

**Abraham Lincoln Elementary School
Media Center**

Research Handbook



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Introduction

Oh no.....the teacher has assigned you a research project! This is your first and you have no idea where to begin. Well...look no further. This research handbook will answer all your research questions and more.

Included in this handbook is:

- *A list of research materials found in the media center. This list includes print and online resources available for your use.

- *A step-by-step guide to research: finding resources, evaluating resources, how to take notes, how to cite your sources, how to avoid plagiarism and how to present your final project.

- *A map of where everything is located in the library

- *General information about the media center like hours, check-out procedures, patrons catalog, etc.

You may always ask Mrs. Vigna, the media specialist, for help.

Now....get to work!

Resources for research

Print research materials

This is the place to start your project. These are books that have a lot of information to set you on your way.

The following titles can be found in the media center's reference section:

World Book Encyclopedia - This is a 22 volume set that provides information about people, places, things, events and ideas.

The New Book of Knowledge – This encyclopedia provides articles on history, literature, art, music, math, science and sports.

The American Heritage Children's Dictionary – This dictionary provides definitions, pronunciations, word origins of over 34,000 words. It also includes a thesaurus.

The American Heritage Children's Science Dictionary – This dictionary contains information about science. Topics include: astronomy, biology, physics, chemistry, weather, computers, medicine and more. Also, contains biographies of famous scientists.

Roget's Thesaurus – Look here when you need a synonym for a word.

U.S. Atlas for Young Explorers – This atlas contains full page, easy to read maps of the fifty states. It is organized by sections of the U.S.: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest and West.

Digital & Online Resources

These are resources that you will find on the computer. You will need your identification number and password.

Subscription Databases:

Encyclopedia Britannica Online School Edition – This online encyclopedia contains over 74,000 articles. It also includes a thesaurus, dictionary and atlas.

Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia – You can use two different encyclopedias plus a dictionary, thesaurus and atlas at this database. Has a great feature called “Today is....find out what happened his day in history.”

Newsbank School Mate Kids Page – This site provides information about plants, animals, fossils, science, math, earth, health, sports, important problems and more.

Oxford English Dictionary Online – This dictionary has over one half million words! Also features a “Word of the Day.”

SIRS Discoverer - This is a great place to visit for research project ideas. Provides access to an almanac, thesaurus, encyclopedia and dictionary.

World Book Online – This encyclopedia has over 25,000 articles and 1,800 tables that provides a huge range of information about countries and other places.

Websites:

[AOL New Search for Kids](#)

[Ask Jeeves for Kids](#)

[Fact Monster](#)

[Information Please Almanac](#)

[KidsClick](#)

[Yahooligans](#)

These websites are free and considered safe for student use. For more approved websites visit the Montgomery County Public Schools webpage:

<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/isa/elit/tea/searchengcomlist.htm>



Newspapers & Magazines

You should now have some basic information about your research topic. Newspapers and magazines are great places to gather additional information.

Cobblestone – A magazine for grades 4 and up about American history.

National Geographic for Kids – Learn about the world and its cultures.

Ranger Rick – All about nature for grades 2 and up.

Spider- This magazine contains stories, poems, and activities for Students in grades 1-4.

The Montgomery County Gazette – This is your local newspaper. and is published weekly.

The Washington Post – This newspaper is a must have for local, state and worldwide news. It is published daily.

Zoobooks – The magazine for all you need to know about animals.

Check-List for a successful Research project



- Choose your topic.
- Locate Your Sources.
- Take Notes.
- Organize Your Ideas.
- Write your first Draft.
- Document Sources.
- Write Bibliography.
- Revise First Draft.
- Write Final Draft/prepare your presentation.

1. Choose your topic – If your teacher did not assign you a topic you will have to choose one. Try to pick a topic that is fun and interesting. Think of something that you enjoy learning more about.

If a topic Doesn't come to mind, ask yourself these questions:

what subjects am I interested in?

What interests me most about those subjects?

Is there anything I wonder about with regard
To the subject?

Once you have chosen a topic, you may need to narrow a down a bit. For example:

Broad: pets

Narrow: dogs

2. Locate your sources – Use the first pages of this handbook to locate your sources.

First use print resources (encyclopedia, dictionary, Atlas, etc.)

Next use Digital resources (subscription databases & Websites.

For a final bit of information try magazines & Newspapers.

3. **Take Notes** – It is extremely important to take notes as you locate information. Use Use notecards or a notebook to record Information. Write down important information From Each source. Don't write down too much! Summarize the author's main ideas, but put Them in your own words.

Document each source as you go. This will help you Complete your bibliography.

General Format for Print Resources:

Author name (Last name, first name). Title of Book. city of publisher: publisher, year of publication.

