

## Essential Unit of Study

**Title: Things That Make You Go Hmmm.... Research**

**Subject: Language Arts**

**Grade: 4**

4<sup>th</sup> 9 weeks (from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ )

Approximate Time Frame: 3-4 weeks

Unit Design Status: Initial Draft Date: 2/28/09

Revised Draft Date: 2/9/10

Important Dates:

### Unit Summary:

*Note: This unit of study may be integrated with science, social studies, or the persuasive unit of study.*

Research is utilized in many aspects of our lives. It empowers us to seek new information and knowledge and promotes critical thinking. Research allows us to deepen our understanding of the world, its people and oneself.

When we have questions or encounter a problem, we research to find answers to our questions, to help solve problems, and to gain a deeper understanding on a topic. Teachers model the Big 6 research process (librarians are a great resource) and necessary research skills to support students as they begin the steps of the research process. (The topic may be integrated with science, social studies, or the previous unit on persuasive texts.) Students begin the process of research by becoming acquainted with a variety of topics, considering topics of personal interest, brainstorming with others on possible topics, and narrowing down the topic. Students develop open-ended questions on the self-selected topic, develop a plan of research, and narrow a specific topic by consulting expert sources. Using multiple sources such as surveys, interviews, online searches, and library resources, students collect data systematically. Students use effective speaking and listening skills if conducting interviews or consulting local experts. Teachers model various note taking strategies and paraphrasing techniques. Students must differentiate between paraphrasing and plagiarism while note taking. Information is cited properly by acknowledging sources in a works-cited page. Students compile information from multiple sources and organize and present the ideas according to the purpose of the research and the audience in a brief written explanation, which will be revised for each writing trait and edited prior to publishing.

## Desired Results

### Big Ideas:

- Clarity in written and spoken language demonstrates effective communication for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- Inquiry and research guide the discovery of new information, help in formulating questions, and promote critical thinking.
- Knowledge of media, materials, and techniques empowers us to make choices and express ourselves.

### TEKS:

(4.11) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Expository Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:

**(D) use multiple text features (e.g., guide words, topic and concluding sentences) to gain an overview of the contents of text and to locate information**

(4.13) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents. Students are expected to:

**(B) explain factual information presented graphically (e.g., charts, diagrams, graphs, illustrations)**

(4.14) Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to:

(C) compare various written conventions used for digital media (e.g. language in an informal e-mail vs. language in a web-based news article)

Reading/ Comprehension Skills. Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author's message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to:

(A) establish purposes for reading selected texts based upon own or others' desired outcome to enhance comprehension

(4.15) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to:

(C) revise drafts for coherence, **organization**, use of simple and compound sentences, and audience

(4.20) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

(A) use and understand the function of the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking:

**(vii) correlative conjunctions (e.g., either/or, neither/nor)**

(4.23) Research/Research Plan. Students ask open-ended research questions and develop a plan for answering them. Students are expected to:

**(A) generate research topics from personal interests or by brainstorming with others, narrow to one topic, and formulate open-ended questions about the major research topic**

(B) generate a research plan for gathering relevant information (e.g., surveys, interviews, encyclopedias) about the major research question

(4.24) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:

**(A) follow the research plan to collect information from multiple sources of information both oral and written, including:**

**(i) student-initiated surveys, on-site inspections, and interviews**

**(ii) data from experts, reference texts, and online searches**

**(iii) visual sources of information (e.g., maps, timelines, graphs) where appropriate**

**(B) use skimming and scanning techniques to identify data by looking at text features (e.g., bold print, italics)**

**(C) take simple notes and sort evidence into provided categories or an organizer**

**(D) identify the author, title, publisher, and publication year of sources**

(E) differentiate between **paraphrasing** and plagiarism and identify the importance of citing valid and reliable sources

(4.25) Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information. Students are expected to:

(A) improve the focus of research as a result of consulting expert sources (e.g., reference librarians and local experts on the topic)

**(4.26) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience.** Students are expected to:

(A) draw conclusions through a brief written explanation and create a works-cited page from notes, including the author, title, publisher, and publication year for each source used

See Social Studies TEKS 4.22- 4.24

*The Bolded TEKS will be assessed on the district nine weeks common assessment.*

## Understandings:

### *Students will understand that...*

- The purpose of research is to investigate questions and synthesize findings to form new understandings.
- Research is a process. The research steps are not necessarily linear.

