

Fourth Grade Informational Research/Writing Project

Fourth graders are embarking on an exciting cross-curricular project in Reader's Workshop and Writer's Workshop. Our Fourth Grade Informational Research and Writing project asks students to research a topic of their choice using multiple sources and then write an informational article to teach others about their topic. It is a great way for students to sharpen a variety of skills related to reading and writing nonfiction, including note-taking, cross-text synthesis, and essay writing.

In reading, we recently began our nonfiction unit of study. Students have been reading a variety of nonfiction texts from our class library and thinking about which topic they will choose for their research. **Their goal is to identify this topic by November 26.**

Students are learning how to take organized notes as they read. They will use the boxes and bullets format for most of their note-taking, and we will also teach them some other note-taking structures (e.g., chronological, sequential, compare and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution) that will help them to capture and organize information.

Boxes and Bullets Template

Main Idea

- Supporting Detail
- Supporting Detail
- Supporting Detail

Students will read and take notes on their topic through Winter Break. **Prior to the break, on December 18, students' notes are due.** They will use these notes after winter break to write an informational article about their topic in Writer's Workshop.

You can help your student:

Help them carve out time to read about their topic as part of their reading homework: Our expectation is that students read about their topic at home as part of the required 30 minutes of reading homework per night. They should log this reading. Until we have taught them the note-taking structures, they should stop to jot about their reading on post-it notes or in their Home Journals.

Help your student find additional resources: Students will need to read at least two books on their topic. Most students use four or five resources. We have a great library in our classroom, but we do not always have multiple books on each student's

chosen topic. We encourage you to visit a library to find additional books. It is possible to request books online from other DCPL libraries, which are then delivered quickly to your local branch.

We also encourage students to search online for articles on their topics that are written for kids and to watch videos and visit museum exhibits on their topics. Please assist your student to find additional resources so that they always have enough research materials. Students should always bring a resource to read in class if they have already finished our classroom books.

Here are a few great online resources:

www.brainpop.com (username: Janney, password: school)

www.loc.gov (The Library of Congress: this is a great site for primary sources)

<http://www.ushistory.org>

<http://www.si.edu/> (the Smithsonian's website)

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/> (Great resource on animals)

www.history.com

www.biography.com

Other news sites, like Newsela and Britannica, can be accessed through your child's Clever account. They can sign in using the same username and password they use for Typing Agent.

We'll send updates on the research project in the weekly Fourth Grade Newsletter. If you have any questions, please reach out to your student's reading or writing teacher. Thank you!

Ms. Buscher

Mr. Gold

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