

Report Writing

Grades 6-8

SUGGESTED SOCIAL STUDIES REPORTS
FOR GRADES 1-8

1st grade: Simple book report

2nd grade: Historical figure (1 page)

3rd grade: American Heroes or American Indians or
Animals-a science topic

4th grade: California Indians/Mission or other topic of California

5th grade: State Report

6th grade: Country Report, Ancient History

7th grade: World History

8th grade: U.S. History

WRITING A REPORT

A REPORT has information about a topic. You investigate the topic of your report.

A TERM PAPER is a more formal report which takes a period of time to complete, like a quarter or semester.

There are five steps to a successful report or term paper.

1. Plan the report
2. Find information
3. Get organized
4. Write the report
5. Prepare a bibliography

Warm-up activity: Think about the last report you wrote.

What were some of the problems you had?

How can you avoid these problems with this report?

If you have never written a report, what are you anxious about? Perhaps you can make a list with your child and discuss some solutions, before you get stumped in a problem area.

Lesson 1: Planning a Report

The most important time you spend is the time you spend in planning your report. A plan is a set of directions which tell you where you are going and how you are going to get there. Before you make a plan, it helps to think about the final goal. It also helps to think about all of the steps you must take.

Step 1 - Planning and choosing a topic

(on your calendar, mark due dates for each step)

Step 2 - Finding information and taking notes

Step 3 - Getting organized and making a final outline

Step 4 - Writing the report, proofreading, revising and rewriting

Step 5 - Preparing a bibliography

Final Goal - Handing in a good report on time!

Lesson 2: Finding Information

You should use the public library to find information about your topic. You can also find information on the reference shelf in the library. A reference book has information. People usually do not read the whole book. They use it to look up facts about a topic. You usually cannot check out a reference book from a library. Here are some reference books:

Almanac: contains facts, statistics and records for current and past years

Atlas: a book of maps and facts about places

Encyclopedia: information on important people, places, things and ideas

Who's Who in America: information about famous people

Before you check out a book, read the table of contents and look at the index. The table of contents lists all the titles of the chapters in the book. It is a quick way to see if the book has the information you need. An index lists all of the topics in a book. The index tells you the page numbers where you can find information.

When you have found the books and magazines that you need, the next step is to read and take notes.

Guidelines for taking notes:

- You may use index cards. They are easy to put in order when you write the paper
- Begin each card by writing information about the book
- Write any information that you may need
- Put quotation marks around sentences that you copy exactly. You should try to avoid these types of sentences.
- Be sure that your information is correct and complete
- Use different cards for different sources

Lesson 3: Getting Organized

When you have finished finding information, you will have many note cards. Before you write your report, you must put those notes in order. You should have an outline.

The first step in getting organized is to sort out your note cards.

1. Put the notes on the same topics together.
2. If you have only one card on a topic, see if it fits in with one of the other topics.
3. If you have a very large pile of cards, maybe you should divide them into subtopics.
4. Some of your notes may not fit anywhere. You don't have to use all of the information you found.

The next step is to make a list of the main topics. You will have a stack of cards for each topic in your list. The list of main topics will help you make an opening sentence for each paragraph.

Finally, before you write the outline, you must put the topics into some kind of order.

Lesson 4: Writing the Report

The next step is to write the body of the report. You should write at least one paragraph about each of the major topics in your outline. Most of your report should be written in your own words. The information will be from books and periodicals you have read.

Using your note cards and outline, do these things:

- **Write the title of the paper on the top line
- **Write the topic paragraph (the introduction)
- **Write complete paragraphs about each topic and subtopic
- **Make your last paragraph a summary

Sometimes you will want to write the *exact* words of the author of a book. This is a direct quotation. You then must identify the source in your bibliography. If you use direct quotations:

- **Only use quotation marks around the exact words of the author.

When you put the information in your own words, do not use quotation marks.

- **The reader should be able to find out the name of the book and publisher from your bibliography.

Lesson 5: Preparing a Bibliography and Table of Contents

A bibliography is a list of sources. These are the books and other sources you used to find your information. Your bibliography must also include the periodicals or web sites you used.

The bibliography should be in alphabetical order. Here are some samples:

Book entry:

Author, Title. Place of Publication: Publisher, date, pages.

Periodical entry:

Author, "Title of Article." Title of Periodical, Date, Volume number, Issue Number, pages.

Encyclopedia entry:

"Article Title." Title of encyclopedia, Volume number, date, pages.

Don't get frazzled writing a bibliography. There is more than one way to do it. When searching for information for your bibliography, look on the title page and on the back of the title page. Information about periodical entries will be within the article itself and in the front of the periodical.

Next, complete your title page and table of contents.

Direction Sheet

Country/Nation Report

6th-8th Grades

Report Features:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | Cover | Your cover must be the report of the nation. |
| 2 | Table of Contents | The report must be organized as listed by this Table of Contents. |
| 3 | Illustrations | All illustrations must be included in this section of the nation report. |
| 4 | Government Modern | The Modern Government section must include the name of the legislative bodies of the nation. How is the nation governed? Is it democratic? |
| 5 | Industrial | What products does the nation export? What goods are produced for domestic usage? |
| 6 | Natural Resources | What materials are mined? Minerals of the nation that are exported! |
| 7 | Farming | What crops are common in the nation? Does the nation produce enough food to feed itself? Does the nation export food to other nations? |
| 8 | Rivers | What use is made of the nation's rivers? |
| 9 | Cities & Capitol | What is the capitol of the nation? What are the chief cities? Populations! |
| 10 | History of the nation | Describe the nation's history of both modern and past back to the founding of the nation. |

Bibliography Format

Writers use a bibliography to identify the sources they used when writing an article or book. Bibliographic entries are alphabetized according to the first word in the entry.

