells second-hand school uniforms. Write two questions to guide your search — one starting with “Which rules ...?” and one starting with “Where ...?”.

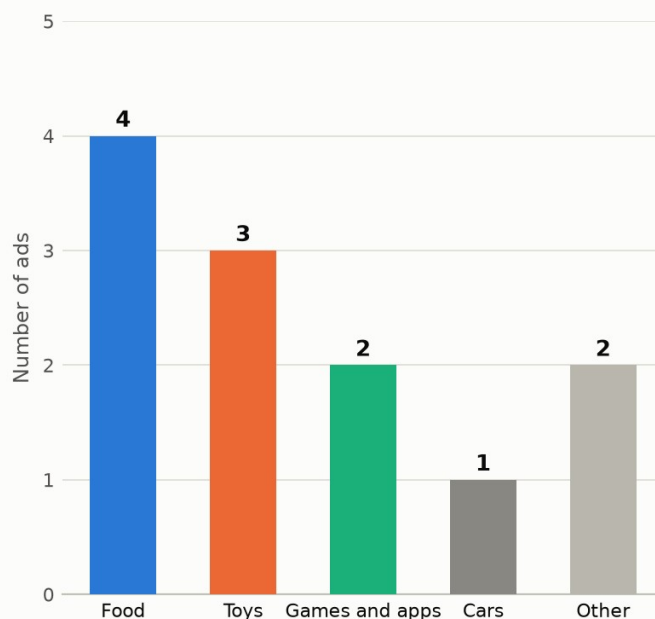
Q4. These notes are messy. Sort them into a clean table with the headings *Seller* and *Price*: “hot mess 9.99 qbd — the cover says 16.99 — harry hartog 16.99 same as the cover”.

Q5. Use the model ad watch below (sample data — your own count will be different). (a) How many food advertisements were counted? (b) Which category had the most advertisements? (c) What was the total?

An ad watch - model example

One student counted the ads in the breaks of a 30-minute TV show. SAMPLE DATA - your own count will be different.

What the ad was about	Tally	Count
Food		4
Toys		3
Games and apps		2
Cars		1
Other		2
Total ads		12



A tally table counts what you see. A column chart then shows which kind came up most.

A model ad watch: a tally table of advertisements counted by category (food, toys, games and apps, cars, other) next to a column chart of the same counts, labelled sample data

Q6. These facts about Canva, a successful Australian business (→ Section 2C), are out of order. Organise them into a table with the headings *Began*, *Started where*, *Founders*, *Used by*, *Designs made* and *Used where*. Facts: started in Perth; began on 1 January 2013; founders Melanie Perkins, Cliff Obrecht and Cameron Adams; more than 220 million people use it each month; more than 30 billion designs made; used in more than 190 countries and more than 100 languages. (Source: canva.com, retrieved 26 August 2026.)

On your own

Q7. Pick a book or product you know. Find two Australian sellers online. Show: (a) your key words; (b) a collect table with a seller, a price, a source and a date for each fact; (c) a bar chart of your prices; (d) one sentence saying what you found out.

Q8. Do an ad watch: 30 minutes of a television show or an online video (ask first). Tally the advertisements by category, show your counts as a table and a column chart, and write one sentence about what you noticed.

Q9. Topic: *Is our school ready for a market day?* Write three questions to guide your search. For each question, give one key word and one place you would look — name the kind of website by its address ending, or use the library.

Q10. These notes are about the two kids' savings accounts from Example 2: "youthsaver base 2.15 bonus 2.90 — bump base 1.75 bonus 3.30 — both reach 5.05 — bump needs three steps a month — youthsaver needs a deposit a month". Build a comparison table and write one sentence about the same top rate and the different mix.

Inquiry task

Be a data detective. Choose one investigation and run the full cycle — ask, plan, locate, collect, organise and show. Keep a source for every fact (Step 3 checklist), and bring your table and your chart to class.

- **Option A — Price detective.** Compare the price of one product at two Australian sellers. Add the price printed on the cover or box if you can find it.
- **Option B — Ad watch across media.** Count the advertisements in one television show and in one online source, and compare your two tallies.

Your plan must answer these questions: What are we trying to find out? What key words will we use? Where will we look, and what do the address endings tell us about those places? How will we organise what we collect? (Section 3C is where you read what your chart shows, and Section 3D is where you check your sources.)

Answers

A1. Key words: small business, Victoria, starting (or information). Little words to cross out: where, could, we, find, good, about, a, in. (Find and good may also be kept — the point is a short search, not a whole sentence.)

A2. (a) .gov.au — an Australian government body. (b) .com.au — a business registered in Australia. (c) .edu.au — a school or university. (d) .org — a club or community group.

A3. Any two sensible questions with the right starters, e.g. “Which rules do we have to follow when we sell second-hand uniforms?” and “Where could we find uniforms to sell?”

A4. A table with three rows: QBD Books \$9.99; Harry Hartog \$16.99; printed price (the cover) \$16.99.

A5. (a) 4. (b) Food. (c) 12.

A6. Began: 1 January 2013. Started where: Perth. Founders: Melanie Perkins, Cliff Obrecht, Cameron Adams. Used by: more than 220 million people each month. Designs made: more than 30 billion. Used where: more than 190 countries and more than 100 languages.

A7. Answers will vary. Must-haves: key words with the little words crossed out; a table with seller, price, source and date for each fact; a bar chart with the prices labelled; one sentence comparing the prices.

A8. Answers will vary. Must-haves: a tally table by category; a column chart of the same counts; one sentence saying which category had the most and which had the least.

A9. Answers will vary. Must-haves: three questions; a key word for each; a place to look for each, with the website kind named by its address ending (or the library).

A10. A table like the one in Example 2 (account, bank, base rate, bonus rate, top rate, steps), plus one sentence such as: both accounts reach 5.05%, but Youthsaver gets there with a bigger base and Bump gets there with a bigger bonus.

Worked solutions

Q1. The words that carry the meaning are *small business* (what we are asking about), *Victoria* (where) and *starting* (what about it). So a good search is: small business starting Victoria. Cross out: where, could, we, find, good, information, about, a, in.

Q2. (a) → an Australian government body; (b) → a business registered in Australia; (c) → a school or university; (d) → a club or community group. The ending is a clue about who put the information there — but always check the site itself too.

Q3. Model: “Which rules do we have to follow when we sell second-hand uniforms at school?” and “Where could we find second-hand uniforms to sell?” A question that names the what and the where points you to the right sources.

Q4.

Seller	Price
QBD Books	\$9.99
Harry Hartog	\$16.99
Printed price (the cover)	\$16.99

Same facts as the notes — the table just makes them easier to read and compare.

Q5. (a) The food row shows 4 tallies. (b) Food had the most advertisements (4). (c) $4 + 3 + 2 + 1 + 2 = 12$ advertisements in total.

Q6.

Heading	Fact
Began	1 January 2013
Started where	Perth
Founders	Melanie Perkins, Cliff Obrecht, Cameron Adams
Used by	more than 220 million people each month
Designs made	more than 30 billion
Used where	more than 190 countries and more than 100 languages

Q7. Model answer using the Hot Mess data from Example 1: key words “Hot Mess” book price Australia; collect table with QBD Books \$9.99 (qbd.com.au, 26 August 2026) and Harry Hartog \$16.99 (harryhartog.com.au, 26 August 2026); bar chart as in Example 1; sentence: “The same book cost \$7.00 less at QBD Books than at Harry Hartog on 26 August 2026.”

Q8. Model shape: a tally table with your categories (e.g. food, toys, games and apps, other), a column chart of the same counts, and a sentence such as “Most of the advertisements were for food, and not one was for cars.” Your numbers will be your own — the model ad watch in Q5 shows the shape.

Q9. Model: (1) “Which rules do we have to follow when we run a market day?” — key word: rules — look at: a government site (.gov.au). (2) “What equipment or materials do we need for a market day?” — key word: market day — look at: the school site (.edu.au) or the library. (3) “How much do tables and stalls cost to hire?” — key word: hire prices — look at: a business site (.com.au).

Q10.

Account	Bank	Base rate	Bonus rate	Top rate	Steps for the bonus
Youthsaver	CommBank	2.15%	2.90%	5.05%	a deposit each month
Bump	Westpac	1.75%	3.30%	5.05%	three steps each month

Sentence: both accounts reach the same top rate of 5.05%, but the mix is different — Youthsaver has the bigger base rate and Bump has the bigger bonus, so the two accounts ask you to do different things to earn it.

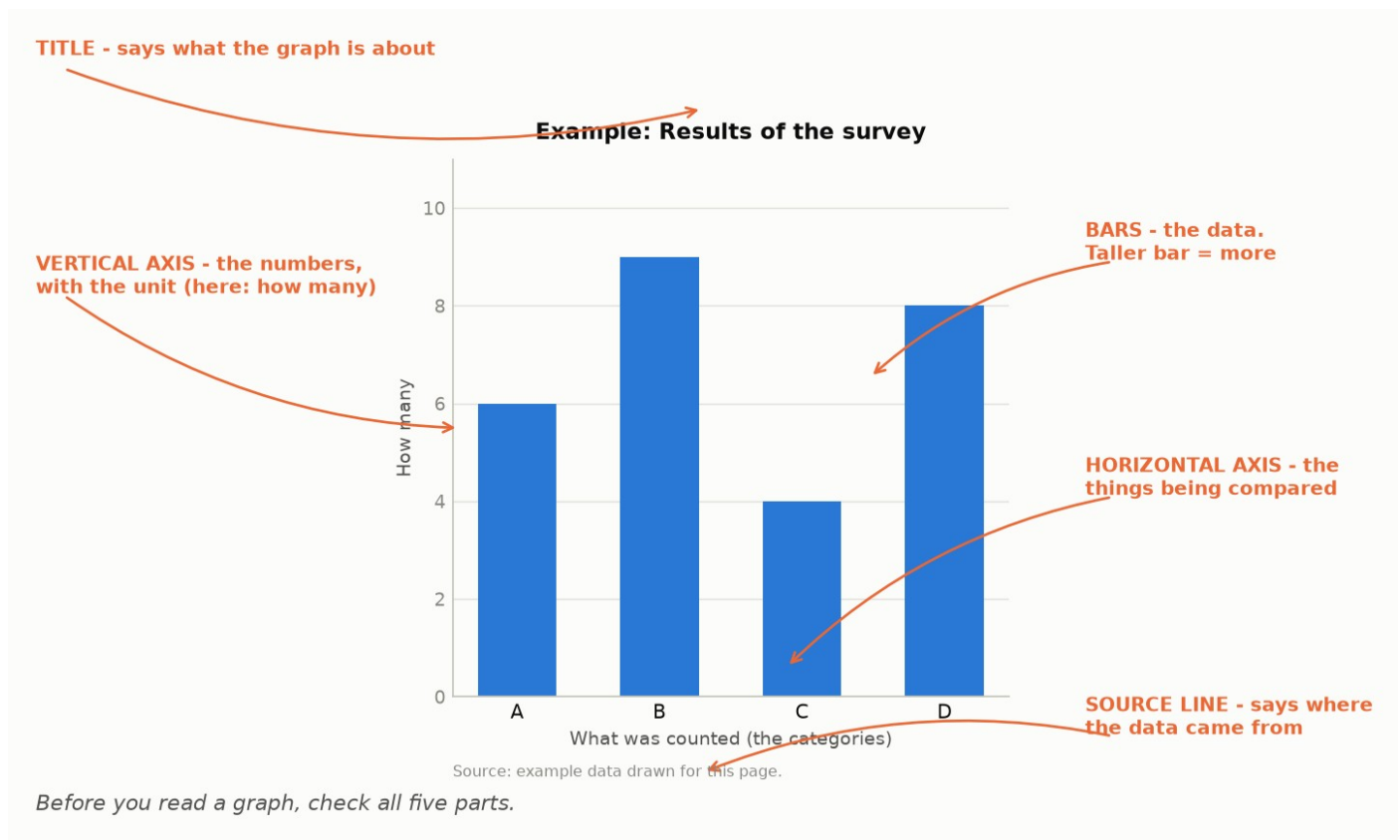
Spotting patterns and trends in graphs, models and text

Curriculum — VC2HE6S03 (Skills: Interpreting and analysing data and information, Levels 5 and 6). This section draws on elaboration ids .E01- .E04 (the join keys to the question bank) and reuses ideas from 1A (needs and wants, price data), 1C (entrepreneurs) and 2A (advertising).

Learning sequence

Data, patterns and trends. *Data* are the facts and numbers someone has collected. A *pattern* is something you notice happening again and again in the data - the same shape, the same order, the same gap between bars. A *trend* is the way the data is heading overall across time: an upward trend (rising), a downward trend (going down) or a level trend (staying about the same). In this section, *trend* always means the overall direction - not one jump or one dip on its own.

Before you read any graph, run the five checks.



Labelled diagram of a bar graph with arrows pointing to its five parts: the title, the vertical axis with its numbers and unit, the bars that hold the data, the horizontal axis showing the things compared, and the source line saying where the data came from.

1. **Title** - what is this graph about?
2. **Vertical axis** - what numbers run up the side, and in what unit (dollars, per cent, number of businesses)?
3. **Horizontal axis** - what things are being compared?
4. **The marks** - what do the bars, the line or the pie slices stand for?
5. **Source line** - where did the data come from, and when? A graph with no source is a graph to question (that is the job of 3D).

A good description of a trend has three parts.

Model text: describing a pattern and a trend

A good description names the trend, gives the time frame and uses numbers from the data as evidence.

| From **May 2024 to June 2026**, Australian prices **rose** in most months.

| The **biggest** monthly rise was **1.3%** in **July 2025**.

| Prices **went down** in **7** of the **26** months, with the **biggest** drop of **0.7%** in **May 2026**.

 = trend word

 = time frame

 = evidence number

Notice: every claim points back to the graph. No opinion, no guess - the data does the talking.

Model text with three example sentences. Trend words such as *rose* and *went down* are boxed in blue, time frames such as *May 2024 to June 2026* are boxed in orange, and evidence numbers such as *1.3 per cent* are boxed in green, with a key below.

- a **trend word** (rose, went down, stayed level, jumped, dipped);
- a **time frame** (from when to when);
- an **evidence number** taken from the graph itself.