### *Unit Specific*

- Research topic ideas come from our questions, problems, and interests.
- Information can be collected from a variety of sources including expert sources.
- Writers use various sources and critical thinking to check the accuracy of information.
- Good writers use skimming, scanning, and synthesizing techniques to paraphrase text.
- Credit must be attributed to the source where information or ideas are obtained.
- Information should be organized and presented in a format according to the purpose of the research and the audience.

## Essential Questions:

### *Overarching*

- What is the purpose of research?
- What steps should be taken to research a topic?

### *Unit Specific*

- Where do we get our research ideas?
- What are the best sources to gather information on a topic and how is each used?
- How do writers check the validity of their research?
- How do writers take another person's words and make them their own?
- Why are sources cited?
- What is the best format to share my research?

## Misconceptions:

### *Students may think that...*

- Copying straight from a book or webpage is adequate research.
- They can only do research online.
- All printed information and information online is accurate.
- When you Google, the first option listed (or the top hit) is the best website to utilize to find information.
- Research is only done formally and must result in a project.
- When researching, you may not change your original research question.
- When doing research, you will always find answers to your research question.
- The library is separated and organized in two parts, Fiction and Nonfiction, not organized by the Dewey Decimal System.

## Students will know...

- Ideas for research topics might come from personal interests, things that personally matter, questions, and brainstorming with others.
- Open-ended questions require more than a yes/no answer and allow for discovery and involve asking "why" to think about answers.
- Before researching, you must have a plan and follow a research process. (ex. Big 6 Research Process)
- Relevant information can be gathered from surveys, interviews, encyclopedias, on-site inspections/observations, data from experts, and online searches.
- Writers can find answers to questions by investigating and researching a variety of sources. Students will learn that through researching, more questions emerge.
- Utilizing text features allows the reader to access information more efficiently.
- The language used in digital media varies depending on the audience, purpose, delivery, and format (e.g., informal email, web-based article, Comic Life, I-movie, Power Point).
- Notes can be organized according to the questions answered, provided categories, or an organizer.
- All sources must be cited by identifying the author, title, publisher, and publication year.
- Multiple research sources are necessary to determine the validity of the information.
- Expert sources (reference librarians and local experts on a topic) may be consulted to improve the focus of research.
- A works- cited page includes the sources you actually used in your research.
- A research paper is organized according to audience and purpose.
- A final research product should have student ownership and show evidence of student learning.
- Correlative conjunctions (e.g., either/or, neither/nor).

## Students will be able to...

- Generate and narrow the focus of a research topic.
- Formulate open-ended questions about the research topic.
- Make a research plan for gathering relevant information.
- Gather oral and written relevant sources.
- Establish a purpose for reading selected texts.
- Skim and scan to identify data by looking at text features (e.g. bold print, italics, guide words, topic and concluding sentences, charts, graphs, diagrams, illustrations).
- Compare various written conventions used for digital media.
- Explain factual information presented graphically (e.g., charts, diagrams, illustrations, graphs, maps, timelines).
- Take simple notes and organize it into categories.
- Identify the author, title, publisher, and publication year of sources notes are taken from.
- Differentiate between paraphrasing and plagiarism.
- Identify the importance of citing valid and reliable sources.
- Create a works-cited page that includes author, title, publisher, and publication year for each source used.
- Clarify research questions and determine which additional questions to pursue to support the essence of the research question.
- Evaluate and synthesize collected information.
- Organize and present findings according to the purpose of research and the specific audience.
- Draw conclusions from the research with a brief written explanation.
- Revise for all traits and edit the written piece prior to publishing.
- Use correlative conjunctions correctly in writing.

## Evidence (Assessment For and Of)

### Performance Tasks:

Students research a topic of their choice and draw conclusions in a written paper (summary/ explanation).

To assess students during the research process, you may use rubrics created by the librarians that address steps 1-4 of the Big 6 Process (Task Definition- step 1, Seeking Strategies/ Location and Access- steps 2 & 3, Use of Information- step 4) or you may generate rubrics as a class.

<http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/home.htm> (Choose Research on the left)

To assess students final written piece you may use the district rubric that addresses all of the traits: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions.

[http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth\\_grade\\_writing\\_rubrics.htm](http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth_grade_writing_rubrics.htm)

If students complete an additional presentation, as well as the written piece, then the teacher (or teacher and students) can create a rubric with the criteria prior to developing the presentation.