Book with one author:

Author's last name, first name. Book Title. City published in: Publisher, Date published.

example: Detz, Joan. How to Write and Give a Speech. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984.

Book with two or three authors:

1st author's last name, first name, and 2nd author's first and last name. Book Title. City published in: Publisher, Date published.

example: Ornstein, Robert, and Richard F. Thompson. The Amazing Brain. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

Book with more than three authors:

1st author's last name, First name, et al. Book Title. City published in: Publisher, Date published.

example: Dolciani, Mary P., et al. Algebra. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980.

Article in an encyclopedia:

"Article title." Encyclopedia name, Vol. letter. City published in: Publisher, Date published, pp. page numbers.

example: "Ecology." The World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. E. Chicago: World Book, 1983, pp. 37-38.

Article in a monthly magazine:

Author's last name, First name. "Article Title." Magazine title (Month. year): pages.

example: Flamsteed, Sam. "When Galaxies Collide." Discover (Feb. 1990): 50-57 .

Article in a weekly magazine:

Author's last name, First name. "Article Title: Magazine title (Month. day, year): pages.

example: Flamsteed, Sam. "When Galaxies Collide." Discover (Feb. 24, 1990): 50-57.

Article in a daily newspaper:

Author's last name, First name. "Article Title." Newspaper title (Month. day, year): pages.

example: Chira, Susan. "Electronic Teacher." The New York Times (Jan. 24,1990): A1-A2.

Film/Media

Title. Film Production Company, date filmed.

example: Airplanes. American Film Co., Inc., 1972.

Computer Encyclopedia on C.D.:

"Article Title." Encyclopedia name C.D., date.

example: "Egypt." Encarta C.D., 1997.

Online/Internet Information:

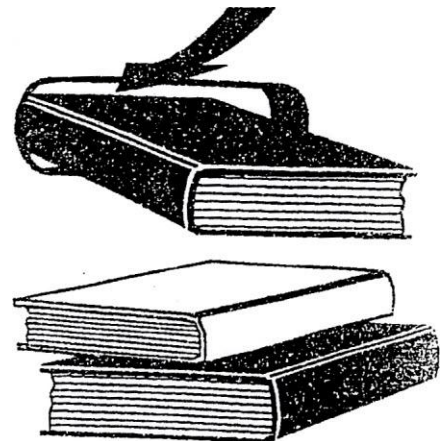
"Title." www. address. Date page was posted. Date information retrieved.

example: "Eddie Bauer." www.eddiebauer.com. 2012. Retrieved Jan. 12, 2013.

Article in Pamphlet:

Author's last name, first name, "Title", Publisher (date).

example: Lee, Jon, "Smoking", Bantam Books (1998) .



A Closer Look at a Bibliography:

Example 1: Book Entry

Authors (Last name first in alpha order) Title Place of Publication
Allen, G., and Howard, M.K. The History of Computer. Chicago:
Best Books Co., 1982.
Publisher Date of Publication

Example 2: Periodical (Magazine, Newspaper) Entry

Author Title of Article Title of Periodical
Evers, Wayne. "Computers Yesterday and Today." The Computer
Journal, August 1980, 2 (8), pp.9-11.
Date: Month & Year Volume & Issue Number Page Numbers

Example 3: Encyclopedia Entry

Title of Article Title of Encyclopedia Volume Number Date of Publication Page Numbers
"Computers." World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, 1980, pp.119-125.

Example 4: Online/Internet Information

Title of Article Date Web Page was Posted/Updated
"Cassette Tape to MP3 Conversion Guide."
Web Address → [www. http://cassettetomp3.blogspot.com](http://cassettetomp3.blogspot.com). Sept. 21, 2010.
Retrieved on Jan. 12, 2013.
Date you viewed the web page and got your information

Teacher's Holistic Writing Evaluation

Student's Name: _____ Date of Evaluation: _____

Writing Assignment: _____

Carefully read the student's piece of writing. Check the paragraph that most closely reflects your opinion of the assignment.

- A. This is a well-written assignment that shows logical organization to present its message clearly. It is creative and uses appropriate language for the audience. The author uses a variety of sentences. It is error-free and neatly written.
- B. This written work is good and shows preparation by the author with thought to its purpose and audience. It is interesting, but it is not as smooth as it could be and does not have much sentence variation. The mechanics are good, with only a few errors. It is neatly written.
- C. This assignment shows only a minimum of preparation, with little adherence to detail. There are some errors in mechanics and spelling. The student needs to use a proofreading checklist.
- D. This writing is unsatisfactory. It is vague and unorganized. There are many errors. It is not neatly written. This student will need to have individualized help.
- F. This assignment was not completed by the student. This student will need to have a conference with the teacher.