



Research Basics – Syllabus

Course Description: This course will introduce your child to the basics of research, an incredibly practical skill for all students. Students will first choose from a list of historical events or figures. Then, students will learn how to choose good research material, copy source information, take notes, create an outline, plan their writing, and write a basic three (3) to five (5) paragraph composition based on their research.

Course Outline:

Week One: Beginning Steps

- A. Choosing a Topic
- B. Finding Sources
- C. Creating a Bibliography

Week Two: Researching & Note-Taking

- A. Basic Narrative Elements
- B. Note-Taking Tips
- C. Review of Plagiarism

Week Three: Creating an Outline

Week Four: Beginning the Rough Draft

Week Five: Continuing the Rough Draft

Week Six: Finishing the Rough Draft

Week Seven: Editing the Research Project

Week Eight: Submitting the Final Paper



Research Basics

Grading Information: Assignments 1 through 7 will be averaged together to receive a weekly assignment grade. The final project presented on Week 8 will receive a separate grade. Both the weekly assignment average and the final project grade will be combined utilizing the weighting seen below:

Course Components	Percentage of Final Grade
Weekly Assignments	40%
Final Paper	60%

Assignments 1 through 7 will be graded using the following rough-draft rubric. The final project presented on Week 8 will be graded using our standard grading rubric for *The Beginning Writer*.

Exemplary 100%	Strong 99%-90%	Proficient 89%-80%	Developing 79%-70%	Emerging 69%-60%	Beginning 59%-50%	No Attempt 49% and below
Student has followed all assignment directions and has demonstrated exemplary understanding of lesson concepts. For drafts of outline, bibliography, and paper, student has submitted a complete assignment and demonstrated excellent effort.	Student has followed most assignment directions and has demonstrated strong understanding of lesson concepts. For drafts of outline, bibliography, and paper, student has submitted a mostly complete assignment and demonstrated strong effort.	Student has followed most assignment directions but has struggled to fully understand lesson concepts. For drafts of outline, bibliography, and paper, student has submitted a mostly complete assignment and demonstrated proficient effort.	Student has followed some or most assignment directions but has demonstrated a need for better understanding of lesson concepts. For drafts of outline, bibliography, and paper, student has submitted mediocre written work and demonstrated some lack of effort.	Student has followed some assignment directions but has demonstrated inadequate understanding of lesson concepts. For drafts of outline, bibliography, and paper, student has submitted inadequate written work so that the instructor finds it difficult to provide helpful feedback.	Student has followed few assignment directions and has demonstrated poor understanding of lesson concepts. For drafts of outline, bibliography, and paper, student has submitted short and poorly written work so that the instructor is unable to provide helpful feedback.	Student has followed few to no assignment directions and has demonstrated no understanding of lesson concepts. For drafts of outline, bibliography, and paper, student has submitted nothing.



Research Basics

Lesson One: Beginning Steps

SAMPLE LESSON

What is research? **Researching is reading and studying to learn more about something.**

Why do we research? **We research in order to learn more about something that interests us or about something we need to know.**

What do we do with the research? **Often, we can just research whatever we would like and not write anything; but in school, we write about what we have researched to show that we are learning.**

We write a research paper.

This class will teach you not only how to research but also all of the steps to writing a small three to five-paragraph research paper.

Of course, the first step to any research project is to decide what you are going to research. If you do not have a topic to study, it would be a little difficult to research, would it not?

For this class, we will ask you to write about a historical event or figure. This is often a good place to start with research, and it will allow you to put some basic composition writing skills to use with chronological (narrative) order or order of importance.

BEGIN TO RESEARCH –

After you have chosen your topic, you must begin to research. The first step in researching is to find resources. ***Resources are books, websites, magazines, newspapers, or videos from which you can get information about your topic.***

Where can you find valuable resources for your research project?

- **Look around your house** for books, magazines, newspapers, or videos that pertain to your topic. You might be surprised what your parents have stashed on the bookshelves.
- If the topic really interests you, **you might even already have** some resources of your own that would be useful.
- **Go to the library** and look for books, magazines, and videos that talk about your topic.
- **Ask your friends or family** for resources if you know they might have something about the topic.
- **Use the internet** to find videos, online magazines and newspapers, articles, and other information about your topic.
- You can also **use personal interviews** if you know a person who is very knowledgeable about the topic.

NOTE: When looking for research sources, particularly books, please consider the difference between fiction and nonfiction. Fiction books are imaginative stories. Sometimes, fictional books can be of use in a research project, but they should not provide the bulk of your information as it may be difficult to know the difference between what in the story is factual and what is made up. Nonfiction books are those that are factual. Because you are trying to research and understand the complete truth of a topic, look primarily for non-fiction resources.

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY –

Although you may have trouble pronouncing or spelling *bibliography*, it is not a difficult word to understand. **A bibliography is an alphabetized list of the resources you used for research.** At the end of your research project, you should include a list of the books, magazines, newspapers, websites, videos, and personal interviews you used so the reader knows where you got your information.

