

Research Project Overview

Project Overview: Students should select a specific topic that has a “provable” component to it. Do not create a report that solely gives information on a topic.

Project requirements:

1. 3-5 pages in length.
2. MLA format.
3. **Six sources minimum from a variety of credible texts. One source must be in book form.**
4. Students must create an outline of their essay including a thesis, concrete details, and analysis.
5. Students will include a works cited page at the end of their essay (MLA Format).

Format:

1. Title page
2. Times New Roman 12-point font
3. 1-inch margins (standard)
4. Double-spaced text
5. Page numbers at the top right corner of each page

Research Material Options:

Books

Internet Sites

Interview with a credible source expert

Educational Publications Magazines

Newspapers

Documentaries

Encyclopedias

Literary Critiques Pamphlets

Documentaries

Online Databases

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH PROCESS?

Like the writing process, the research process follows a regular sequence of activities

A. PREWRITNG ACTIVITES

- Selecting a topic
- Identifying sources in the media center
- Organizing a direction and a purpose for reading
- Gathering materials
- Taking notes
- Preparing an outline

B. DRAFTING ACTIVITIES

- Writing the first draft

C. REVISING ACTIVITIES

- Making sure your report is in the best possible order
- Adding details, examples, and/or quotations to make your report clear
- Deleting information, which does not support your topic statement
- Making sure the whole report sticks to the topic

D. EDITING ACTIVITIES

- Using standard written English
- Choosing the best vocabulary

E. PUBLISHING ACTIVITES

- Preparing the report in correct research form, including internal citations and a **Works Cited** page

A NOTE TO THE STUDENT

Whether you are a student in grade six, seven or eight, this style manual will help you to write effective research reports in all of your subjects.

The manual will guide you through a research process during which you will learn how to develop a topic, to improve your note-taking skills, to develop an outline, to produce a preliminary and final draft, and to prepare your final draft according to formal research form. The skills you develop with this manual and your teacher will provide you with the background you need for conducting more sophisticated research in high school, in college, and in your eventual career.

WHAT IS A RESEARCH REPORT?

Research means to “search again.” The purpose of research is to find existing facts and/or opinions from a variety of sources and to present them to support an opinion, which you have developed.

Preparing a research report will involve your ability to:

- gather information and think critically about it
- decide what your point of view is concerning the information
- organize the information carefully
- present the information in written and/or oral form

A research paper presents the results of your investigations on a selected topic. Based on your own thoughts and the facts and ideas you have gathered from a variety of sources, a research paper is a creation that is uniquely yours.

GETTING STARTED

GOAL:

At the conclusion of this research project, you will be able to utilize language arts, social studies, science, math and library media skills to develop and to prepare an original research report.

THE PROCESS:

A. SELECTING A TOPIC

1. Choose a research topic, (which may be provided for you by your teacher). Talk with your teacher about your topic choice to make sure you understand your research task. Your teacher will also provide you with a written explanation of the research project's requirements, including:
 - number and kind of sources;
 - process of research;
 - requirements of the final paper;
 - deadlines;
 - grading policy;
2. Plan on conducting some of your research in school and some research at home.
3. Plan to use several sources: one or more non-fiction books, an encyclopedia, a database, a specialized dictionary or encyclopedia all provide good information. You may also find information in magazine articles and travel brochures. Your teacher will specify how many and what kind of sources is to be used.

C. PREPARING A WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY

This is a simple procedure if you follow the directions carefully. Your teacher will show you a model and guide you through your first cards.

WHAT MUST BE INCLUDED IN A BIBLIOGRAPHY?

- **AUTHOR**
- **TITLE**
- **PLACE OF PUBLICATION**
- **PUBLISHER**
- **DATE OF PUBLICATION**
- **PAGE NUMBER(S)** (For articles from magazines, journals, periodicals, newspapers, encyclopedias, or in anthologies).

STEP 1. You will need a separate 3" x 5" index card for each source you plan to use.

