



ONLINE RESEARCH SKILLS

INFORMATION LITERACY AND ONLINE RESEARCH SKILLS

Starting a research project can feel intimidating, there are so many details to organize and the internet can feel overwhelming. Here is a cheat sheet with some helpful skills that will help you find the best sites for your project and keep track of the information you find.



SEARCH

This is where you clarify your topic by coming up with the key details you want to search online. You will need to choose which resources will work for you and determine the direction of your project.



SELECT

There are so many websites and online resources available to you. A savvy researcher will determine which sites offer the most suitable information for their project and look for high quality, truthful resources.



CITE

As you gather information, it needs to be carefully organized so you can assemble it for your final presentation. It is important to take careful notes and to include quotations so you can demonstrate where you found your information.

SEARCH

HOW TO BEGIN



At the start of your project, take a moment to clarify the direction you want to go with your project. Consider some key words or phrases, concise questions and important vocabulary to get your started on your search.

- Make a list of 5-10 words to describe your topic
- Create some simple questions that will help guide your search
- Design a web or a chart to help you think about all the details of your topic

SELECT

CHOOSING THE BEST RESOURCES



Choose high-quality websites, with trustworthy information.

- Practice skim reading to scan the site to determine if the site is a good fit for your topic: Take a look through the titles, highlighted words and main paragraphs, these should give you an understanding of the big idea of the article.
- Make sure to choose credible resources. Often websites that end in .com, .org, .edu, .gov come from more reliable sources such as academic institutions and recognized organizations. You can also use a website evaluation chart to thoroughly test if your site is trustworthy!

LOOK FOR RELIABLE WEB SOURCES FROM SITES THAT END IN .COM, .ORG, .EDU, .GOV

- Start your search with a creditable source by searching our district Resource Databases. These are a collection of encyclopedias, magazines and journals that have been vetted so they are safe, free of advertisements and widely available. Having trouble finding them? Check out this infographic to get you started!

CITE

KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR INFORMATION



It is important to keep all your information well-organized so you can go back to it for your final presentation.

Find a style of note-taking that works for you and stick with it. All your notes should be clear, separate and quotable.

- Don't be afraid to take up space, your notes can be many pages as long as you're able to find what you're looking for!
- Summarize big ideas in your own words
- Use quotation marks when taking notes so that you can accurately cite the original speaker. Remember, you cannot use someone else's phrases, sentences or ideas without giving them credit. This is called *plagiarism*.
- Keep a handy Citation Reference Sheet available so you can properly cite your sources at the end of your project