

# Research and Writing Handbook:

A Resource for Teachers for the  
Implementation of the Literacy Plan

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# Table of Contents

<i>How to use this resource</i> .....	2
<i>Research Subjects/Products</i> .....	3
<i>Goal Setting Worksheet</i> .....	4
<i>I-Search Research Model</i> .....	5
Carrying Out the I-Search Process .....	5
Developing Effective Search Behaviors and Attitudes.....	6
I-Search ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE.....	7
<i>I-Search – Research Guide and Checklist</i> .....	9
<i>The Big6™ Skills</i> .....	13
1. Task Definition .....	13
2. Information Seeking Strategies.....	13
3. Location and Access.....	13
4. Use of Information .....	13
5. Synthesis.....	13
6. Evaluation .....	13
<i>Assignment Organizer for The Big6™ Research Model</i> .....	14
<i>Examples of Graphic Organizers for Any Research Model</i> .....	18
<i>Web Site Evaluation Guide</i> .....	19
<i>Plagiarism</i> .....	21
<i>Copy of Plagiarism Letter</i> .....	23
<i>Documentation: MLA vs. APA</i> .....	24
<i>Examples of Select MLA and APA Citations</i> .....	26
<i>Student Publishing Checklist</i> .....	27
<i>Four-Point Scoring Rubric – 6+1 Trait Writing</i> .....	29
<i>Editing Marks</i> .....	30
<i>Formatting Business Letters</i> .....	31
<i>Acknowledgments</i> .....	33
<i>Helpful Resources</i> .....	34
<i>Library Research Databases</i> .....	35
<i>References</i> .....	36

# How to use this resource

The purpose of this resource book is to help classroom teachers implement **Goal 4** of our **Literacy Plan**:

## **Students will write a research piece in all classes.**

This resource provides guidance and consistency to all teachers at the high school level.

**Research Subjects/Projects, p.3:** Implementing Goal 4 of the Literacy Plan does not require each teacher to have students embark on a massive research project or to write a ten-page research paper, but rather can include “researched pieces” that will use the same research skills but with a specific targeted audience other than the teacher. This section provides many ideas on what products teachers might ask for in order to do a researched piece in class.

**Goal Setting Worksheet, p. 4:** Help students work through this sheet to set goals and timelines to complete the project on time.

**Research Models, pp. 5-17:** This section includes two systematic methods to guide students through the entire research process from planning to citations. The I-Search model can be used with the novice researcher or for introductory level classes. The Big6 is a more complex model and students should use this research model several times before leaving high school as it will be beneficial for their subsequent educational careers.

**Graphic Organizers, p. 18:** Two types of hierarchy charts are included in the handbook because they lend themselves to organizing the information of a research project quite well. At the top a student would list the topic, and the three sections below that should be the three supporting points. The additional boxes leave room for the details under those supporting points. There are many other types of graphic organizers that can be useful in the research process such as fishbone charts, KWL charts, and concept maps. Check out the graphic organizer web sites included on page 32 for more examples and blank printable sheets.

**Web Site Evaluation Guide, pp. 19-20:** Use one copy of this helpful evaluation for each website the students visit during the research process to help them determine whether or not a site is valid.

**Plagiarism, pp. 21-23:** Plagiarism has become more of a concern in the digital age. Students often cut and paste without acknowledging where they received the information. This resource includes a definition of plagiarism, how to talk to students about plagiarism, and the letter all students receive through English class regarding our plagiarism policy. Turnitin.com information is also included here. Turnitin.com is a plagiarism prevention program that can be used with all students on any written work. It is easy to use and very effective.

**Documentation, pp. 24-26:** There are many ways to document and cite sources when writing and producing research products. This section provides information on the two most popular methods of documentation, the Modern Language Association (MLA) and American Psychological Association (APA), including examples of citations using both styles from several different resources.

**6+1 Student Publishing Checklist and Rubric, pp. 27-29:** Students have used the 6+1 Traits throughout their academic careers in the Independence School District. This checklist will help students determine whether they have done the best job possible. The rubric provides teachers with a valuable grading tool.

**Editing Marks, p. 30:** A quick review of the most common marks used to edit and grade papers. This will save every teacher a great deal of time!

**Formatting Business Letters, pp. 31-32:** An explanation of how to format business letters is included as many students are still unfamiliar with how to write a formal letter and it is an easy way for teachers to incorporate the research and writing process without having to do a major research project.

**Acknowledgements, p. 33:** Have questions, comments, concerns, suggestions or kudos? Talk to one of the people listed in this section.

**Helpful Resources, p. 34:** Need additional resources on a specific topic? Look here. We have listed the best websites and books available to help support this research piece.

**Library Research Databases, p. 35:** This handout provides a list of research databases that will yield students better results when looking for articles than simply doing a Google search.

## Research Subjects/Products

A variety of assignments can be utilized to incorporate research into any discipline. As long as the teacher requires students to use and cite reliable sources, a wide variety of assignments can be created that will effectively expose the student to the world of research.