STEP 2. Assign a different code letter for each source you plan to use. Put a code letter in the upper right-hand corner of your 3" x 5" index card. You can use the code letter rather than writing out the whole title when you begin preparing your note cards.

STEP 3. You will save a lot of time later if you use the correct bibliographical form when you prepare your 3" x 5" bibliography cards.

STEP 4. At the bottom of your card, state where you found the source. If you don't and you need to find the source again, you might end up going to several libraries.

Here is a *model* for preparing a *Working Bibliography* card for a book:

A
Author's last name, first name. <u>Title.</u>
City of publication: Publisher,
Copyright date.
Place in which you found the source.
Call number

E. READING AND TAKING NOTES

After you have located your sources, the next step is to read, evaluate the material and take notes.

There are generally speaking, three methods of note taking: **summarizing, paraphrasing and quotations.**

Summarize if you want to record only the general idea of large amounts of material. If you require detailed notes on specific sentences and paragraph, but not the exact wording, you may **paraphrase**- that is, to restate the material in your own words. If you feel the passage is more effective in the original words, you may **quote** it. Make sure you use quotation marks and copy the words exactly. In taking notes, try to be both concise and thorough. Strive for accuracy. Careful note taking will help you avoid the problem of plagiarism.

As you examine each source, make a separate note of each fact or quotation you might use in your paper. Be sure to identify the source of the information on the listing.

Here is a **model** for a **note card**:

Guide word(s)	Code letter
Page number(s)	Author's last name
Note: Taken in phrases All relate to guide words	

Step 1. Select a 4" x 5" index card for **note taking**. In the upper right-hand corner of the card, write the code letter from the **Working Bibliography** card.

Step 2. Write a **guide word** or words in the upper left-hand corner. The guide words will help you to organize your outline and your information later.

Step 3. Under the guide word, write the **exact** page number or numbers from which you are taking information. You will need the page number (or page numbers) to document your sources later on, e.g. internal citations, quotations.

Step 4. Place the source code letter in the upper right corner. Place the author's last name underneath the code letter.

Step 5. Write phrases to save time and to ensure that your final paper will be written in your own words.

Step 6. If you decide to use a direct quote, i.e., the author's exact words, use quotation marks. However, don't quote everything! It will take far too much time, and you may end up plagiarizing unintentionally.

Step 7. Repeat this process for each of the sources you chose for your **Working Bibliography**. Some of those sources will furnish you with lots of information. Some of the sources will not be helpful at all. If you do not find information in a source, put a big X on the **Working Bibliography** card.

Use a new index card every time you need to use a new **guide word**.

Use a new card for each new source of information, even if the **guide word** is one you have used before.

Here is an **example** of a finished **note card**:

	D
Sugar	Borden
p. 138	King in Hawaii
	Specialized process for making sugar
p. 140	Employs more people than any other industry (1 out of 12)

Your note cards will now provide the authoritative basis for your paper's content and documentation.

Arranging the listings and using your descriptive headings will help you prepare an outline.

F. PREPARING THE OUTLINE

Outlining is an important intermediate stage between research and writing. Your outline will provide the basis for organizing your paper. It will help you divide your manual into paragraphs, support your topic sentence, and arrange the information in your report.

Step 1. Turn your notes into an outline using lined notebook paper. In the outline:

- a. Bring related materials together under general headings and arrange these sections into a logical order. Each major heading will begin with a Roman numeral followed by a period. The first word of the main topic will be capitalized.
- b. The guide words from the upper left-hand corner of your note cards will serve as categories for your outline. Each guide word will begin with a capital letter followed by a period. The first word of the category will be capitalized.
- c. Each of the facts from your note cards will become a subtopic. Each subtopic will begin with an Arabic numeral the first word of the subtopic will begin with a capital letter. Each subtopic will begin with a capital letter followed by a period. The first word of each subtopic will be capitalized.

The following examples will help you to translate your notes to a formal outline.