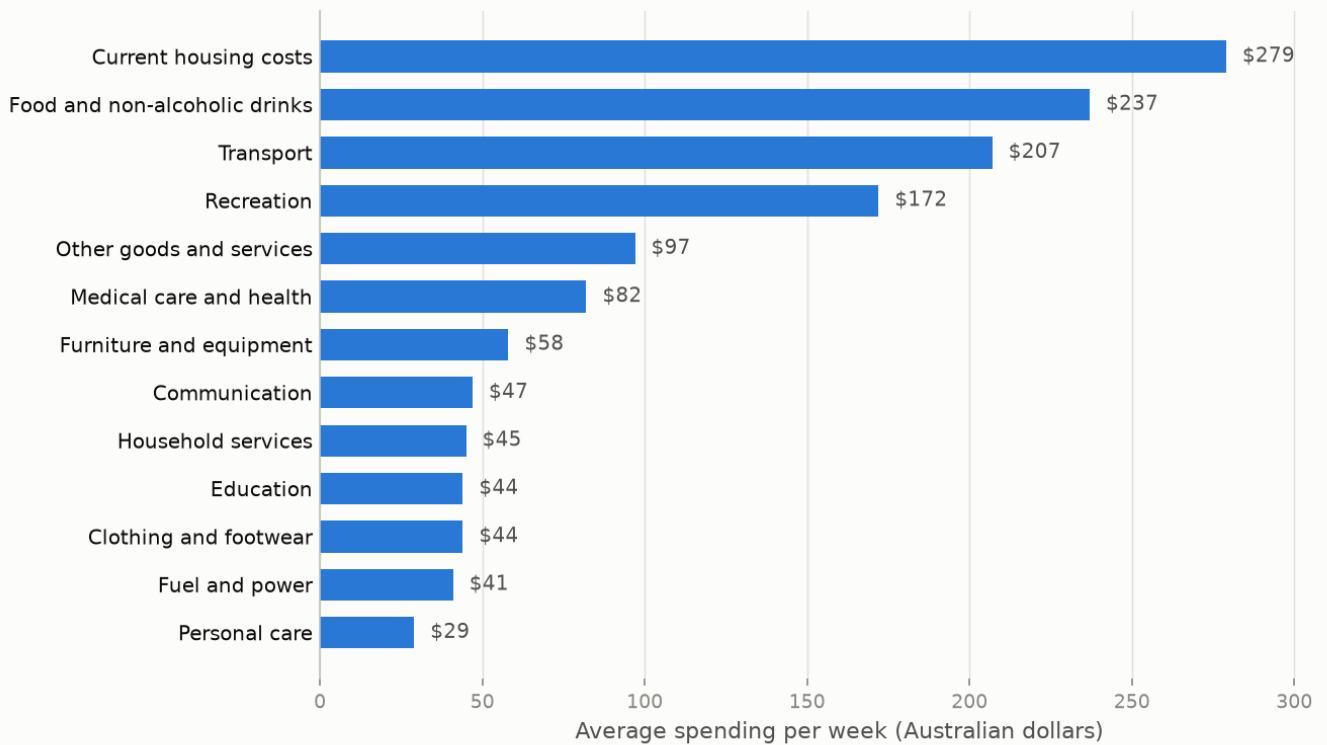
Evidence means a number or fact from the data that backs up what you say. If a sentence has all three parts, a reader can check it against the graph.

Worked examples

Example 1 - what a family's spending shows (.E01, links to 1A)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) runs a survey of what Australian households spend. These two graphs show its results for 2015-16.

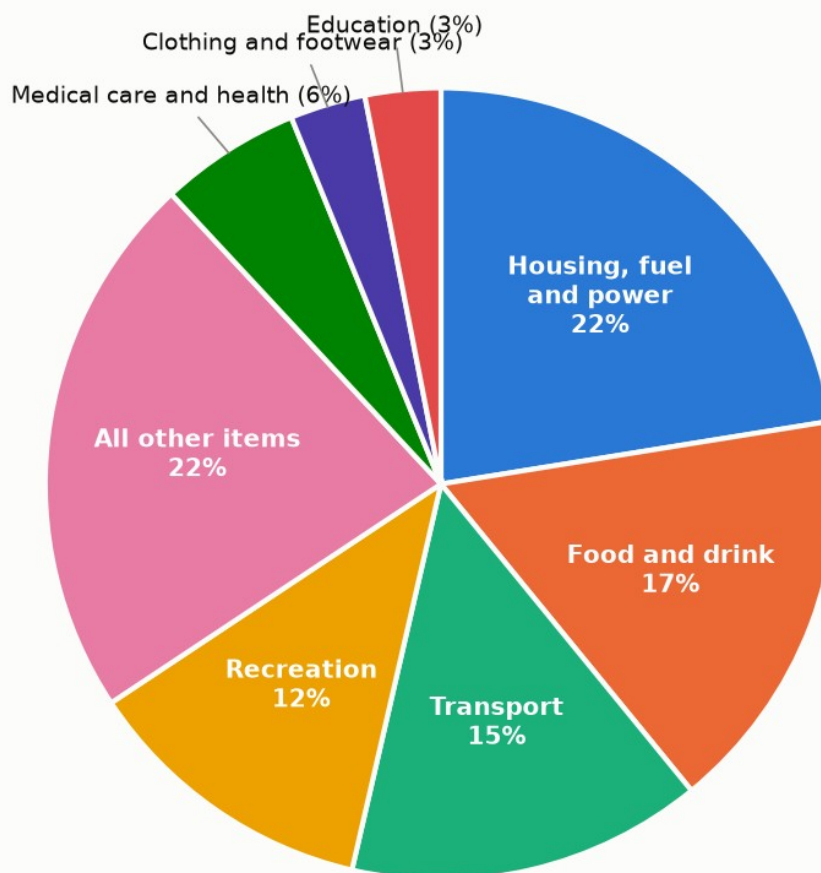
What an average Australian household spent each week, 2015-16



Source: ABS, Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results, 2015-16 (cat. 6530.0). Alcohol and tobacco are not shown.

Horizontal bar chart of average weekly household spending in 2015-16: current housing costs \$279, food and non-alcoholic drinks \$237, transport \$207, recreation \$172, other goods and services \$97, medical care and health \$82, then smaller amounts on furniture, communication, household services, clothing, education, fuel and power, and personal care.

Where the household dollar went: shares of \$1,425 spent each week



Source: ABS, Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results, 2015-16 (cat. 6530.0). Percentages are rounded.

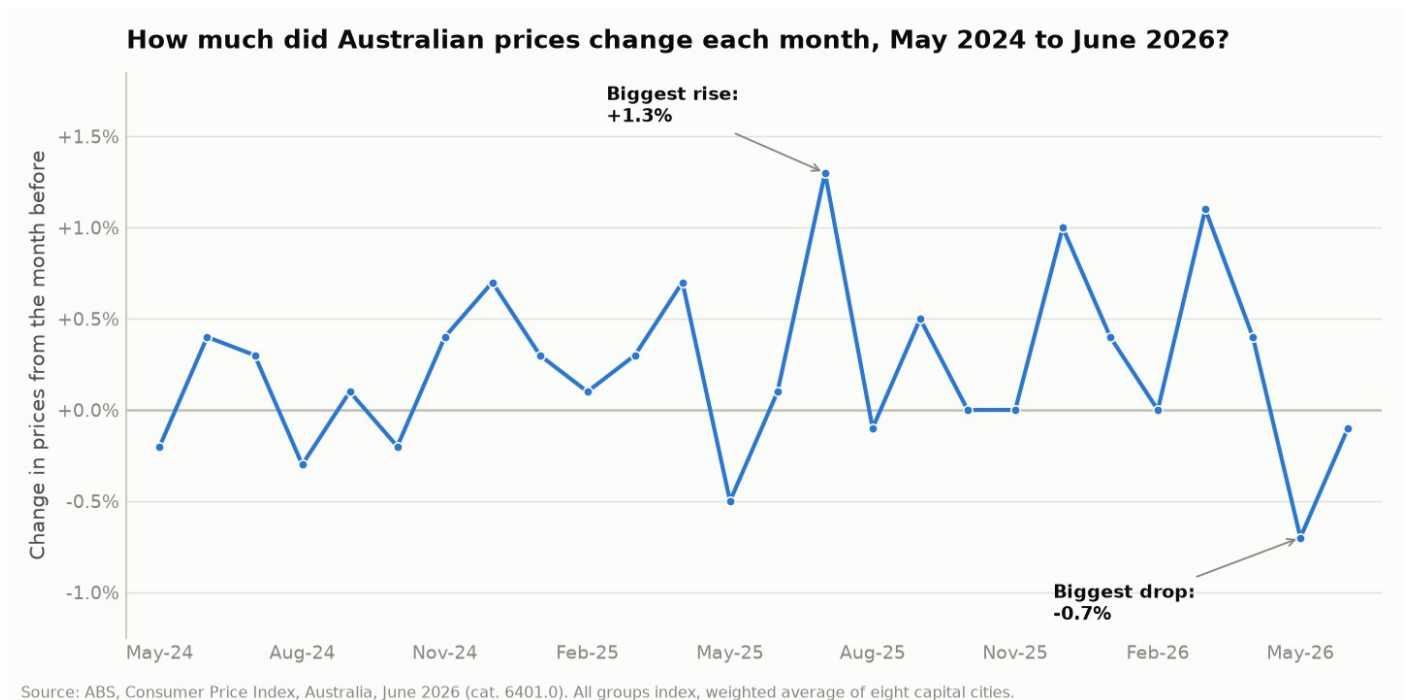
Pie chart showing the same spending as shares of \$1,425 per week: housing, fuel and power 22 per cent, all other items 22 per cent, food and drink 17 per cent, transport 15 per cent, recreation 12 per cent, medical care and health 6 per cent, clothing and footwear 3 per cent, education 3 per cent.