Below are lists of potential subject categories and end products that can be used as starting points for effective research assignments. Combine any category from the left with a compatible product from the right to help generate an assignment in your field of study.

For instance, a health teacher may choose to have students research the dangers of smoking (**cause and effect**) and present the results of their research with a pamphlet, documentary, or letter to the editor (**product**).

### Subjects

- concept
- issue
- biography
- historical development
- problem-based learning
- cause/effect
- instruction (“how-to”)
- comparison
- contrast
- analysis
- persuasion

### Products

- essay
- speech
- multimedia presentation
- demonstration
- debate
- video documentary
- mock news story/report  
(written or recorded)
- statistical analysis (including  
charts, graphs, etc.)
- pamphlet/brochure
- editorial
- mock campaign (political,  
social, marketing, etc.)
- visual art
- letters (business, etc.)
- museum exhibit

# Goal Setting Worksheet

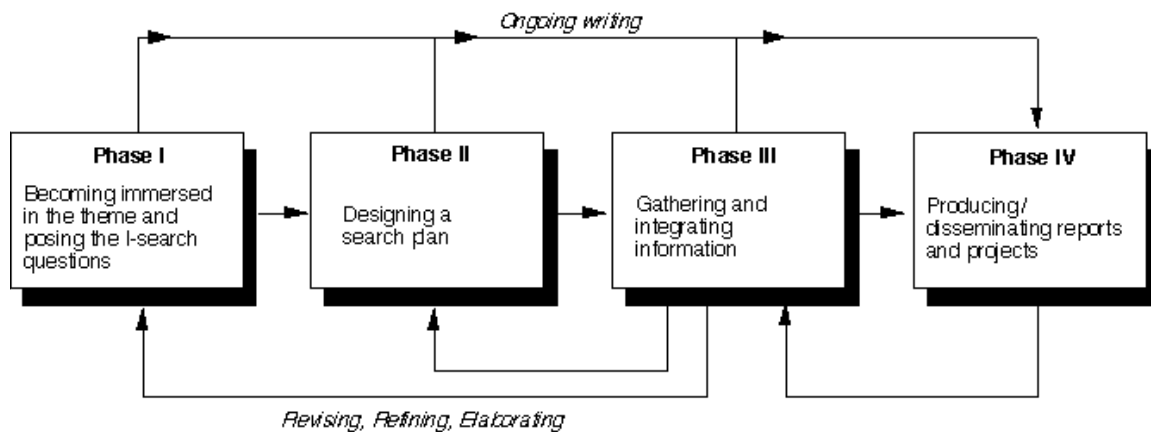
My goal is:	Completion date:
What is the first step?	Target completion date:
What is the second major step?	Target completion date:
What is the third major step?	Target completion date:
Next step?	Target completion date:
Final step?	Target completion date:

# I-Search Research Model

## *Carrying Out the I-Search Process*

These process oriented objectives focus on the student's ability to carry out the four phases within the I-Search process: posing questions, developing a research plan, gathering and integrating information, and producing/disseminating the individual report and group project.

### I-SEARCH PROCESS: FOUR INSTRUCTIONAL PHASES



Examples of objectives for carrying out the I-Search Unit are:

- identify prior knowledge and relevant experiences
- become familiar with I-Search format
- pose personally meaningful questions related to the overall concepts
- devise a search plan using a variety of materials and resources
- choose relevant information and record it in an organized format
- revise search plan, as needed
- summarize information from different sources
- use computer applications to locate and organize information
- write drafts of report
- choose useful information from report to contribute to a group report

## ***Developing Effective Search Behaviors and Attitudes***

These objectives focus on the student's ability to function as an "investigator," as an individual, and as a contributing member of a team or small or large group. Examples of objectives for developing these behaviors and attitudes are:

- keep searching for new information to increase knowledge of subject
- be flexible in altering search strategies
- reflect on changes in one's own thinking
- take ownership for learning and contribution to the group process
- give feedback
- draw on feedback, reactions, and suggestions to revise writing
- share materials and resources with others
- actively cooperate in bringing together resources and combining information from all participants
- develop a sense of competence and confidence in writing abilities
- take pride in a finished product that communicates information to others

acknowledge the work and contribution that others make to a task or project

***I-Search ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE***

THEME or TOPIC:

---

NAME OF ACTIVITY:

---

STUDENT OBJECTIVES:

---

MATERIALS/RESOURCES:

---

WAYS TO SEE IF STUDENTS MEET OBJECTIVES (ASSESSMENT):

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**I-Search ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE, part 2**

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**PROCEDURES:**

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PREPARATION FOR ACTIVITY:

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ACTIVITY:

---

PROCESSING OF ACTIVITY:

# I-Search – Research Guide and Checklist

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## My Search Process

- What I Want To Know (a questioning paragraph describing my topic and why I chose it)

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- The Steps I Plan To Take (outline of my tasks, check box when complete)

1.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Challenges and How I Solved Them (difficulties during my search)

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Information – Gathering Sheet (use one sheet per source)**

- Source (list book, website, person interviewed, etc.)