TOPIC – Introduction – thesis statement

I. Major Heading

A. Category

1. Subtopic
2. Subtopic

B. Category

1. Subtopic
2. Subtopic

II. Major Heading

A. Category

1. Subtopic
2. Subtopic

B. Category

1. Subtopic
2. Subtopic

III. Major Heading

A. Category

1. Subtopic
2. Subtopic

B. Category

1. Subtopic
2. Subtopic

G. PREPARING TO WRITE

Follow the steps below to get an idea of things you should be **thinking about** and **doing**, and some of the strategies, which will help.

Steps for preparing to write:

- Analyze and organize your information
- Construct a thesis statement
- Weed out irrelevant information

Analyze and organize your information

The word “analyze” means to break something into its parts. A meaningful analysis identifies the parts and demonstrates how they relate to each other. You have information from different sources, which examines different aspects of your topic. By breaking down the information, you may be able to see relationships between the different sources and form them into a whole concept.

Constructing a thesis statement

Before beginning to write the paper, write a thesis statement. A well-written thesis statement, usually expressed in one sentence, is the most important sentence in your entire paper. It should both summarize for your reader the position you will be arguing and set up the pattern of organization you will use in your discussion. A thesis sentence is not a statement of accepted fact; it is the position that needs the proof you will provide in your argument. Your thesis statement should reflect the full scope of your argument.

Quotation: A quotation can give credence to what has been written about, especially if an authority in the field is quoted. In the example, the quotation adds authority to the author's main point.

Thus, despite tremendous advances in computer technology, the kind of robot found in science-fiction movies is still a long way off in the future. According to MIT electronics expert Phillip Materson, "Someday, we will be able to go into our local discount store and buy a mechanized robot that will take our commands, do our housework, and make our lives easier." Until that time, we can only dream of such mechanical humans.

In any conclusion, don't introduce an idea that you have not discussed in the body of the essay. This should not happen in a carefully planned essay, but if it does, insert the idea appropriately in the body of the essay.

I. WRITING THE PAPER

STEP 1. Take a piece of lined paper and writing on every other line, turn your outline into full sentences. The purpose of this activity is to get your information on paper.

STEP 2. When you completed the first draft of your research report, you are ready to **revise** your report to improve the quality of your writing. Check the following:

- a. Is your report arranged effectively?
- b. Do you need to add details, examples, or quotations to make your report clear?
- c. Are there details, examples, or quotations in your report, which do not add to the clarity?
- d. Does your report stick to the topic?
- e. Have you used transition words or phrases where necessary?

STEP 3. When you are satisfied that your report is organized and clear, you will need to **edit** your writing. Check the following:

- a. Spelling
- b. Punctuation and capitalization
- c. Tense
- d. Word choice

STEP 4. Read your paper out loud, to yourself. See if the arguments are coherent, logical and conclusive when read aloud. Have several experienced people read and critique your paper.

PREPARING THE WORKS CITED PAGE

Just as researchers, colleges and universities do, you will include an alphabetical listing of the sources you consulted to prepare your paper. This list will include materials, which you read for background as well as those from which you took notes. This section is called **Works Cited** and will appear at the end of your paper. **Works Cited** is sometimes referred to as **References**; the terms mean the same thing. **Works Cited** and **Bibliography** are not the same. In **Works Cited** you only list items you have actually cited. In a **Bibliography** you list all of the material you have consulted in preparing your paper whether or not you have actually cited the work. The documentation style used in your paper should be **MLA** style.

Format:

- Begin a new page. Start on the 6th line from the top (or one-inch down from the top of the paper), center and type **Works Cited**. Quadruple space after the title.
- Alphabetical order
- Do not number entries
- Begin each entry flush with the left margin; indent additional lines five spaces.
- Double-space between all lines on the Works Cited page.
- Double-space after each period in a Works Cited entry.

Remember the purpose is to communicate to the reader, the sources that you have used in sufficient detail to be identified. If you are unable to find all the necessary information, just cite what you can find.

