



Science Symposium Background Research Guide

Name _____ Date _____ Per _____

Before you can learn more about a subject it is good to have some basic knowledge to build on. Learning this background information is the first step in your symposium project. This guide will help you through the steps to research your topic, write a short paper, record the sources you used and gain new knowledge about your chosen topic.

1. List the science topic you are interested in studying. This is the subject of your research paper.

2. Find 3-5 key words or phrases that are related to this science topic. List them below. Your paper will include the meanings of these important words and phrases. (Hint: Scan the science textbook or encyclopedia selections on this topic to find these terms.)

3. Find an information source to help you build an understanding of the science topic you're interested in. You may choose one web page and one printed resource such as an encyclopedia, book or web page on your topic.

4. Print or photocopy the information resource and read it to find the meanings of these terms and other details related to your topic. Discover how they are connected. Highlight this information as you read. Circle new words and define them in the margins or connect other words in the passage with a similar meaning. This process is like one you may have used in your English class.

5. Pay attention to your thinking as you read and write. When a question comes to your mind, write it down on the back of this paper. These questions may become very important for your symposium project as you focus in on your project details. You may even answer them as you read. Later this page may be added to your science symposium notebook.

Questions that came to mind while reading:

5. Complete the information below for both resources you read. You will need the following information to write a simple bibliography listing where you found the information and giving credit to the author. Complete all spaces for each resource.

Printed Resource:

Author's Full Name: _____

Book Title: _____

Year book was published: _____ Page numbers: _____

Web Page Resource: Use reliable Internet sites. Wikipedia **IS NOT** an acceptable resource to choose.

Author's Full Name (if known): _____

Article Title: _____

Web address: _____
(list all letters)

Date you found this source: _____
Year Month Day

6. Then use what you learned from these sources to write the background research paper on your science topic. The paper should have 3 or more paragraphs describing what you have learned. In a fourth paragraph summarize how all of this information is related to your symposium project idea. List the resource information above, in order as a simple bibliography. Refer to the research paper checklist as you write and before it is peer reviewed.