

# The Big6™ Skills

The Big6 is a process model of how people of all ages solve an information problem.



## 1. Task Definition

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

## 2. Information Seeking Strategies

- 2.1 Determine all possible sources (brainstorm)
- 2.2 Select the best sources
  - What are all the possible sources to check?
  - 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
  - Where can I find these sources?
  - 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
  - What information do I expect to find in this source?
  - What information from the source is useful?

## 5. Synthesis

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

## 6. Evaluation

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

# BIG 6™ RESEARCH WORKSHEET

Use this “form” to help you organize your project research. If you do your “thinking” first you will save lots of time and frustration. The following steps support what is called “The Big 6” process and refers to the six steps we all use to solve “information problems”. Your “problem” is usually the project you have to research.

Take the time to develop your understanding of the process so your efforts are productive.

**Step#1: TASK DEFINITION.** Define your information problem & identify the information needed to complete your task.

**Key Question:**

What is the project and what information do I need?

**Strategy:**

- List questions to answer about your project.  
(who, what, when, where, which, why, and how)

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Research/Project Requirements:

*As you get ready to get to work, make sure you know what you are required to do. Consult rubrics and/or directions and expectations and **list ALL Requirements** below.*

**Example:** My assignment involves writing a report on a famous person in history.

My final project should have:

- a title page
- an introductory paragraph, body paragraph(s), and a conclusion
- a Bibliography/Works Cited page (a page that lists the resources you used to your information).

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12.
13.
14.

## Develop Questions

*In this area, write out a list of questions that you need to answer in order to solve your “problem.” Try to think through all the aspects of what you need to discover about your topic and then write these things out as questions.*

*Below are some questions to get you started. Circle the questions in the box that you used. This will help make sure you don't skip over any important questions.*

Who is...	Who did...	Who can...	Who will...	Who would...
What is...	What did..	What can...	What will...	What would...
When is...	When did...	When can...	When will...	When would...
Where is...	Where did...	Where can...	Where will...	Where would...
Which is...	Which did...	Which can...	Which will...	Which would...
Why is..	Why did...	Why can...	Why will...	Why would...
How is...	How did...	How can...	How will...	How would...

## Questions:

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Complete the K-W Chart Below. It will help you identify the information that you need.

### K-W Chart

<b>K</b> What do I <b>know</b> ?	<b>W</b> What do I <b>want</b> to find out?

**Step #2 Information Seeking Strategies.** Think of possible information sources. Brainstorm then determine the range of possible sources and prioritize them with respect to the value, availability and content.

**Key Question:**

Which resources are the best to use for my topic or project?

**Strategy:**

- Use the Chart below, or a list given to you by your teacher or librarian, to help you choose appropriate sources.

**Possible Sources**

<input type="checkbox"/> Non-fiction books	Online resource/Databases:
Reference books:	<input type="checkbox"/> EBSCO
<input type="checkbox"/> Atlas	<input type="checkbox"/> Facts on File
<input type="checkbox"/> Encyclopedia	<input type="checkbox"/> Grolier
<input type="checkbox"/> Biographical dictionary or encyclopedia	<input type="checkbox"/> World Book
<input type="checkbox"/> Almanac	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Magazine	
<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/> Web site
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Interview
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Video
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

It's important to think about the websites you use for your report or project. There are four major things you should consider when evaluating a web resource:

**Website Evaluation:**

<b>Author or Sponsor</b>	The author or group responsible is listed on the website. The author's or group's qualifications are listed on the website. The author's or group's contact information is listed on the site.
<b>Reliability</b>	The author or organization clearly states the purpose of the website. (e.g. inform, explain, persuade). Consider whether the author/sponsoring organization has anything to gain by presenting this information. Author or group responsible is an authority on the subject. The information presented on the website is free from bias – gender, race, religion.
<b>Date Published</b>	The Website shows the date it was created. The website was updated recently.
<b>Content</b>	The title tells you about the content of the website. The information on the site is accurate when compared to other sources. The website improved or confirmed your knowledge of the subject. The pictures, photographs, graphs, video, and sound files help you understand the subject.

If you can answer YES to the statements in the chart above, you've probably found a good website.

**Step#3 Locate & Access Information.** Locate sources and find specific information within the sources.

*In the boxes below, list **terms** – **words or phrases** – that would be used in documents referring to your research topic. These can be very specific or general, yet used in conjunction with your topic. These are the “search terms” which will be found in indexes, library catalogs, and on web pages, which relate to your needed information.*

**Initial**


**During Research**


► **At this point you need to do the searching!**

You need to:

- Consult **the Library Catalog** (in school and other online library catalogs from which you can interlibrary loan.)
- Use your list of possible resources from Big 6™ Step #2.
- Use the **index, table of contents, guidewords, headings** and **bold print** to locate your information.
- Search in **periodical databases** for articles relevant to each aspect of your research needs.
- Use **unique search tools** – special search engines or web sites or reference sources – which direct you to information relevant to your research needs.
- Skim and Scan
- Finally, go to **the Internet at large** – but use more than one or two keywords!
- Evaluate each resource to find the **best** ones for you.

List the resources you found most helpful for the information you need.

Title	Call# or URL	Page(s)
1.		
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11.		
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15.		

### **Works Cited Resources**

Listed are two online resources to help you format your works cited page in MLA format.

- Son of citation machine: <http://citationmachine.net/>
- Easybib: <http://www.easybib.com/>

**Step #4 Use of Information.** Engage the information (read, hear, view, touch) and extract relevant information from your sources.

**Key Question:**

What information do I need for my notes?

**Strategy:**

- Read, view, listen
- Mind-mapping, concept mapping, data chart, T-chart for note taking.

Once you have gathered your sources, the next step is to read, watch or listen for information and take notes. Begin to use the section of the resource that answers the questions you wrote in Stage 1. Write your notes on a note-taking sheet or on a form your teacher gives you.

Here are some hints about taking notes:

1. Carefully read, view or listen for important information that will answer your questions
2. Think about what you read
3. Take notes using a graphic organizer, notebook or note cards
  - ❖ Use your own words
  - ❖ Write down facts, keywords, main ideas, phrases
  - ❖ Only write down what is important for your topic
  - ❖ Do not copy whole sentences
4. Ask yourself: “Do I have enough information in my notes to write my rough draft or organize into my project(s), using my notes ONLY as a guide?”
5. Record each resource you use on the Works Cited worksheet

**Step #5 Syntheses.** Organize and present your information.

**Key Question:**

How can I organize and present my information?

**Strategy:**

- Write an outline, list of key points or create a mind map to help organize your report or project
- Write a rough draft and begin to complete your assignment.

*At some point you need to start putting your information and ideas together for presentation. You are creating a new information source when you do this. You take what you have learned and synthesize it into something that is unique to your project goals. So, explain what you want to do with the information. In what format do you need to present it and how will it be organized? Consider making an outline first!*

Here are 2 suggestions that you can use to help organize your information:

- Write an outline
- List key points

**Don't forget that when you use the thoughts and ideas of other people, you need to give credit to them by citing your information source. If you don't, you are plagiarizing!!**

Questions to help you organize your work

- ❖ Do I have enough information? Have I finished my research?

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- ❖ Does the information I have answer my assignment questions?

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- ❖ How will I present my information?

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- ❖ Have I completed my *Works Cited List*?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No

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**Step #6 Evaluate.** Judge the product (effectiveness) and judge the process (efficiency).

*This part of the process doesn't happen at the end, but is something that you **do continuously** throughout your research. Judging the product and the process applies to the sources you look at as well as the final presentation of your research. If you effectively evaluate what you are doing as you go along, your final product will be of a higher quality and have more impact than if you take the first things you see and fail to examine them carefully.*

**Key Question:**

How do I know did well?

**Strategy:**

1. Compare your project to the task as defined in **Stage 1** to sure that you met all the requirements.
2. Use the rubric or teacher research/project expectations

Now is the time to judge your completed report or project before you turn it in to your teacher. Your teacher may give you a rubric you can use at this stage to evaluate your work. Also, ask and answer the questions below:

1. I had a clear understanding of my task before I began to work on my report or project.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2. I used the best resources available.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3. The information I gathered was the information I needed.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. I took good notes.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. I organized my notes in a way that made sense.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. I cited my sources correctly.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. My finished assignment matches what I was supposed to do.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. I used my time efficiently.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. I am proud of my work.	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Consider...

- Have I completed the requirements of the assignment?
- Have I done my best work?

1. What did I do well?

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2. What would I do differently?

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