USING YOUR SOURCES WISELY AND WELL

A WORD OF CAUTION

Writing a quality research paper takes a lot of time and work; therefore, you will want to make every effort to see that the work is completely your own and that you get full credit for it.

Students sometimes think that they can take short cuts by plagiarizing, that is, copying word for word from another author's text; or by paraphrasing, i.e., copying any of another author's words and changing only a few or rearranging the order of the sentences in another author's passage.

This practice is *illegal, unethical, and completely unacceptable* for the student has given the impression that the work or ideas of an author are his/her own.

Just to make sure that you do not plagiarize or paraphrase, even by accident:

1. Follow the directions for taking notes carefully.
2. Avoid using the author's words, sentences, or ideas unless you add quotation marks.

Here is our original text from Elaine Tyler May’s *Myths and Realities of the American Family*”:

Because women’s wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage, single mothers rarely earn enough to support themselves and their children adequately. And because work is still organized around the assumption that mothers stay home with children, even though few mothers can afford to do so, child-care facilities in the United States remain woefully inadequate.

Version A:

Since women’s wages often continue to reflect the mistaken notion that men are the main wage earners in the family, single mothers rarely make enough to support themselves and their children very well. Also, because work is still based on the assumption that mothers stay home with children, facilities for child care remain woefully inadequate in the United States.

Plagiarism In Version A there is too much direct borrowing in sentence structure and wording. The writer changes some words, drops one phrase, and adds some new language, but the overall text closely resembles May’s. Even with a citation, the writer is still plagiarizing because the lack of quotation marks indicates that Version A is a paraphrase, and should thus be in the writer’s own language.

Version B:

Women today still earn less than men – so much less that many single mothers and their children live near or below the poverty line. Elaine Tyler May argues that this situation stems in part from “the fiction that men earn the family wage” (588). May further suggests that the American workplace still operates on the assumption that mothers with children stay home to care for them (589).

This assumption, in my opinion, does not have the force it once did. More and more businesses offer in-house day-care facilities...

No Plagiarism The writer makes use of the common knowledge in May’s work, but acknowledges May’s original conclusion and does not try to pass it off as his or her own. The quotation is properly cited, as is a later paraphrase of another of May’s ideas.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERNAL CITATIONS

When you do research and you have quoted an author's words, sentences, or ideas, you must give credit to the author or to the source through an **internal citation**.

Internal citations tell your reader the source of your information. **Internal citations** are placed inside your paper directly after the quoted or "**borrowed**" information. **The internal citation** includes the author's last name and the page number of the source. That source will also be listed in your **Works Cited** section.

Here are some items, which must be credited through internal citations:

- Any direct (exact) quote
- Any chart, diagram, graph, or map taken from a source
- Any facts, statistics, or data which you have not compiled

You do not need to credit these:

- Your own ideas or conclusions
- Dictionary definition(s)
- Familiar quotations or sayings

SAMPLE INTERNAL CITATIONS

ONE WORK BY SINGLE AUTHOR

Give the author's last name and page number:

(Borden 138)

A WORK WITH NO AUTHOR:

Give title of work, or a shortened version, and page number.

("Gorbachev Meets with Bush" 12)

PLACEMENT AND PUNCTUATION OF INTERNAL CITATIONS

WITHIN THE TEXT

Place the internal citations directly after the material which you are referring to or which you are quoting and before the end punctuation of the sentence.

Remember : the quotation mark follows the closing punctuation.

Example:

"Driving through the cane sugar fields of the main island, it is easy to see why farmers refer to sugar cane as the 'King of Hawaii'" (Borden 138).

GUIDELINES FOR USING QUOTATIONS

1. Only use quotes which are important to your report.
2. Make sure that your quote uses the author's exact words. Never change spelling, capitalization, and/or punctuation.
3. When quoting prose:

If the quotation is fewer than four lines, it should be incorporated into your text.

