

Supporting Common Core State Standards

Sharpen your child's research skills

There is a heavy emphasis on developing students' research skills in the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Even students in kindergarten will be introduced to basic research techniques. Whether your child has a short- or long-term research project, you can offer support by reviewing these research essentials.

Identify resources

Help your child sharpen research skills by discovering different types of resources. Encourage your child to consider:

- **The Internet.** Information from around the world is at your child's fingertips. And since most students enjoy using the Internet, that in turn makes doing research for school more fun. Be sure to review online safety tips with your child and stay close by to monitor the websites he visits.
- **Newspaper and magazine articles.** Encourage your child to find and read articles on her topic. Additional sources of information are likely to be named in the articles. Your child might even contact a reporter. Many are happy to share information with students.
- **Experts.** Make calls or send emails to experts. To find experts in a certain field, your child can call businesses or the public affairs offices of universities.
- **Teachers.** Once your child has collected some resources, he should ask his teachers for suggestions on books that may offer a different point of view.



Evaluate sources

Your child must “consider the source,” especially when looking up information online. Just because it's online doesn't mean it's true. Is it a commercial website that is trying to sell something or push an agenda? Was the site updated recently? Suggest that your child stick to websites from unbiased nonprofit agencies, educational institutions and government agencies.

Give credit

Remind your child to keep track of her sources so she can give them proper credit. She should:

- **Write down the names and job titles of people she interviews.**
- **Print a copy of information she finds online, including the website address.**
- **Make copies of information found in books or other print sources.**

Avoid plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking someone else's words or ideas and passing them off as your own. Because it is so easy to copy and paste information found online, students may inadvertently plagiarize someone else's work. Talk to your child about the importance of restating information in his own words and giving credit to his sources.