Working	Comment
1. Run the five checks.	Title: what an average household spent each week in 2015-16. Unit: Australian dollars per week. Source line: the ABS household spending survey.
2. Read the three biggest bars.	Housing costs \$279, food \$237, transport \$207.
3. Find a pattern.	On the pie chart those three slices are 22% + 17% + 15% = 54% - more than half of all spending.
4. Needs or wants?	A <i>need</i> is something a family must have to get by; a <i>want</i> is something nice to have. Housing, food and health are needs. Recreation and personal care are mainly wants.
5. Describe it.	“In 2015-16 the average Australian household spent more on needs than on wants: housing, food and transport alone took 54% of the \$1,425 it spent each week.”

About “average”: some households spent far more and some far less. The survey adds every household’s spending together and shares it out equally, so the \$1,425 is a picture of the typical week, not of your family’s week.

Example 2 - price rises over time (.E02 and .E03, links to 1A)

Each month the ABS works out how much prices have changed since the month before. That report is called the Consumer Price Index.



Line graph of the monthly change in Australian prices from May 2024 to June 2026. The line sits above the zero line in most months, with the biggest rise of 1.3 per cent in July 2025 and the biggest drop of 0.7 per cent in May 2026 labelled.

How much did prices rise in the year to June 2026?

Annual rise for each spending group, per cent

Spending group	Annual rise
Housing	+6.8%
Clothing and footwear	+4.9%
Education	+4.8%
Alcohol and tobacco	+4.4%
Health	+3.7%
Recreation and culture	+3.3%
Food and non-alcoholic drinks	+3.3%
Insurance and financial services	+3.2%
Communication	+2.2%
Household goods and services	+1.6%
Transport	+0.1%

Source: ABS, Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026 (cat. 6401.0), released 29 July 2026.

Table of the annual price rise for each spending group to June 2026: housing plus 6.8 per cent down to transport plus 0.1 per cent, with a small bar beside each row.

Working	Comment
1. Run the five checks.	Title: monthly price changes, May 2024 to June 2026. Vertical axis: change from the month before, in per cent. Source: ABS, Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026.
2. Pick out the key points.	Biggest rise: +1.3% in July 2025. Biggest drop: -0.7% in May 2026. The line sits below 0 in 7 months out of 26.
3. Find the pattern.	16 months up, 7 months down, 3 months level. The line keeps coming back above 0, so prices rose in most months.
4. Check the one-year view.	The table says every group cost more in June 2026 than a year earlier. Housing rose fastest (+6.8%); transport rose slowest (+0.1%).
5. Describe it.	“From May 2024 to June 2026, Australian prices rose in most months. The biggest monthly rise was 1.3% in July 2025, and in the year to June 2026 housing costs rose fastest, up 6.8%.”

Practice tasks

With help

Q1. Use the retail chart (.E02). Australian shops report their sales to the ABS each month. *Sales* (the ABS word is *turnover*) means the total value of everything sold.



Horizontal bar chart of what Australian retail businesses sold in June 2025: food retailing \$14,995.5 million, household goods \$6,129.0 million, other retailing \$6,052.4 million, cafes, restaurants and takeaway \$5,581.6 million, clothing, footwear and accessories \$3,160.4 million, department stores \$1,987.7 million; total turnover \$37,906.6 million.

- (a) Which industry sold the most in June 2025? (b) Which of the six sold the least?
- (b) How much more did food retailing sell than department stores? (d) In one sentence, describe the pattern the bars show.

Q2. Use the business table (. E02).

How many businesses were trading in Australia?

At 30 June 2026 there were 2,814,778 actively trading businesses.

Businesses in selected industries at 30 June 2026

Industry	Number of businesses	Change in 2025-26
Transport, postal and warehousing	261,109	+4.9%
Health care and social assistance	227,702	+6.7%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	170,185	-0.5%
Financial and insurance services	139,417	+4.3%

Net increase in the number of businesses in 2025-26, by state

State	More businesses than a year earlier
New South Wales	+26,057
Victoria	+19,581
Queensland	+19,244
Western Australia	+12,248 (the largest percentage rise: 4.6%)

Source: ABS, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, July 2022 - June 2026 (cat. 8165.0), released 18 August 2026.

Table showing 2,814,778 actively trading businesses in Australia at 30 June 2026, selected industry counts with their change in 2025-26, and the net increase in business numbers by state.

- (a) How many businesses were actively trading in Australia at 30 June 2026?
(b) Which industry grew the fastest in 2025-26? (c) In which industry did the number of businesses go down? (d) Which state gained the most new businesses?

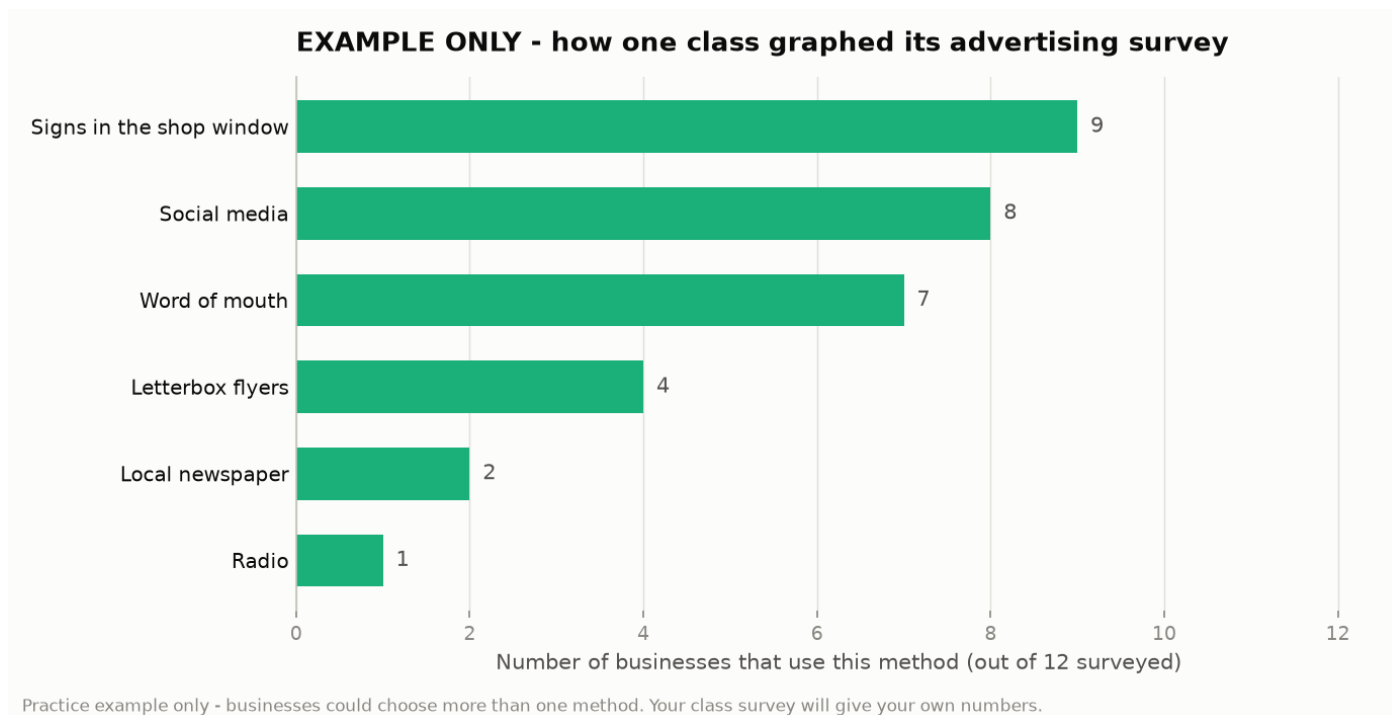
Q3. Read this text, then answer (. E01, links to 1C).