Quotes of more than four lines are separated from the text using the following format:

- a. Quotes are indented an additional inch at the left side of the page. If an indented quotation comes from two or more paragraphs, indent the first line of each paragraph an additional one-quarter inch.
- b. Quotation marks are not used.
- c. The quotation is double-spaced.

PREPARING THE FINAL DRAFT

Because a research paper is a formal presentation of your ideas, the format of the final draft becomes very important. You should follow certain guidelines in preparing the final paper for submission so that your presentation will reflect the pride you feel in your work.

Your final paper should consist of:

- Title page (6th and 7th grade)
- Text
- Works Cited

Your teacher may request that you include one or more of the following:

- Table of Contents
- Outline
- Chapter headings
- Subtopics
- Illustrations
- Original diagrams or charts

Steps to Writing a Thesis Statement

The purpose of writing a research report is to convince your reader of the point you want to make about a topic by backing it up with information which supports that point. In order for you to do this and for you to even know what it is you want to say, you must first get all your information together, then organize it clearly. You must answer certain question about your topic and your information. Then you will be able to write the thesis statement for your report. Use this checklist.

I have found an interesting general topic.

My general topic is _____

It is interesting because _____

I have narrowed the topic down.

My final topic is _____

My thesis statement is _____

I have had my thesis statement approved by my Language Arts and content area teachers.

NOW, and only now, are you ready to write your thesis statement.

My thesis statement is _____

Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting

Summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting are three ways of using the information you found in researching your report. When you summarize, paraphrase, and quote correctly, you will avoid the problem of plagiarism. These techniques take practice, however.

The following paragraph is reproduced from an interdisciplinary unit on Native Americans published by Teacher Created Materials, Inc. Assume you found this paragraph while doing your research and want to incorporate it into your research report.

Long ago in Middle America, there were small, wandering groups of hunters who were equipped with flaked knives, pebble tools, and choppers. Half or more of their food they got from hunting, and the rest was from wild vegetable sources which included species that would later become domesticated plants such as gourds, pumpkins, peppers and runner beans. Shortly after 6500 B.C., some inhabitants began to cultivate cotton, chili peppers, and a type of squash. The people became dependent on these plants, and as they did, they began to adjust their hunting patterns to seasonal changes. This encouraged two or three families to settle down together each year in order to cooperatively harvest these vegetable foods.

Practice summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting by doing the following:

1. To **summarize**, read this passage and without looking at it again, rewrite the main points in your own words in three sentences or less. Do not include your own interpretations. Do not add your own ideas. After finishing, check your accuracy.

2. To **paraphrase**, read this passage and do not look at it again. Rewrite the passage in your own words including all the points made by the author. Do not offer your own ideas or interpretations. After finishing, check your accuracy.

3. To **quote**, copy the author's words exactly and place them within quotation marks. Include all punctuation and capitals. If there are errors in the passage, copy them exactly as they are. Immediately after the error write "(sic)," which is a Latin word meaning "so" or "thus." Use your own paper.

Glossary of Research Terms

Abstract – Summary of an article in a journal, usually found at the beginning of the article.

Almanac – Reference put out each year with selected facts, such as weather and statistical information

Alphabetical – Listing in order of the alphabet.

APA – American Psychological Association

Autobiography – The story of a person's life as told by that person

Bibliography – List of books, journal and periodical articles, CD-ROMS, and Internet sites at the end of a book or journal article. Leads to additional information.

Biography – The story of a person's life as told by another person.

Book Stacks – Shelves where reference and circulating books are located.

Call Number – The group of letters and numbers given to a book in a library. Shows the order in which one book is arranged with other books on the shelves.

Citation – Written information about source materials such as books, periodicals, and journals used in an article. Identifies author, page numbers, volume number, publisher, and publishing date.

Dictionary – A book listing words alphabetically with their pronunciations and meanings. There are general dictionaries, as well as specialized subject dictionaries.

Document – Show evidence.

Encyclopedia – Reference books which provides facts and background information.

