

Elementary Research Checklist

Defining a Topic

- I thought about what interested me
- I decided what I already knew
- I thought about what I wanted to know
- I selected a topic to study
- I decided on a question to study about my topic. I made my question clear and pertinent.
- I thought about the different ways I could explore my topic
- I made sure I could complete it in the time I had
- I brainstormed a list of my ideas
- I clustered my ideas to help organize them for my research

Gathering Information

- I gathered information from a variety of sources:
 - library card catalog
 - Databases
 - books and CD's
 - periodicals
 - videos
 - experts
 - Internet
 - other

Sorting Information

- I selected only the information that answered my question.
- I revised my search based on the information I found.
- I paid attention to the quality of my information; it was from a reliable source
- I thought about the timeliness of the information.
- I took into account the difference between fact and opinion. I watched for propaganda or biased information.
- I noticed when sources agreed or disagreed.
- I decided what the most important information was.
- I kept track of my sources (eg. copyright date, title, author, publisher, page or path information).

Organizing Information

- I compared the information I collected from various sources.

- I used a graphical organizer such as a web, a chart, a timeline or a table to help me understand or explain how the information goes together.
- I decided on the most important points and eliminated information I didn't need.
- I organized the key ideas in a logical order.
- I summarized using my own words.

Communicating Information

- I considered my audience.
- I thought about the best way to show what I found out.
- I answered my questions in my search for information.
- I clearly communicated my information so others could understand.

Evaluating My Research

- I looked for the strengths and weaknesses of my research process and product.
- I thought about the advice I would have for someone doing research.
- I thought about ways I could make my research even better.