Janine Allis and Boost Juice. Janine Allis was born in 1965. She started work at 17 at an advertising company. Later she worked as a model, as an assistant gym manager, as a nanny in France, in promotions in Portugal and as a camp counsellor in the United States. In 2000, while caring for her baby, she started Boost Juice from her home. Her first store opened in Adelaide, and by 2020 the chain had about 550 stores. In 2004 she was named Telstra Australian Business Woman of the Year. (Source: Wikipedia, “Janine Allis” and “Boost Juice”, retrieved 26 August 2026.)

- (a) List three jobs Janine Allis did before she started Boost Juice. (b) She worked in three countries before 2000. What quality does that pattern suggest about her? (c) From one store in 2000 to about 550 stores by 2020: upward, downward or level trend? Give one evidence number.

Q4. Use the price line graph (. E03). (a) Which month had the biggest rise, and how big was it? (b) Which month had the biggest drop? (c) In how many of the 26 months did prices go down? (d) “Prices rose in most months from May 2024 to June 2026.” True or false? Give one evidence number.

Q5. Use the survey example chart (.E04, links to 2A).



Horizontal bar chart, labelled EXAMPLE ONLY, of advertising methods used by 12 local businesses in one class survey: signs in the shop window 9, social media 8, word of mouth 7, letterbox flyers 4, local newspaper 2, radio 1.

- (a) Which method did the most businesses use? (b) Which did the fewest use? (c) The bars add up to 31, not 12. Why? (d) Write one trend sentence about the chart.

Q6. Look back at the model text. (a) Name the three parts every good description has. (b) List the trend words it boxes in blue. (c) What time frame does it give? (d) Write down two evidence numbers it uses.

On your own

Q7. Describe the retail chart in two or three sentences. Use at least one trend word, one time frame and two evidence numbers.

Q8. Choose two industries from the business table and compare them in words: which grew, which shrank or grew more slowly, and by how much.

Q9. Look at the spending pie chart. Does the average household's pattern show more spending on needs or on wants? Back your answer with two percentages.

Q10. Choose any graph or table in this section. Write three key points the data shows. Each key point must carry a number.

Inquiry task - run your own advertising survey (.E04, links to 2A)

This task is the investigation. Work through it over a few lessons.

1. **Plan.** With your teacher, write three questions to ask local businesses, such as "How do you let customers know about your business?" Tick the methods from a list: window signs, social media, word of mouth, letterbox flyers, local newspaper, radio, other.
2. **Collect.** With an adult, visit or phone about ten local businesses and record their ticks. Write down the date you collect the data - that date becomes your source line.
3. **Graph.** Tally the ticks and draw a bar chart like the example in Q5. Give it a title, label both axes, and add your source line: "Class survey of [number] local businesses, [date]."

4. **Describe.** Write two or three sentences using trend words, a time frame and evidence numbers: which method leads, which is rare, and anything that surprises you.
 5. **Conclude.** What does the pattern suggest about the link between the type of business, the advertising it uses and the customers it wants to reach? For example, did shops that rely on local regulars lean on one method while a business chasing new customers used another?
 6. **Check yourself.** Is your conclusion based on your data, or on what you expected to find? (That question is the heart of 4A.)
-

Answers

Q1. (a) Food retailing. (b) Department stores. (c) $\$14,995.5 \text{ m} - \$1,987.7 \text{ m} = \$13,007.8 \text{ million}$. (d) Sample: “Food retailing sold far more than any other industry - more than twice as much as household goods retailing.”

Q2. (a) 2,814,778. (b) Health care and social assistance (+6.7%). (c) Agriculture, forestry and fishing (-0.5%). (d) New South Wales (+26,057).

Q3. (a) Any three of: assistant at an advertising company, model, assistant gym manager, nanny in France, promotions worker in Portugal, camp counsellor in the United States. (b) Sample: she was willing to try new things and ready to take risks - she kept learning new jobs in new places before starting her own business. (c) Upward trend; evidence: 1 store in 2000, about 550 stores by 2020.

Q4. (a) July 2025, +1.3%. (b) May 2026, -0.7%. (c) 7 months. (d) True - the line sits above 0 in 16 of the 26 months.

Q5. (a) Signs in the shop window (9 of 12). (b) Radio (1 of 12). (c) Each business could tick more than one method, so the counts overlap. (d) Sample: “Nearly every business the class surveyed used shop-window signs, while only one used radio.”

Q6. (a) A trend word, a time frame and an evidence number. (b) rose, went down (“biggest” is also boxed - it tells you the size of the change). (c) May 2024 to June 2026 (July 2025 and May 2026 as well). (d) Any two of: 1.3%, 0.7%, 7, 26.

Q7. Sample: “In June 2025, Australian retail businesses sold \$37,906.6 million worth of goods. Food retailing led all industries at \$14,995.5 million, while department stores sold the least, \$1,987.7 million.” (Check: trend word, time frame, two evidence numbers.)

Q8. Sample: “Health care and social assistance grew faster (+6.7%) than transport, postal and warehousing (+4.9%), while agriculture, forestry and fishing was the only listed industry to shrink (-0.5%).”

Q9. Sample: “The pattern shows more spending on needs. Housing, food and transport - mainly needs - take 54% of the week’s spending, while recreation, a want, takes only 12%.”

Q10. Sample key points for the business table: (1) 2,814,778 businesses were trading at 30 June 2026; (2) NSW gained the most businesses in 2025-26 (+26,057); (3) agriculture, forestry and fishing shrank by 0.5% while the other listed industries grew.

Sources for this section (all retrieved 26 August 2026 unless stated): ABS, *Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results, 2015-16* (cat. 6530.0); ABS, *Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026* (cat. 6401.0), released 29 July 2026; ABS, *Retail Trade, Australia, June 2025* (cat. 8501.0); ABS, *Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, July 2022 - June 2026* (cat. 8165.0), released 18 August 2026; Wikipedia, “Janine Allis” and “Boost Juice”.

Where did this information come from? Finding and checking sources

Curriculum link. This section owns VC2HE6S04 (VC2 Levels 5–6, Skills strand, *Interpreting and analysing data and information*), with its elaboration ids .E01 and .E02.