Journal – Magazine published by a group or institution, usually concentrated on a specific subject area and written by educators or researchers. Magazines found in newsstands are not generally journals.

Journal Index – Alphabetical listing of journal articles. It may be a general index or may be specific to a field such a medicine, technology, or education.

MLA – Modern Language Association

Source – Any book, magazine, newspaper, TV show, person or Web site used in a report or article.

Evaluating Information

When doing research, it is important that you learn to think critically about the information you find. Critical evaluation of information will help your whole life, not just when you are doing research. If you think carefully and analyze the materials you read, you will know whether you are receiving accurate information. Never assume that whatever you read in print is true and accurate just because it has been published. Many books and articles are printed that are completely inaccurate. Some slant the truth in a way that causes the unwary reader to believe what is not true. Remember, just as you want to write for your reader, other writers are writing what they want you as a reader to believe. Read carefully. What are some things you need to watch for?

Knowing the Difference Between Fact and Opinion

A **fact** is something that exists. It is truth; it is reality. An **opinion** is a judgment. It may be true, or it may not be.

Fact: People must have air to breathe in order to live.

Opinion: Perfume makes the air smell fresh.

Which of these statements state fact, and which are opinion? Why?

- _____ 1. Dogs make good pets.
- _____ 2. The United States is made up of 50 individual states.
- _____ 3. People need to learn at least one language besides their own.
- _____ 4. Most universities require entering students to have taken mathematics.
- _____ 5. Good students should study two hours every night.
- _____ 6. Green vegetables contain many vitamins needed for health.
- _____ 7. Milk is good for everyone.
- _____ 8. Good parents always give their children everything they need.
- _____ 9. Forrest Gump is a good movie.
- _____ 10. Forrest Gum stars Tom Hanks.
- _____ 11. Time magazine is one of the best magazines.
- _____ 12. Different writers with varying ideas write for Time magazine.
- _____ 13. Some magazines are published just to make money.
- _____ 14. An almanac contains interesting facts.

Write one fact and one opinion about a book you've read recently.

How to Think Critically

When you think critically, you question what you read, hear, and think about things. You do not just accept what someone says just because she/he says it. Does the person who says something which sound true have the background and knowledge to know what she/he is talking about? You need to question yourself and your own decision to be sure you are making the best decision under the circumstances. Write **yes** or **no** next to each question.

When choosing research materials to use in your research report, ask yourself these questions about each source.

Name of source. _____

1. Does this source help answer the questions I need to answer? _____
2. Is this source biased; does it try to make me take one side or another? _____
3. Does this source make broad generalizations, such as boys don't show their feelings or girls cry too much? _____
4. Does this source give easy answers and make complex things sound too simple? _____
5. Does this source consider more than one side of a question? _____
6. What background does the writer of this source have that makes him/her an expert about the subject? _____

When writing your research report, ask yourself these questions about what you are writing.

1. Am I generalizing too much? _____
2. Am I oversimplifying? _____
3. Have I considered differing opinions? _____
4. Have I withheld my judgment until after reading all my sources? _____
5. Have I read each source carefully? _____
6. Is this source appropriate for school use? _____

Finding Information on the Internet

Picture millions of computers all hooked together by a common thread, somewhat like a giant spider web stretched in many directions and operated by millions of people at the same time. On this giant web, people can send and receive electronic mail (e-mail), join groups of people with the same interests as their own, talk about things which concern them, search for information on many different topics, and download text, graphics, sound and software. This is the Internet.

Before the early 1990s, the information that was available on the Internet had been placed there solely by educators, scientists, students, and the government. Now, however, the widespread use of the Internet by ordinary people has grown to the point where just about anyone who has a computer and a modem can put anything online. Some material put online is personal, some professional, and some is educational.