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- Notes (important ideas, what I learned, what surprised me, what disappointed me, etc)

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- Links or Leads to More Sources (list websites, books, next place to search)

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**What I Have Learned About My Topic (brief outline from information sheet)**

Point 1 -

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Point 2 -

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Point 3 -

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---

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Point 4 -

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Point 5 -

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**What This Means To Me**

- What I learned about searching for information (How will my next search be improved by this experience?)

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# The Big6™ Skills

The Big6 is a more complex model that students should use several times before leaving high school.

## ***1. Task Definition***

- 1.1 Define the information problem
- 1.2 Identify information needed (to solve the information problem)
  - o What is my current task?
  - o What are some topics or questions I need to answer?
  - o What information will I need?

## ***2. Information Seeking Strategies***

- 2.1 Determine all possible sources (brainstorm)
- 2.2 Select the best sources
  - o What are all the possible sources to check?
  - o What are the best sources of information for this task?

## ***3. Location and Access***

- 3.1 Locate sources (intellectually and physically)
- 3.2 Find information within sources
  - o Where can I find these sources?
  - o Where can I find the information in the source?

## ***4. Use of Information***

- 4.1 Engage (e.g., read, hear, view, touch)
- 4.2 Extract relevant information
  - o What information do I expect to find in this source?
  - o What information from the source is useful?

## ***5. Synthesis***

- 5.1 Organize from multiple sources
- 5.2 Present the information
  - o How will I organize my information?
  - o How should I present my information?

## ***6. Evaluation***

- 6.1 Judge the product (effectiveness)
- 6.2 Judge the process (efficiency)
  - o Did I do what was required?
  - o Did I complete each of the Big6 Stages efficiently?

The "Big6™" is copyright © (1987) Michael B. Eisenberg and Robert E. Berkowitz. For more information, visit: [www.big6.com](http://www.big6.com)

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Red Hook Central School District, Red Hook, NY

# Assignment Organizer for The Big6™ Research Model

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

## Big6 #1: Task Definition

Determine a purpose and need for information – What am I supposed to do?

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What information do I need in order to do this? (Consider listing in question form): You will most likely find interesting additional information as you use the resources. List below information that you feel you need to know at this time.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Big6 #2: Information Seeking Strategies**

Examine alternative approaches to acquiring information. List the best sources to find this information. Don't forget traditional print and human sources as appropriate.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If using websites, who will evaluate them for relevancy, accuracy, and authority?

- I will use only those evaluated by and provided by my teachers or librarian, including the databases to which the school subscribes.
- I will find free web sites and use a web site evaluation guide for each site that I use in my project.

**Big6 #3: Location and Access**

Locate sources and access the information within them – Where will I locate these sources?

- School library
- Public or university library
- Personal library
- Provided by my teachers
- Internet
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

If using a search engine list likely key words:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Big6 #4: Use of Information**

Use a source to gain information – How will I record the information that I find?

- Take notes using cards
- Take notes using paper
- Take notes using a word processor (MS Word form)
- Illustrate concepts
- Use a tape recorder, video, or digital camera
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How will I give credit to my sources?

- Use <http://citationmachine.net/>
- Use Writing Handbook

**Big6 #5: Synthesis**

Integrate information from a variety of sources – How will I show my results?

- Written paper
- Oral presentation
- Multimedia presentation
- Performance
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How will I give credit to my sources in my final product or performance?

- Include a written bibliography
- After the performance or presentation, announce what sources I used
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials I will need for my presentation or performance (list, separated by commas):

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How much time do I estimate it will take to find the information and create the product?

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 hours | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-7 hours          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 hours | <input type="checkbox"/> 7-8 hours          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 hours | <input type="checkbox"/> 8-9 hours          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 hours | <input type="checkbox"/> 9-10 hours         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5-6 hours | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 hours |

**Timeline for assignment**

Ideas for project (task definition) completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Information searching (note taking) completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

First draft due: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed assignment due: \_\_\_\_\_

Include here any additional information needed to successfully complete the assignment:

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**Big6 #6: Evaluation**

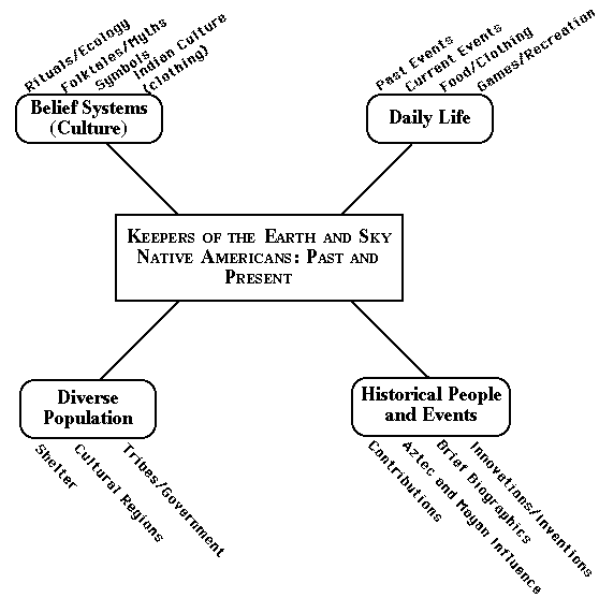
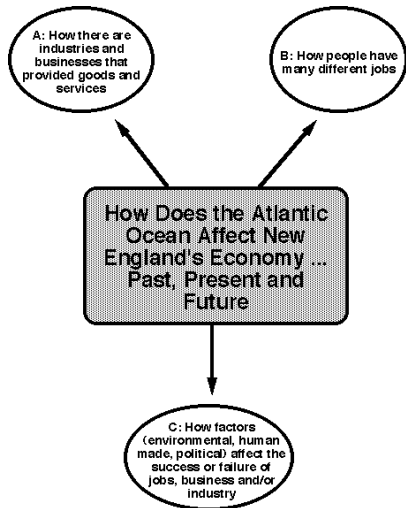
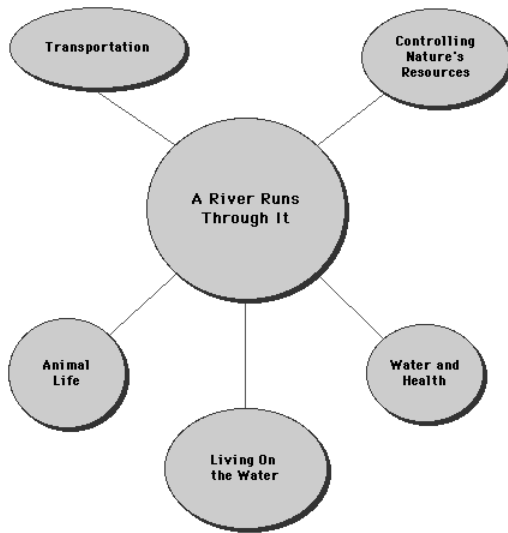
Before turning in my assignment, I need to check off all of these items:

- What I created to finish the assignment is appropriate for what I was supposed to do in Big6 #1
- The information I found in Big6 #4 matches the information needed in Big6 #1
- Credit is given to my sources, written in standard citation format.
- I am in compliance of copyright laws and fair use guidelines
- My work is neat
- My work is complete and includes heading information (name, date, etc.)
- I would be proud for anyone to view this work

Worksheet adapted from:

<http://www.sasaustin.org/podium/default.aspx?t=30393>

## Examples of Graphic Organizers for Any Research Model



# Web Site Evaluation Guide

Your name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Web site URL: http://\_\_\_\_\_

Title of web site: \_\_\_\_\_

## Content

Is the purpose (inform, persuade, sell, entertain) of the site indicated on the home page? If you answer "yes" circle one: **YES / NO**

If not, can you guess the purpose(s) of the web page? Write it here.

\_\_\_\_\_

Could that purpose cause the web author to be biased? **YES / NO**

Do you feel as though the document is trying to convince you of something?  
**YES / NO**

Look at the advertising on the page. Could the companies paying for the ads influence the content or cause bias? **YES / NO**

Is the information useful for your purpose? **YES / NO**

Would it have been easier to get the information somewhere else? **YES / NO**

Would information somewhere else have been different? **YES / NO**

If so, why? \_\_\_\_\_

Did the information lead you to other sources that were useful? **YES / NO**

When was the document created? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the information current? **YES / NO**

Does up-to-date information matter for your purpose? **YES / NO**

Does the information appear biased? **YES / NO**

Does the author express his or her opinion as fact? **YES / NO**

Does the author support his ideas with references to show that he has done research?  
**YES / NO**

Does the information contradict something you found somewhere else? **YES / NO**

Briefly describe the contents of this site:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Authority**

Is there a person or organization responsible for the web page? **YES / NO**

Write the name of the person or the organization.

---

Is there an e-mail address to contact the author or authors? **YES / NO**

What authority or credentials does the person or organization have? Describe.

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Is the Web page linked to a home page for an organization, commercial enterprise, or individual?

(Circle one)

Has the site been reviewed by an online reviewing agency or won awards?

**YES / NO**

Does the domain (i.e. edu, com, gov) of the page influence your evaluation of the site?

**YES / NO**

Are you positive that the information is true?

**YES / NO**

What can you do to prove that it is true? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Are you satisfied that the information is useful for your purpose? **YES / NO**

If not, what can you do next?

---

Are you using this web page for your paper or project? **YES / NO**

Modified version of *Kathy Schrock's Critical Evaluation Survey : Secondary School Level*. Used with permission. Modified by Barbara A. Jansen. 1.13.04, rev. 12.03.07.

## Plagiarism

According to the *Write For College* handbook, plagiarism is defined as the presentation of another writer's ideas or words as if they were your own, without acknowledging the source." It is important that high school students understand what plagiarism is, and the importance of attributing authorship of others' works. The *Write for College* handbook suggests the following guidelines regarding plagiarism: (See the section in this handbook for help with the format to use when documenting sources.)