Theory

Word watch — these words are defined here, the first time they are used in this book:

Word	What it means in this section
<i>data</i>	facts and numbers that have been collected
<i>information</i>	what data tells you when you read it
<i>source</i>	where a fact, number, graph or picture came from — the person or group that made it
<i>evidence</i>	data or information you use to back up what you say
<i>verify</i>	to check that something is true
<i>authentic, authenticity</i>	real, true and able to be trusted. <i>Authenticity</i> is the curriculum’s own word: data has authenticity when it really is what it says it is
<i>cross-check</i>	to look for the same fact or number in a second place
<i>footnote</i>	a small note under a table or graph, or at the bottom of a page, that says where the data came from
<i>heading</i>	the title at the top of a page or of part of a page
<i>web address ending</i>	the letters at the end of a web address — .gov.au, .edu.au, .com.au, .com — that show the kind of group that runs the site
<i>Consumer Price Index (CPI)</i>	the way the Australian Bureau of Statistics (the ABS) shows how much prices have gone up over time

The teaching sequence — five steps.

Step 1 — Every number has a maker.

When you see a number such as “prices went up 3.8%”, someone measured it and someone put it there. The *source* of the data is that someone. A fact with a named source is *evidence*. A fact with no source is only a claim. In this section you will learn to find the source of economics and business data (.E01), and then to make the check a habit — part of your routine for everything you use (.E02). It builds on 3B, where the web address endings .com, .edu and .gov first showed you where a site comes from, and it hands on to 4A, where a checked source is what makes a conclusion strong.

Step 2 — Find the clues.

Four places on a page tell you where its data came from. Figure 1 shows them on a drawn web page.

The web page is titled "Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026" and was released on 29 July 2026. It states that the CPI rose 3.8% in the 12 months to June 2026. Below this is a table showing the change in the CPI for different groups. The table has two columns: "Group" and "Change". The first row shows "Housing" with a change of "+6.8%". The second row shows "Food and non-alcoholic beverages" with a change of "+3.3%". Below the table is the source line: "Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics". The footer of the page reads "© Commonwealth of Australia · Australian Bureau of Statistics".

Group	Change
Housing	+6.8%
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	+3.3%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

© Commonwealth of Australia · Australian Bureau of Statistics

2 The web address
ends in .gov.au — a government site

1 The heading (title)
names the release

3 The Source line
under the table names who made it

4 The footer
shows who owns the site

Four places to look for the source of data on a web page (drawn for this book).

A drawn copy of a web page about the June 2026 CPI release, with four source clues labelled: 1 the heading, 2 the web address ending in .gov.au, 3 the Source line under the table, 4 the footer naming the Australian Bureau of Statistics

The page in Figure 1 is a drawn copy of a real ABS page. Figure 2 shows the real numbers with their clues circled.

A source with its clues showing

www.abs.gov.au ②

Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026 ①
Released 29 July 2026

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 3.8% in the 12 months to June 2026.

Group	Annual change
Housing	+6.8%
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	+3.3%
Recreation and culture	+3.3%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics ③

What do the clues tell us?

1 The heading says this is the CPI release for the June quarter of 2026.

2 The address ends in .gov.au, so it is an Australian Government site.

3 The Source line names the Australian Bureau of Statistics (the ABS).

So we know who made these numbers, where they live, and when they came out.

That is what it means to establish the source of data.

Numbers: ABS, Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026 (released 29 July 2026), retrieved 26 August 2026. Extract re-drawn for this book.

The same page drawn as a source extract with three clues circled — the heading naming the release, the web address www.abs.gov.au, and the Source line naming the Australian Bureau of Statistics — beside a panel saying what each clue tells us

The web address ending is one of the clues. Figure 3 shows the Australian forms of those endings and what each one suggests.

Web address endings: what they tell you about who runs a site

Ending	Who usually runs it	What that tells you
.gov.au	The Australian Government and its bodies, such as the ABS and the ATO	Official home of government numbers and rules — a strong place to check a fact
.edu.au	Universities and schools	Teaching and research bodies — usually careful, still worth checking
.com.au	Businesses registered in Australia	A business runs the site — ask why it wants you to know this
.com	Anyone in the world	Could be anyone — check who wrote it before you use it
.org	Groups and organisations of many kinds	Find out who the group is and what it wants

The ending is a clue, not a guarantee. Even a good site can carry an old number, and a site that looks tidy can still be wrong. Always check the date and cross-check.

Made for this book. The curriculum names .gov, .edu and .com as provenance clues.

A table of web address endings, .gov.au, .edu.au, .com.au, .com and .org, showing who usually runs each kind of site and what that tells you

Step 3 — Ask the source five questions.

The clues tell you who made a page. The questions tell you how far to trust it.

Five questions to ask a source

1

Who made this?

A person? A business? The government? Look for a name, an About page, or a Source line.

2

Why did they make it?

To tell people something? To sell something? To get you to agree? The reason matters.

3

When was it made?

Look for a date. Old numbers can be true for their time but wrong for today.

4

Where did the data come from?

Good pages say where their numbers came from, often in a Source line or footnote.

5

Can I find the same data in a second place?

Check the site of the body that made the data, or another careful source.

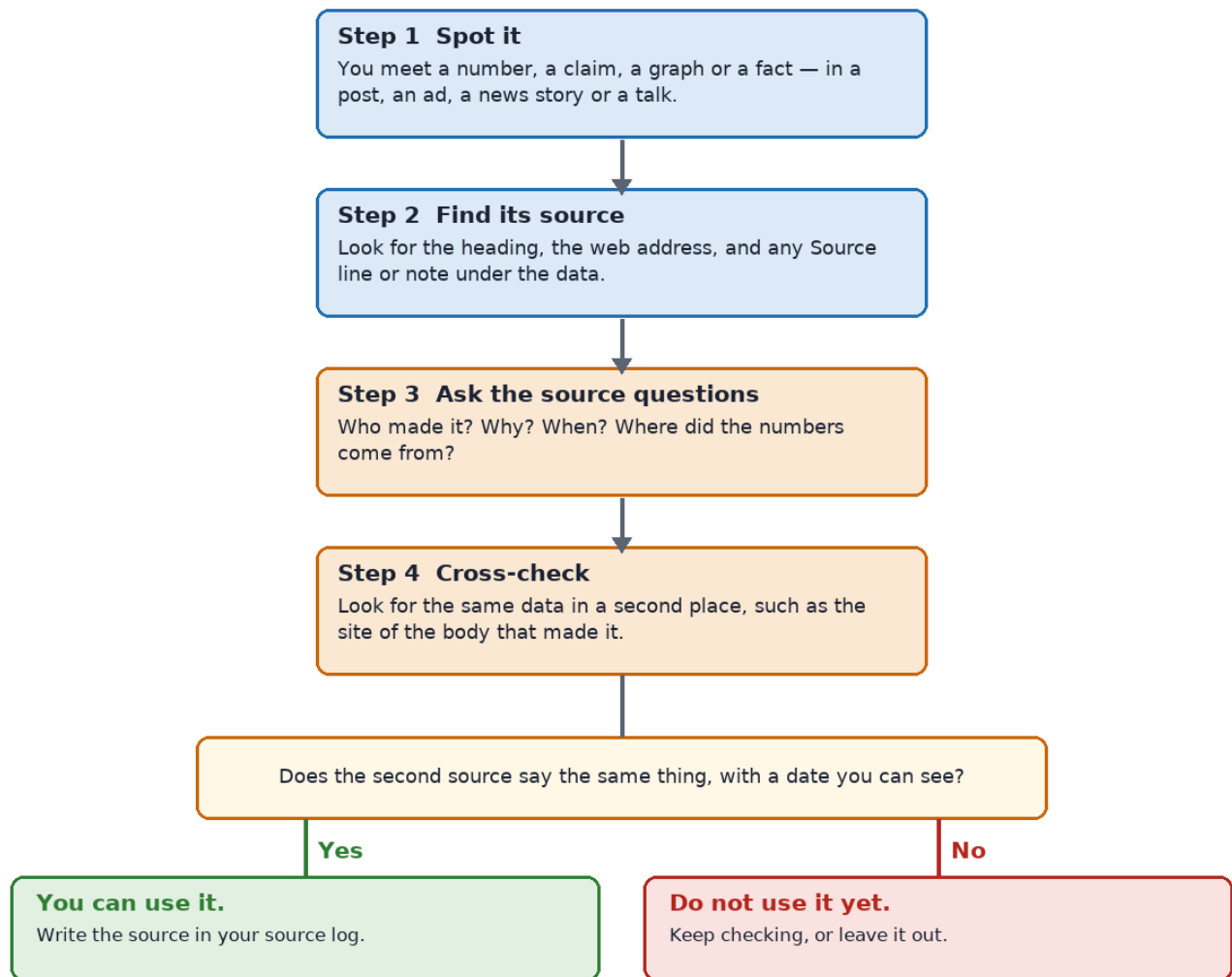
If you cannot answer these, say so. "I don't know where this came from" is a strong finding.