Much of the information you will find online is not what you want to use for a school research report. While there is a wealth of good information on the Internet, there is also a great amount that is not good. You must use your best judgment when looking for information. Look for educational sites, scientific sites, and professionally constructed sites. *If a piece of information is not appropriate for school use, do not use it.*

What you can find online:

- A limited number of free encyclopedias and dictionaries
- Encyclopedia and dictionary resources which have a fee or subscription charge
- Information posted by educators as part of their teaching
- Personal homepages posted by students and others
- Excerpts from current and recent issues of magazines and newspapers
- A limited number of electronic magazines and journals
- Information provided by government agencies, such as the Library of Congress and NASA
- Information provided by nonprofit organizations on their areas of interest
- Complete text of works (books, plays, and stories) whose copyrights have expired
- A limited number of single-volume reference works

What you cannot find online:

- Most reference works such as encyclopedias, at least not for free
- Books, plays, and short stories still under copyright
- Full text nonfiction books on scholarly subjects
- Most scholarly journal articles
- Newspaper and magazine articles published prior to 1994
- Many of the reference books, such as author information volumes, which are available from your library's reference librarian

Tips for Using a Search Engine

1. To use a search engine, you need to identify a keyword for the engine to search. Keywords are words that represent the concepts of your topic. If you enter the keyword “Lincoln,” you will get thousands of documents about Lincoln. Entries will include Abraham Lincoln, as well as the towns and schools named Lincoln. To narrow your search, enter “Abraham Lincoln.”
2. Use keywords that would be most likely to get best results. Be specific. For example, to learn about the welfare system in California, use “welfare AND California.”
3. If you enter AND between two words, you will get files containing both words.
4. If you enter OR between two words, you will get files containing at least one of the words.
5. If you use NOT before a word, no files containing that word will appear.
6. ALL will act the same as AND.
7. ANY will act the same as OR.
8. Using an asterisk (*) after a word will bring up files with all the many variations of a word. For example, “human*” will bring up “humanist,” “humane,” and “humanistic.”
9. When you first open the homepage of the search engine, first go to **Help, FAQ** (Frequently Asked Questions) to learn how to best use the search engine. Print this page for reference.
10. Compare different search engines to see how they work differently.
11. Print out the first page of each search both for finding it again and for citation.
12. Place your favorite sites in the Bookmarks or Favorite Places file in your computer.
13. Meta-Search Engines check several search engine and show their files.
14. Use subject directories from universities, libraries, and search engines as you would subject catalogs in libraries. For example, Yahoo! Has directories for **Arts and Humanities, Business, Computers, Education**, etc. A university directory might list **English, History, Philosophy, Writing Center**, etc.

Choose a keyword that relates to your research project. On the back of this paper, list the first 10 documents you locate from three separate search engines. Underline the ones that are educational sites.

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING INTERNET SOURCES

Ask yourself these questions about each Internet source you find. You should be able to answer yes to all or most of these.

_____ **Is this site an edu, org, gov, or mil site?** These are the sites which are generally the most reliable ones. Commercial (com) sites contain advertising and articles which may be slanted one way or another.

_____ **Is the author a well-known expert, perhaps connected with an established institution?** Remember, anyone can put anything on the Internet, so you do not want to believe something just because it is online any more than you want to believe something just because it is in print.

_____ **Is the publisher a university, professional organization, government agency, or well-known publisher?** Avoid publishers that exist only on the Internet. There are so-called vanity publishers on the Internet whom people pay to publish their material. There are also organizations such as cults and other groups that establish Web sites just to promote their own philosophies.

_____ **Do the hyperlinks given take you to educational sites?**

_____ **Is a bibliography provided which shows high quality sources?**

_____ **Does the site provide quality sources that you can check out for yourself?**

_____ **Is there a recent publication date showing that the information is current?**

_____ **Is the information given based on facts rather than the opinions of the author?** Remember that anyone can put anything on the Internet without having to back up what he/she says with factual information. Beware of information that is clearly written to persuade you into believing what the author wants you to believe.

_____ **Is the information written for people who are seriously interested?** Beware of information you get from chat lines.