### What to do:

- Indicate clearly when you use anything from another writer's work, even if only a phrase or single key word, by using quotation marks.
- When summarizing or paraphrasing, distinguish clearly where the ideas of others end and your own comments begin.
- When using a writer's idea, credit the author by name and also cite the work in which you found the idea.
- Provide a new citation when using additional information from a previously cited work.
- Err on the side of caution by giving credit whenever you suspect you are using information, other than general knowledge, from a source.

### What not to do:

- Do not use facts, details, or ideas from a source without indicating in some way that you are doing so.
- Do not confuse your own ideas with others' ideas discovered during research. Even if your own resembles another writer's, you must credit that writer and the work in which the idea is shared.

### Checking for plagiarism

High schools in the Independence School District subscribe to an on-line service called "Turnitin" that allows teachers to check for plagiarism. After students submit their documents electronically to the website [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), teachers receive a report that indicates where the document may include plagiarized information, and the sources from which the information may have been lifted. Sources include more than 12 billion web pages, 40 million student papers, 10,000 major newspapers, magazines, and scholarly

journals, and thousands of books, according to the Turnitin Instructor User Guide. It has been the experience of teachers who have used this service that it acts as a strong deterrent to plagiarism and encourages proper citation.

Teachers who wish to use Turnitin should check with their building administrator or Communication Arts TLC to obtain the building password. An on-line user's guide will lead new users through the process of setting up a user profile, creating a class, and enrolling students. Students must have a working email address when enrolling in the service. If they don't have one, teachers have required students to create a Yahoo email account or other "free" email account so they may use the Turnitin program.

Lastly, the Independence School District requires all students to sign a letter that informs them of the Independence School District plagiarism policy.

Information for the plagiarism section of this handbook was taken from these sources:

Sebranek, P., Meyer, V., & Kemper, D. (1997). Plagiarism, Write for College (pp. 297-298). Wilmington: Great Source Education Group.

Turnitin Instructor User Guide, iParadigms, LLC, 1998-2007. Retrieved on January 26, 2008 from [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com).

# Copy of Plagiarism Letter

Dear Parents,

August 1, 2009

The Independence School District has designed a curriculum across all disciplines to meet the varied needs of all our students. To prepare for the demands of college requirements, future employment, and life in general, we strive to teach students to read and think critically and to communicate clearly and effectively. To insure that all students have the best possible opportunity to learn and strengthen skills, we have developed the following guidelines and suggestions. Please read and sign the statement below with your student, so you will be familiar with the policies of the Independence School District.

## Plagiarism

Students need to be aware of the legal and ethical consequences of plagiarism. Intentional or not, it is never acceptable to use someone else's words without giving him or her credit. In order to be successful in school, students need to know how to avoid plagiarism. It is defined as "the use of another person's writing or ideas without giving that person credit by means of quotation marks and/or footnotes. All source material, whether presented through summary, paraphrase, or précis, must have adequate footnote citation" (UMKC – HSCP English Handbook, 2006).

In individual classrooms, English teachers will discuss academic honesty and will instruct students as to proper methods of documentation to avoid plagiarism. It then becomes, and is, the student's responsibility to credit his or her sources properly. **Failure to do so shall result in a failing grade for the assignment and, in serious instances, may result in a failing grade for the course. Parents will be informed of any instances of plagiarism as well as the consequences decided upon by the classroom teacher and administration.**

Please contact your student's teacher if you have any questions regarding these policies or would like additional information about any classroom activity or assignments. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kristel Barr  
Principal  
Truman HS

Dr. Greg Netzer  
Principal  
Van Horn HS

Mr. Jason Dial  
Principal  
William Chrisman HS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Documentation: MLA vs. APA

	APA	MLA
<b>Who uses it?</b>	<u>Social Sciences:</u> Sociology Business Economics Nursing Social Work Criminology Psychology Political Science	<u>Humanities:</u> Literature Ethics Philosophy Foreign Language Religion History English
<b>What kind of writing is written in this format?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* results of research for publication</li> <li>* written proposals to obtain funding for research</li> <li>* Written reviews to present new ideas that emerge from experiments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* written reactions to text</li> <li>* critical interpretations of text</li> <li>* creative styles of writing</li> </ul>
<b>What is “valued” in each discipline determines format.</b>	<p>*values straight-forward and to the point writing</p> <p>When you write in APA style, you rarely use first person voice. You should use the third person or passive voice constructions when writing in APA style. In general, you should foreground the research and not the researchers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* values scientific process (logic and quantitative data) -ex. Look at organization and language in writing</li> <li>* values research not heavily on researcher. More emphasis on most <b>recent</b> research in field. -ex. Reference page</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* values showing the reader, not telling them in most cases</li> <li>* values creative process -ex. Look at organization and language in writing</li> <li>* values personal (author / “I” pronoun) and credibility -ex. Works Cited page</li> </ul>