Students reflect on their research experience at the end of the process. (See Self Assessment and Reflection box below)

[http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth\\_grade\\_writing\\_rubrics.htm](http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth_grade_writing_rubrics.htm)

### Other Evidence:

(e.g., tests, quizzes, prompts, work samples, observations, journals, dialogue)

Teacher observation during reading and writing conferences

The reflection questions (in the box below) can help guide teacher questioning techniques

Authentic writing samples from the student assessed for correct spelling of all 4<sup>th</sup> grade Priority Words

The 4<sup>th</sup> 9 Week Common Assessment might assess:

Reading/ Research: Text features (guide words, topic and concluding sentences, bold print, italics), explain factual information represented graphically (charts, diagrams, graphs, illustrations, maps, timelines), summarize a passage focusing on main idea and key ideas, take notes from a passage, sort information into an organizer, formulate open ended questions, choose the best research question, determine the best source to address the question (survey, on-site inspection, interview, expert data, reference text, online search), identify title, author, publisher, publication year of a source, organization and presentation of ideas

Writing: Students will write a reflection after the completion of the research process using questions provided in the self - assessment box below. Using a rubric, teachers will assess student's ability to thoughtfully reflect about the research process.

[http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth\\_grade\\_writing\\_rubrics.htm](http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth_grade_writing_rubrics.htm) (Research Reflection Rubric)

Writing Multiple-Choice: correlative conjunctions, spelling of Priority and Core Words (through #500), spelling skills (Latin roots, silent letters-wr, suffixes)

### Self Assessment and Reflection:

(e.g., student data notebooks, journals)

Students have access to the rubrics and self assess their progress along the way in each step of the research process as well as the written explanation.

Student reflection of the research process

Reflection Questions:

Why did you choose this topic?

How did you decide which sources to use to gather information?

Which source did you find most valuable? Why?

What step in the research process did you find most difficult? Why was it challenging? How did you work through it?

What three things did you find that is surprising or would be interesting to others?

What did you learn about your topic that you did not know before?

What lingering questions do you still have?

What did you learn about yourself as a writer during this unit of study?

Student Data Notebook Ideas:

- *Research Capacity Matrix*
- *Vocabulary- Latin and Greek Roots Capacity Matrix*

## Learning Plan

### Pre-assessments:

Prior to the unit beginning, ask students to think about what they might be interested in researching. Ask students to write a possible research question and submit it as an exit ticket upon leaving class one day. The teacher uses this information to determine student's current level of familiarity with developing open ended research questions.

**Differentiation:** *Regard learner differences as inevitable, important, and valuable in teaching and learning.*

- What level of **background knowledge** does the student bring to this experience?
- What level of English **language proficiency** does the student bring to this experience?
- What **learning style** or multiple intelligence preference does the student bring to this experience?
- What **interests** does the student bring to this experience?

### Learning Experiences:

Teachers model the research process with a topic of interest or a class topic of interest. Students choose topics to research based on personal interests or by brainstorming with others. (You might consider integrating science or social studies.)

Sample Lesson Plan Idea:

- *Generating Open-Ended Questions*
- *Summarizing vs. Paraphrasing*

### Vocabulary:

text features  
guide words  
topic and concluding sentences  
bold print  
italics  
charts  
diagrams  
graphs  
illustrations  
maps  
timelines  
words  
images,  
graphics  
sounds  
digital media  
correlative conjunctions  
open-ended research question  
research plan  
source  
surveys,  
interviews  
encyclopedia  
reference texts  
online searches  
author, title, publisher, publication year  
paraphrasing  
plagiarism  
valid  
reliable  
works-cited page

### Resources:

Nonfiction Matters- Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis  
Strategies That Work- Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis  
Nonfiction Craft Lessons – JoAnn Portalupi and Ralph Fletcher

Your campus librarian and technology facilitator are excellent resources!

Big 6 Research Process Rubrics - (Choose Research on the left side or see your librarian) <http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/home.htm>

Inspiration

<http://www.tcet.unt.edu/START/teks/res.htm> (Technology TEKS)

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/ch113a.html> (Social Studies TEKS)

<http://www.youthlearn.org/learning/teaching/questions.asp> (types of questions)

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/> (American Memory Collection- Library of Congress- web source for primary resources)

[www.easybib.com](http://www.easybib.com) (Bibliography)

[www.noodletools.com](http://www.noodletools.com) (Bibliography)

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

<http://streaming.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?location=klru> (Discovery Streaming)

Online Databases: EBSCO, Kids Infobits, Texas Almanac Online, Thompson Gale InfoTrac, World Book Encyclopedia Online

[http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth\\_grade\\_writing\\_rubrics.htm](http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/fourth_grade_writing_rubrics.htm)  
(Writing Rubric- all traits)

<http://classroom.leanderisd.org/webs/elemla/home.htm> (LA website)

### Notes/Reflections: