



Drawing Conclusions

Police stopped a van with a driver and three passengers for a traffic violation. One passenger was a woman, and the other three people in the van were men. Because the driver had prior charges, the police asked him if they could search the van. The driver asked what they were looking for. The police said drugs or guns, and the driver consented to the search. (It is legal to search open containers with the driver's consent.) The passengers left the van, and when the police found a woman's purse in the back, they searched it and found drugs.

Was this a legal search of the woman's purse? Did the driver have the authority to consent to the search? Could the purse have belonged to the driver? Use the chart to help you draw your own conclusions. Write your answers in the second column.

Assess information	
1. What are the facts in this case?	
Apply prior knowledge	
2. What relevant information did the police have when they asked to search the van?	
Reach a conclusion	
3. What conclusions can you draw about this case?	
Test your conclusion	
4. Were there any other conclusions that could have been drawn considering the facts in the case?	