

Social Studies Fair Research Quick Reference Guide and Tips

Research Process- This is what I do—take it and make it your own.

1. Find articles (use the school website and the links under the media center) & SKIM-- Use CTRL + F and search a key word. Read the parts with the key words and make sure that the article applies to your topic/question.
2. When the article is helpful, I cite it THEN & save it to a word DOC. (Copy and paste). (You may want to use your Office 365 account so that it will not get lost and you can access it again.) If you would like to use something like citation machine or another generator that is acceptable. <http://www.citationmachine.net/>
3. Then I go back later to READ each article and markup it up. This means you can write, underline, etc. parts that you want to cite or quote later in your research paper. You may also find new information and it may lead you to need or want more research.
4. If you find that you need to do more research start back at number 1.

Links

Cobb Digital Library: <https://www.mackinvia.com/> You log in with the same credentials you use in the media center. It is not a bad idea to start with google when you are trying to narrow down your topic. However, it makes it harder to tell which resources are credible. Cobb County School District already checks the information on Mackinvia.

Writing Process

1. First, I take all of my articles that I have marked up and quickly read over them. Then I create an outline based on my research question and the articles that I have. For some essays I may need to put it in chronological order—especially if it is history related. Other essays it may have to be based on topics that lead me to the answer of my research question. Remember—this is still an academic essay so there are certain parts that you will ALWAYS need like: intro paragraph, a hook, a thesis, supporting evidence, counter argument (if appropriate), restate thesis, and conclusion paragraph.
2. Second, I literally start filling in the outline with my words and the evidence from the articles. I remind myself that this is a rough draft and I just focus on continuing on and not worrying about the spelling, grammar, or stylistic errors. I will fix that later.
3. Third, I like to print my paper and read it aloud. I mark it up for the errors and I rework the arrangement or words and or paragraphs to make it flow more logically.
4. Fourth, I have someone else read it. Someone I trust with my ideas and someone who is a more experienced writer than me.
5. Fifth, I take their ideas into consideration. Sometimes I make changes and other times if it is not an error, I may leave it as I said it because I liked it that way. I have that power. It is my paper.
6. Sixth, I read it aloud one last time to make any final changes.
7. Finally, I am glad to be done. And I am glad that I already put all of my articles on the research documents. I simply copy and paste them on to the works cited page. I also make sure that they are in alphabetical order.
8. Lastly, I celebrate. For me that may mean a cookie. Or a nice run outside. You decide. You did something worth celebrating. Writing is hard. It is a struggle. And you made it through it a better writer.