<p><b>Why use a particular style?</b></p>	<p>When writing in APA format, your readers will be able to find what they are looking for, follow your writing more easily, and your communication will be more clearly understood. Using APA style also provides you with a model for thinking about psychological phenomena.</p>	<p>The humanities concern themselves with the complete record of human experience—exploring, assessing, interpreting, and refining it, while at the same time adding to it. When a writer wants to be creative, or to write in such a way that illustrates the writer's reaction, interpretation, and personal response to a text, he/she will generally use MLA format.</p> <p>(not limited to personal writing only)</p>
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Commonalities shared:

- Clarity of presentation, including grammar and mechanics, and correct citation form
- Logical organization and progression of ideas
- Accurate paraphrase, summary, and analysis of evidence
- Interpretation of evidence or data to demonstrate how it supports arguments or conclusions
- Adaptation of ideas or information for a particular audience

Be sure to check out Citation Machine (<http://citationmachine.net/>) to create fast and easy APA or MLA citations. Just enter the information and the citation is automatically created.

## Examples of Select MLA and APA Citations

### MLA:

#### Book

Okuda, Michael, and Denise Okuda. Star Trek Chronology: The History of the Future. New York: Pocket, 1993.

#### Journal Article

Wilcox, Rhonda V. "Shifting Roles and Synthetic Women in Star Trek: The Next Generation." Studies in Popular Culture 13.2 (1991): 53-65

#### Newspaper or Magazine Article

DiRado, Alicia. "Trekking Through College: Classes Explore Modern Society Using the World of Star Trek." Los Angeles Times 15 Mar. 1995: A3

#### Website

Lynch, Tim. "DSN Trials and Tribble-ations Review." Psi Phi: Bradley's Science Fiction Club. 1996. Bradley University. 8 Oct. 1997  
<<http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/psiphi/DS9/ep/503r.html>>

### APA:

#### Book

Okuda, M., & Okuda, D. (1993). *Star Trek Chronology: The History of the Future*. New York: Pocket.

#### Journal Article

Wilcox, R. (1991). Shifting Roles and Synthetic Women in Star Trek: The Next Generation. *Studies in Popular Culture*. 13.2, 53-65

#### Newspaper or Magazine Article

DiRado, A. (1995, March 15). Trekking Through College: Classes Explore Modern Society Using the World of Star Trek. *Los Angeles Times*, p. A3.

#### Website

Lynch, T. (1996). DSN Trials and Tribble-ations Review. Retrieved October 8, 1997, from Psi Phi: Bradley's Science Fiction Club Web site:  
<http://www.bradley.edu/campusorg/psiphi/DS9/ep/503r.html>

# Student Publishing Checklist

## 6+1 Trait Writing

### IDEAS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Ideas make sense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ideas grab my readers' attention.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a main idea and sense of purpose.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have drawn from experience.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I say something new or in a new way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Piece is full of interesting and important ideas.

### SENTENCE FLUENCY

- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing is smooth and easy on the ear.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing is easy to read aloud.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sentences begin in a variety of ways.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sentences vary in length.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sentences do not feel choppy or go on aimlessly.

### WORD CHOICE

- \_\_\_\_\_ I use just the right word or phrase.
- \_\_\_\_\_ After reading, words are still memorable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Words are accurately used.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Words are chosen wisely, but I take risks.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know the language of the topic, but don't try to impress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Simple language is used effectively.

### ORGANIZATION

- \_\_\_\_\_ Opening makes the reader want to keep reading.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing has logical order or pattern (problem-solution, compare-contrast).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Story or main points are easy to follow.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reader is able to predict but is sometimes surprised.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Loose ends are tied up. The piece ends well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The piece doesn't end with "Now you know..." or "Then I awoke and it was all a dream."

## **VOICE**

- \_\_\_\_\_ This sounds like someone I know wrote it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing has style and flavor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Piece reaches out and “pulls me in.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Piece makes me feel a certain way.

## **CONVENTIONS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing is clean and polished.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spelling is correct.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Punctuation is accurate and makes reading easy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Capital letters are used correctly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paragraphs are indented.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grammar is correct.







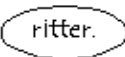















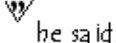




## **PRESENTATION**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Writing is pleasing to the eye.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Handwriting is easy to read, with good slant and spacing or appropriate font is used..
- \_\_\_\_\_ White space and text are nicely balanced.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clarity is enhanced with title, side heads, page numbers, or use of bullets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Text and visuals (illustrations, charts, graphs, tables, etc.) are integrated well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Piece is full of interesting and important ideas.