General Format for Digital Resources:

Author name (last name, First name). "Article Title." Site Name. Article Date. Organization Name. date you visited the site

4. **Organize your ideas** – By this time you should have gathered a lot of information on your topic. Before you write your report you need to organize your information. It is best to use an outline. An outline shows your main ideas and the order in which you are going to write. Use the sample outline on the next page to help create your outline.

Sample Outline

Your research topic

I. Main idea

A. supporting detail

1.

2.

Example:

Different types of animals that are kept for pets.

I. Household animals

A. Dogs

1. considered man's best friend

2. over 100 different breeds

II. Farm animals

a. horses

1.

2.



5. **Write your first draft.** Use the outline you prepared to write your paper for the first time. Include the following:

introduction –this is the first paragraph of the paper. You are telling the reader what your paper is about. Try to capture their attention with your opening paragraph.

Body – this consists of several paragraphs that Develop your paper in detail. Use your outline to Guide you. Remember to start a new paragraph When you change from one idea to the next. Use Examples and quotations from your research.

Conclusion – this is where you summarize your Main points. You should not include any new Information In the conclusion.

6. **Cite your sources.** If you have prepared notecards for each of your sources (see # 3) this step should be a snap. If you need more help with citing sources, please visit the following website.

<http://www.factmonster.com/homework/t8biblio.html>

7. **Write your bibliography .** Your sources should be listed in alphabetical order by the author's last name. sources that don't have an author (encyclopedia, dictionary) should be listed in alphabetical Order by title.
8. Revise your first draft. Here are some ideas for accomplishing this task:

set the paper aside for a few days. You have looked at it for a long time. Take a break and come back refreshed (that is if you have not waited until the last minute)

read it out loud – when you hear it, you may hear places where it “doesn't sound right” or you have left out a word or two.

Have someone else read it. Mom or dad, big Brother or sister. Someone who can tell You what they think.

Proofread! Look for punctuation & Capitalization errors. If you have done Your research on the computer, use spell Check/grammar check

9. **write your final draft.** You are almost done!
Correct any mistakes and prepare a “perfect”
Copy to be turned in to the teacher. Give
Yourself a “pat on the back” for a job well
Done.
10. **Prepare your presentation.** You have several
options for how you want to present your
research. Your teacher may have given you
specific instructions about how to do this. If
so, be sure to follow those directions.

If you can choose, here are some things to
Consider:

Written Report

Use word processing program such as
Microsoft Word to complete the written
Portion.

You may certainly do the written portion
In your own writing if your teacher allows
It.

Oral report

Live presentation – this is where you get up in
Front of your class and share your research.
Your teacher should give you guidelines for
Doing this. Practice, Practice, practice before
The big day!

Videotaped presentation – if allowed, you may have
Someone videotape the presentation to be shown to
Your class. You may arrange to have the media
Specialist record it for you.

Visual Aids

PowerPoint Presentations – this is a great way to Make your research “come alive” for the audience. This is best for projects that have pictures, photos or Sounds.

Poster – this is another place to show your creativity. Sketch it out on a piece of paper before putting your Work on a poster.

Display board – similar to a poster, but bigger. This Is a great way to show scientific research.



Some final words of wisdom:

Plagiarism

The Merriam-webster dictionary defines plagiarism as: “the act of presenting the ideas and words of Another as one’s own.”

This means that you can't copy the work Of someone else and say it is yours!

You must give credit to the person(s) who Created the work. That is the reason for Citing your sources.

Here are some examples of information That we should give credit for:

Quotations (exact words)

Summarized information (like from Encyclopedia)
Ideas

Opinions (not your own)

Maps, charts, graphs

Here's a website for more information:

<http://www.factmonster.com/spot/plagiarism.html>

Copyright



it is against the law to copy other people's work without their permission! Sound scary...well it doesn't have to be. Copyright means that the person who created a book, poem, picture, video recording has control over who is allowed to make copies of their work. In other words you need their permission to use the work. Since that would make research a very time consuming project the law gives you (the researcher) permission to use small parts of another person's work as long as you give credit by citing your source.

Please visit this website to learn more about copyright:

[Copyright and fair use guidelines for school projects](#)

Media Center information

Hours: The media center is open from 8:30 a.m
Until 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Class use: Classes are assigned times to visit
The media center. Teachers may sign-up for
Additional time for research.

Check out procedures: books may be checked
Out for two weeks. There is a limit of two
Books per student. Refence materials may
Not be checked out, but can be used in the
Media center.

Patron's catalog – the patron's catalog is an
Online catalog of all of the resources (print &
Online) available at Colesville Elementary.
The catalog can be accessed on any computer
In the media center or classroom.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN Elementary School
Media center

COMPUTER
STATIONS

NON
FICTION

FICTION

CHECK OUT
AREA

REFERENCE SECTION

ENTRANCE