The trickiest part of creating a bibliography is finding all of the information and putting it in the right order. **There are some very specific rules.** At The Lantern English Co., we use a set of rules known as MLA format. You will use this format in all of our classes.

So, let's learn how to write a bibliography listing for each type of source in MLA format. Below we show you the information and the order. Then, we show you an example. **(Please note: if your bibliography listing is more than one line long, the subsequent lines should be indented.)**

Books:

Last name, First name (Author). *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Wilde, Andrew. *Through the Dawn*. Seattle, Washington: ABC Publishing, 1998.

Books w/ more than one author:

(authors should be ordered the same way in which they are ordered in the book. The first author is listed using last name/first name format; additional authors are presented using first name/last name format.)

Collins, Carolyn Strom and Christina Wyss Erikson. *The World of Little House*. Harper Collins, 1996.

Videos (Standard):

Title. Director, Performers or Narrators, Publisher, year.

Planet Earth. Directed by Alastair Fothergill, performances by David Attenborough, BBC, 2007.

YouTube Videos:

Last name, First name (Of Creator, If Applicable). "Title of Video." *YouTube*, uploaded by, date, URL.

McGonigal, Jane. "Gaming and Productivity." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Think, 3 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3E.

"Scenic Palouse River Canyon LONG Train Pace 10/1/2018." *YouTube*, uploaded by Railfan Dan, 10 Nov 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_to8liroYUc.

Websites:

Last Name, First Name (Author). "Title of Article." *Name of Site*, Name of publisher, publication date, URL.
Access Date.

Morin, Amy. "The Importance of Chores for Kids." *Very Well*, 3 December 2017,
<https://www.verywellfamily.com/the-importance-of-chores-for-kids-1095018>.
Accessed 24 April 2018.

Newspaper/Magazine Articles:

Last Name, First Name (Author). "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical*, Month Year, pages.

Landes, Rachel. "Bright Spot." *Better Homes and Gardens*, January 2013, pp 17-18.

Personal Interviews:

Last name, First Name (person you interviewed). Personal Interview. Date of Interview.

Jamieson, Stephen. Personal Interview. 29 July 2013.

Finding Information for the Bibliography:

Finding information for your bibliography is usually fairly easy. However, the location of information varies by type of source.

- **Books:** The title and author are on the front cover; flip open to one of the first pages, known as the copyright page. You can find the publication company, location, and date there.
- **Videos:** The title and director are usually both on the front of the case; the back side of the case usually lists the popular actors/performers as well as the publisher and date. For YouTube videos, the title, the person who uploaded the video, and the upload date are listed directly beneath the video.
- **Websites:** The title of the website should be at the top of the page; if there is a separate title for the article, that should be listed above any writing, followed by an author and a publication date.

(Sometimes, the publication date is located at the bottom of a web article.) If there is a specific publisher, this will be listed at the bottom of the website. However, please note that the publisher is NOT the same as the name of the website. If there is no author, specific publisher, or publication date, omit those sections from your bibliography listing.

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT WEB SOURCES: You may notice that the URL—that's the website address—automatically becomes underlined when pasted into the document. This is to show that the URL is an active link, one that you could click on to go directly to the website. However, in MLA format, URLs should not be underlined. In order to get rid of the underline, you will need to right click on the link and hit “remove hyperlink.”

- **Magazines/Newspapers:** The title is on the front cover; the article title and author are above the article. The date of the issue is also on the front cover. Then, locate what pages the article is located on.

That looks a little challenging, does it not? If you are confused, it is okay. Writing a bibliography is difficult at first. There is a lot of information to keep track of and rules to follow. Re-read the examples if you do not quite understand. Ask a parent, teacher, or older sibling for help if you need it.

REQUIREMENTS –

Most research papers have requirements. When you are choosing your topic and resources, it is important to know what the assignment requirements are and to pay close attention to them.

For this basic research project, you have two requirements:

1. Find **three or four** sources you can use; ***two of these sources must be books.***
2. Your final paper must be at least **three** paragraphs long but no more than **five** paragraphs.

Assignment 1A: Choose one of the historical events or figures below. Look for three or four resources; then answer the following two questions using complete sentences.

- Alexander Graham Bell
- California Gold Rush
- The First Thanksgiving
- The Boston Tea Party
- Clara Barton
- Your Choice of Historical Event or Figure

Assignment Questions to Answer –

1. What is the topic you will be researching?
2. What made you choose the topic that you did?

Assignment 1B: Looking at your three or four resources, find the information you need, and **write a bibliography listing for each.** If you are in third or fourth grade, have a parent or teacher assist you. If you are in fifth or sixth grade, you should be able to try this on your own. Ask for help if you need it.

When you have finished creating each of your bibliography listings, alphabetize the final list.