## Four-Point Scoring Rubric – 6+1 Trait Writing

	<b>4 Strong</b>	<b>3 Effective</b>	<b>2 Developing</b>	<b>1 Experimenting</b>
<b>IDEAS</b> the meaning and development of the message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrow and manageable topic</li> <li>Goes beyond the obvious or predictable</li> <li>Relevant, accurate details</li> <li>Shows connections/insights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Topic defined but broad</li> <li>Content clear but reader still left with questions</li> <li>Detail support attempted</li> <li>Begins to develop theme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning to define topic</li> <li>Lacks specific information</li> <li>Vague details</li> <li>Glimmer of main point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Searching for a topic</li> <li>Information limited or missing</li> <li>No meaningful details</li> <li>Disconnected thoughts</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZATION</b> the internal structure of the piece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inviting introduction and satisfying conclusion</li> <li>Effective sequencing and pacing</li> <li>Thoughtful transitions</li> <li>Smooth organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Routine lead and conclusion</li> <li>Mostly logical sequencing and pacing</li> <li>Predictable connections</li> <li>Basic beginning, middle and ending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ineffective lead and conclusion</li> <li>Sequencing and pacing confusing</li> <li>Connections awkward</li> <li>Formulaic structure detracts from content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No lead or conclusion</li> <li>Sequencing and pacing not present</li> <li>Connections are confusing or not present</li> <li>Hard to follow</li> </ul>
<b>VOICE</b> the meaning and development of the message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective and strong reader/writer connection</li> <li>Takes risks</li> <li>Reflects interest in and commitment to topic</li> <li>Purpose is powerful and engaging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reader/writer connection present but not strong</li> <li>Pleasing yet "safe"</li> <li>Energy level inconsistent</li> <li>Purpose is credible but not powerful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occasionally intrigues the reader</li> <li>Generally "risk free"</li> <li>Sits on the surface</li> <li>Purpose lacks conviction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No concern for audience</li> <li>Lifeless and mechanical</li> <li>Flat or inappropriate</li> <li>Purpose not present</li> </ul>
<b>WORD CHOICE</b> the specific vocabulary the writer uses to convey meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Powerful and engaging words</li> <li>Wording accurate/specific/precise</li> <li>Artful use of figurative language</li> <li>Words/language creates meaningful pictures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some active verbs and precise nouns</li> <li>Moments of sparkle here and there</li> <li>Effective use of figurative language</li> <li>Words enhance the meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally correct words, no spice</li> <li>Language is functional</li> <li>Attempt at figurative language</li> <li>Words convey general meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary is limited</li> <li>Simple words used incorrectly</li> <li>No figurative language</li> <li>Words do not convey meaning</li> </ul>
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b> the way the words and phrases flow throughout the text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy flow and rhythm</li> <li>Strong and varied sentence structure</li> <li>Invites expressive reading</li> <li>Overall sentence structure enhances meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences more mechanical than fluid</li> <li>Sentences usually hang together</li> <li>Can be read aloud easily</li> <li>Sentences begin differently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phrasing effects readability</li> <li>Sentence structure impairs understanding</li> <li>Parts invite oral reading</li> <li>Too many sentences begin the same way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choppy, rambling or incomplete</li> <li>No "sentence sense"</li> <li>Oral reading difficult</li> <li>Repetitive beginnings</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> the mechanical correctness of the piece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling correct even on more difficult words</li> <li>Accurate punctuation and capitalization</li> <li>Grammar and usage contribute to clarity</li> <li>Paragraphing enhances style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling generally correct</li> <li>Punctuation and capitalization usually correct</li> <li>Grammar and usage are correct</li> <li>Paragraphing correct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling correct on common words</li> <li>End punctuation and easy capitalization mostly correct</li> <li>Grammar errors not serious</li> <li>Paragraphing irregular</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling errors impede readability</li> <li>Incorrect punctuation and capitalization</li> <li>Many usage and grammar errors</li> <li>Lack of paragraphing</li> </ul>
<b>PRESENTATION</b> the overall appearance of the work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handwriting is consistent and uniform</li> <li>Good balance of space and text</li> <li>Effectively integrates graphic elements</li> <li>Overall appearance is pleasing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handwriting mostly legible</li> <li>Spacing improves clarity</li> <li>Margins and headers effective</li> <li>Overall appearance is acceptable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handwriting poor</li> <li>Some thought given to spacing</li> <li>Attempts at margins and headers</li> <li>Overall appearance is distracting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handwriting unreadable</li> <li>Random or lack of spacing</li> <li>Poor use of white space</li> <li>Overall appearance is unacceptable</li> </ul>

## Editing Marks

SYMBOLS	MEANING	EXAMPLE
	Capitalize this letter.	I am a great writer. 
	Use a lower case letter instead of a capital.	I am a <del>G</del> reat writer.
	Add a period.	I am a great writer. 
<b>SP</b> 	Fix this spelling error. "SP" can go in the margin.	I am a great  ritter.
	Use a caret to add a letter, word, or punctuation.	great I am a  writer.
	Take it out.	I am a great <del>great</del> writer.
	Add a space.	I am  great writer.
	Close the space.	I am a gr  eat writer
	Start a new paragraph.	school.  I am a great writer.
	Transpose the words or letters.	I <del>a</del> <del>am</del> great writer.
	Add a comma.	I am a great  talented writer.
	Change to the correct punctuation.	I am a great <del>/</del> talented writer.
	Add quotation marks.	 I am a great writer,  he said.
	Add a colon.	I am a great writer for three reasons  good leads, strong voice, and powerful words.
	Add a semicolon.	I am a great, talented writer  for example, I won a writing contest last year.