Five numbered questions to ask a source: who made this, why did they make it, when was it made, where did the data come from, and can I find the same data in a second place

Step 4 — Cross-check to verify authenticity.

One source can be wrong, old, or taking one side. So look for the same number in a second place. That cross-check is how you *verify* that data is *authentic*.

The source-check routine: four steps every time

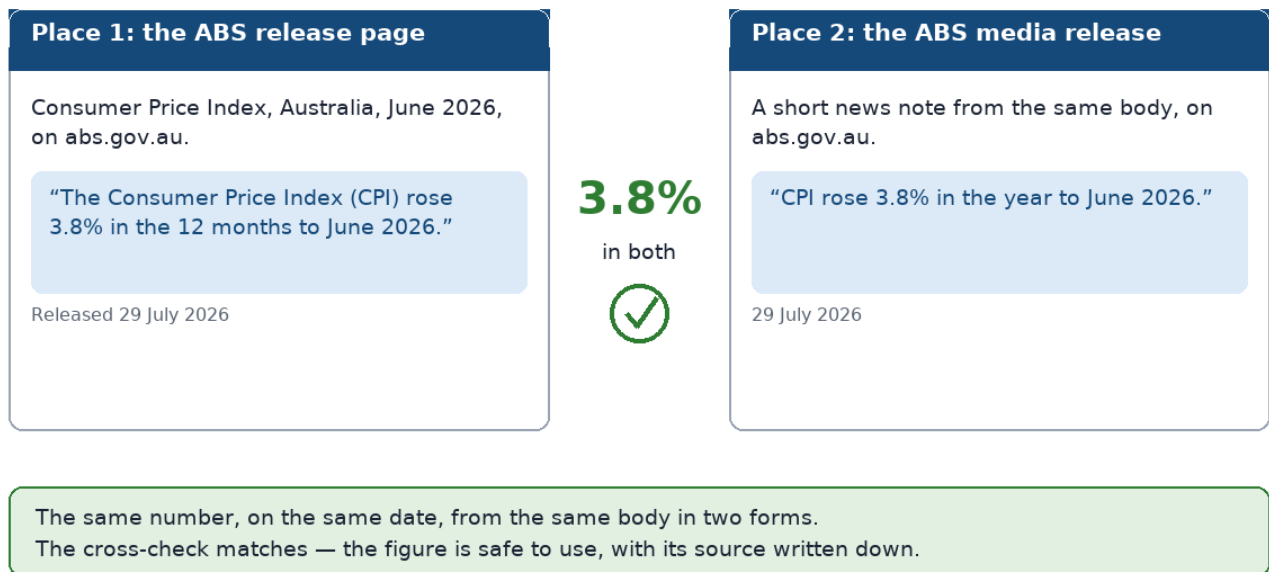


Routine means every time — not just for big claims. Made for this book.

A flow chart of the source-check routine: spot it, find its source, ask the source questions, cross-check, then use the data only if a second source with a date says the same thing

Figure 6 shows a real cross-check: the same CPI number, in two places on the ABS site, on the same date.

Cross-checking: one number, two places

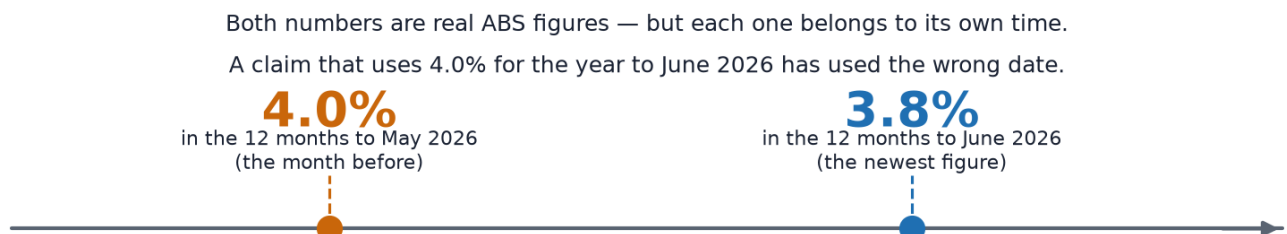


Both texts are real ABS words from 29 July 2026, retrieved 26 August 2026.

Two ABS pages side by side, the release page and the media release, both giving 3.8% for the year to June 2026, with a green tick showing the cross-check matches

And Figure 7 shows why the date is part of the check: two real ABS numbers, each one true for its own time.

Same story, different dates: always check which time a number is for



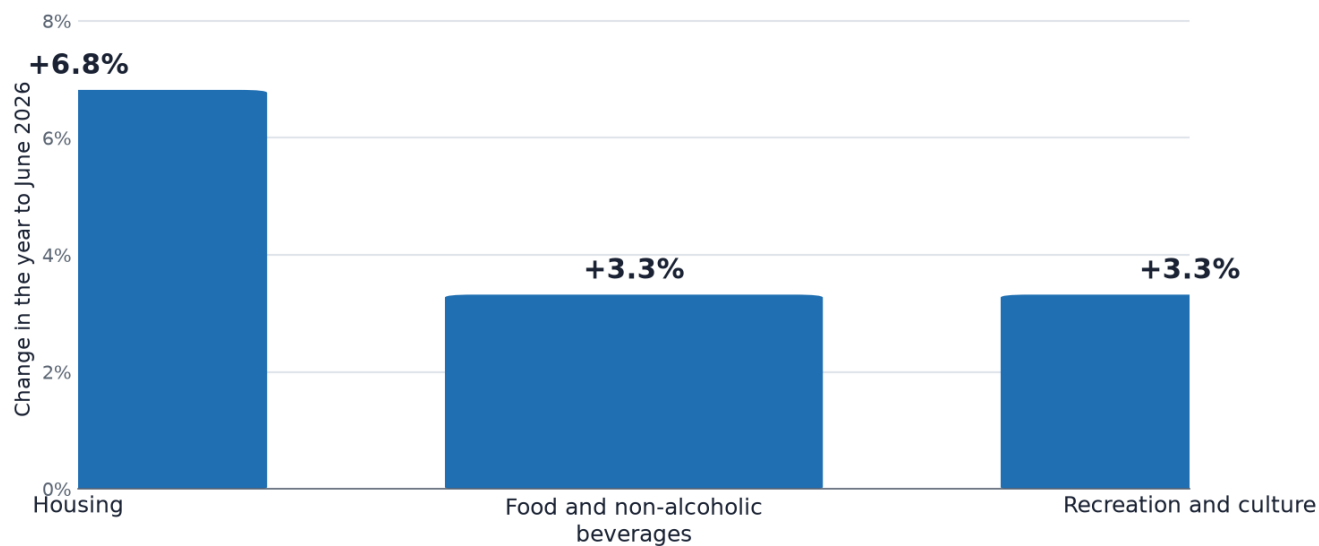
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026 (released 29 July 2026), retrieved 26 August 2026.

A timeline showing that 4.0% is the figure for the 12 months to May 2026 while 3.8% is the figure for the 12 months to June 2026, so the date tells you which number a claim should use

Step 5 — Make it a habit: keep a source log.

Routinely means every time — for charts and graphs too. Every chart in this book names its source under it, like Figure 8.

Prices went up by different amounts: three groups from the CPI, year to June 2026



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026 (released 29 July 2026), retrieved 26 August 2026. Selected groups shown.

A column chart of three groups from the CPI for the year to June 2026: Housing plus 6.8 percent, Food and non-alcoholic beverages plus 3.3 percent, and Recreation and culture plus 3.3 percent, with the ABS named as the source under the chart

Figure 9 is a source log with one real row filled in.

My source log

Check every number or fact you use, and write it down here. That makes checking a habit.

What I used	Where I found it	Web address or book	Date I checked	Cross-checked where?
Prices rose 3.8% in the year to June 2026	ABS release: Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026	www.abs.gov.au (.gov.au)	26 August 2026	ABS media release of 29 July 2026 — same 3.8%
(your next fact)				

If a box stays empty, you have not finished checking. Say what is missing, not nothing.

A source log table with one worked row for the 3.8% CPI figure and one empty row: columns for what was used, where it was found, the web address, the date checked, and where it was cross-checked

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help

Establish the source of this number: “The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 3.8% in the 12 months to June 2026.”

Working	Comment
Clue 1 — the heading. The page is called Consumer	The heading names the release, and tells you which time

Working	Comment
<i>Price Index, Australia, June 2026.</i>	the number is for.
Clue 2 — the web address. The address ends in .gov.au .	A .gov.au ending means an Australian Government site (Figure 3).
Clue 3 — the Source line and the footer. Under the table: <i>Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics.</i>	The Source line names the maker: the ABS, the government group that measures prices.
The five questions (Figure 4). Who: the ABS. Why: to report official prices. When: released 29 July 2026. Where from: the ABS's own measuring.	All four can be answered, so the source is established.
So the 3.8% comes from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in the release <i>Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026</i> , released 29 July 2026 at www.abs.gov.au .	

Example 2 — with help

Verify this claim: “Prices went up 4.0% in the year to June 2026.”

Working	Comment
Step 1 — spot it. The claim is a number: 4.0% for the year to June 2026.	A number with no source cannot be checked, so find the ABS number it must match.
Step 2 — find the ABS numbers. The ABS release <i>Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026</i> says the CPI rose 3.8% in the 12 months to June 2026, and that 4.0% was for the 12 months to May 2026.	The ABS page gives both numbers, each with its date.
Step 3 — compare the dates (Figure 7). The claim uses the May number for the June year.	A real number, but the wrong time.
Step 4 — the check's answer. The claim does not pass the cross-check.	Do not reuse it. If you need the year-to-June figure, the checked number is 3.8%.

So the claim is not authentic for the year to June 2026 — it mixes up two real numbers. The cross-check caught it.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Look at Figure 2. (a) Name the three clues circled on the page. (b) What does each clue tell you about where the 3.8% and the table numbers came from?

Q2. Sort these web address endings using Figure 3: **.gov.au**, **.com**, **.edu.au**, **.com.au**. (a) Which ending suggests an Australian Government group? (b) Which suggests a business? (c) Which needs the most careful checking, and why?

Q3. A supermarket's page says “our prices are the lowest in town!” Ask the five questions from Figure 4 about that page. Write one answer you **can** find on the page and one answer you **cannot**.

Q4. Copy the first row of the source log in Figure 9 into your book, then add a new row for this fact: “Housing prices went up 6.8% in the year to June 2026.” Fill in all five boxes.

Q5. A classmate's note says “the CPI went up 3.8% in the year to June 2026”, with the source “ABS media release, 29 July 2026”. Figure 6 shows the second place. Does the cross-check match, not match, or can you not tell? How do you know?

Q6. Which of these Source lines tells you more, and why? (a) *Source: a website.* (b) *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026, released 29 July 2026.*

On your own

Q7. Find one economics or business number outside this section — a price in a shop, a number in a news story, a number in a post. Write it down, then establish its source using the clues in Figure 1.

Q8. A friend says “everything costs twice as much as last year”. Without using the internet, write the three questions from Figure 4 you would ask first, and one way to cross-check the claim later.

Q9. Put these four places in order, from “usually needs the least checking” to “usually needs the most checking”, and give one reason for your order: a social media post about prices; the abs.gov.au site; a shop’s own advertisement; a library book about money.

Q10. Design a source-check poster for your classroom: four steps from the flow chart in Figure 5, one line each. Under each step, write one clue or one question from this section.

Inquiry task — check a real source yourself

With your teacher or at home, open www.abs.gov.au and find the CPI release *Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026* (search those words on the site). Then:

1. Write the heading, the web address ending and the release date in your source log.
2. Find the Source line, or the name of the group that made the data.
3. Find the same 3.8% in one more place on the site — the media release works.
4. Write one sentence: “The number 3.8% came from ..., and I checked it on ...”

If the site has moved on to a newer release by the time you look, do the same four steps for the newest release. The routine is the skill, not the number.

Answers

Q1. (a) The heading (the release title), the web address ending (.gov.au) and the Source line under the table; the footer also names the ABS. (b) The heading names the release and its time; the address shows an Australian Government site; the Source line names the maker, the ABS.

Q2. (a) .gov.au. (b) .com.au (a business in another country may use .com). (c) .com — anyone in the world can run a .com site, so check who wrote it and why.

Q3. Example answers — yours may differ. On the page: who made it (the supermarket) and why (to sell). Not on the page: where their “lowest” number came from, and whether a second source agrees.

Q4. What: Housing +6.8% in the year to June 2026. Where: the ABS release *Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026*. Address: www.abs.gov.au (.gov.au). Date checked: today’s date. Cross-check: the column chart in Figure 8, which shows the same 6.8%.

Q5. Match. Both places sit on the ABS site, both say 3.8% for the year to June 2026, and both carry the date 29 July 2026.

Q6. (b). It names the maker, the release and the date, so you can find it and check it. (a) names nothing you can check.

Q7. Example answers. A full answer names the number, the maker, and the clue that showed the maker — heading, address, Source line or footer.

Q8. Example: who says so? When is their number from? Where did “twice” come from? Cross-check later: look up the ABS CPI for the last 12 months — prices would need to go up about 100% to be “twice as much”.

Q9. A good order, with reasons that name the maker: abs.gov.au (the government group that makes the numbers) → the library book (checked in print before it reaches you) → the shop’s advertisement (the seller talking about itself) → a social media post (anyone, no name, no date).

Q10. Example answers. Full marks for the four steps in order — spot it, find the source, ask the questions, cross-check — with a clue or question from this section under each.

Inquiry. A full log row names the heading, the .gov.au address, the release date (29 July 2026 for the June 2026 release), the maker (the ABS), the cross-check place and your check date.

Sources for the real data in this section. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Consumer Price Index, Australia, June 2026*, released 29 July 2026, and the ABS media release *CPI rose 3.8% in the year to June 2026*, 29 July 2026; both at www.abs.gov.au, checked 26 August 2026. The 4.0% figure is the ABS number for the 12 months to May 2026, quoted in the same release. All figures and extracts in this section were drawn for this book from those sources.