# Formatting Business Letters

A **business letter** is more formal than a personal letter. It should have a margin of at least one inch on all four edges. It is always written on 8½"x11" (or metric equivalent) unlined stationery. There are **six** parts to a business letter.

**1. The Heading.** This contains the return address (usually two or three lines) with the date on the last line.

Sometimes it may be necessary to include a line after the address and before the date for a phone number, fax number, E-mail address, or something similar.

Often a line is skipped between the address and date. That should always be done if the heading is next to the left margin. (See [Business Letter Styles](#).)

It is not necessary to type the return address if you are using stationery with the return address already imprinted. Always include the date.

**2. The Inside Address.** This is the address you are sending your letter to. Make it as complete as possible. Include titles and names if you know them.

This is always on the left margin. If an 8½" x 11" paper is folded in thirds to fit in a standard 9" business envelope, the inside address can appear through the window in the envelope.

An inside address also helps the recipient route the letter properly and can help should the envelope be damaged and the address become unreadable.

Skip a line after the heading before the inside address. Skip another line after the inside address before the greeting.

**3. The Greeting (Also called the salutation).** The greeting in a business letter is always formal. It normally begins with the word "Dear" and always includes the person's last name.

It normally has a title. Use a first name only if the title is unclear--for example, you are writing to someone named "Leslie," but do not know whether the person is male or female.

The greeting in a business letter always ends in a colon.

**4. The Body.** The body is written as text. A business letter is never hand written. Depending on the letter style you choose, paragraphs may be indented. Regardless of format, skip a line between paragraphs.

Skip a line between the greeting and the body. Skip a line between the body and the close.

**5. The Complimentary Close.** This short, polite closing ends with a comma. It is either at the left margin or its left edge is in the center, depending on the [business](#) letter style that you use. It begins at the same column the heading does.

The block style is becoming more widely used because there is no indenting to bother with in the whole letter.

**6. The Signature Line.** Skip two lines (unless you have unusually wide or narrow lines) and type out the name to be signed. This customarily includes a middle initial, but does not have to. Women may indicate how they wish to be addressed by placing **Miss, Mrs., Ms.** or similar title in parentheses before their name.

The signature line may include a second line for a title, if appropriate. The term "By direction" in the second line means that a superior is authorizing the signer.

The signature should start directly above the first letter of the signature line in the space between the close and the signature line. Use blue or black ink.

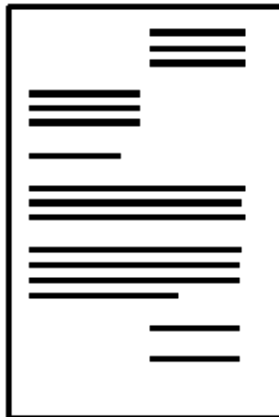
Business letters should not contain postscripts.

Some organizations and companies may have formats that vary slightly.

### Business Letter Styles

The following pictures show what a one-page business letter should look like. There are three accepted styles. The horizontal lines represent lines of type. Click your mouse pointer on any part of the picture for a description and example of that part.

**Modified Block**



**Block Style**



"Business Letters." [Englishplus.com](http://englishplus.com). 10 March 2008

<http://englishplus.com/grammar/00000150.html>

# Acknowledgments

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# Helpful Resources

## **Web Sites:**

Big 6 Research Model:  
[www.big6.com](http://www.big6.com)

Citations:  
<http://citationmachine.net/>

Graphic Organizers:  
<http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/>  
<http://www.educationoasis.com>  
<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/graphic-organizers/printable/6293.html>

Online Writing Lab at Purdue:  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Rubrics:  
<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>

## **Books:**

*The I-Search Paper* by Ken Macrorie

*What Can I Write About?: 7000 Topics for High School Students* by David Powell

Look for additional titles during the 2008 - 2009 year as we will be obtaining additional titles to help support this initiative.

## Library Research Databases

### 1. Newspaper Databases

- a. <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>
- b. Away from school -- Log-in: ra-529 Password: ra-529

### 2. Research Databases

- a. <http://search.epnet.com>
- b. Away from school --Log-in: wchs Password: bears
- c. Access to information such as magazines, biographies, radio and television transcripts, state reports, primary source documents, photographs, maps and flags.
- d. Choose search engine
  - i. EBSCOhost Web (or EBSCOhost Text Only if at a slow connection or old computer)
    1. Check any or all databases to search
    2. Click "Continue" to get to search page
  - ii. Student Research Center—for middle and high school students
- e. Use full text searches
- f. Some articles may be translated
- g. Click on "Citation" to cite source

### 3. Destiny search from home <http://destiny.indep.k12.mo.us>

Go to William Chrisman High School

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- "Turnitin Instructor User Guide." iParadigms, LLC. 1998-2007. turnitin. 23 Apr 2008 <<http://www.turnitin.com/static/home.html>>.
- Warlick, David. "Landmarks Citation Machine." The Landmark Project. 2004 - April 2006. Landmarks for Schools web site for teachers. 23 Apr 2008  
<<http://citationmachine.com>>.

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