The Research Safari

(It's a jungle out there….a jungle of information)

Research Planner

Name: _____

Subject: _____

Teacher: _____

Assignment: _____

Due Date: _____

Introduction

This planner is designed to give you a step-by-step guide through your inquiry. The framework used is called **The Inquiry Process**. In each step there are some very important skills that you need to learn to master inquiry learning.

The booklet is also supported by an online resource called *The Research Safari* can be found at *http://researchsafari.com.au*

While the Research Process sometimes looks like a 'linear' or 'cyclic' process remember you can and may need to go back and forth between stages to adequately complete the task.

Defining ＞ Locating ＞ Selecting ＞ Organising ＞ Presenting ＞ Evaluating

The Research Safari

The Research Process is a roadmap that can help you make your way through the jungle of information. There are six stages to this process:

Defining the Task What is the problem I have to solve?		What are the **main ideas** or key concepts? What do I already know about the topic? What information do I need to find out? What **questions** will help guide my research? What is the best questioning framework to use? What **KEY WORDS** will guide my research?
Locating your resources Where can I find the information I need?		Which sources of information are best for my needs? Which sources do I already have? Where can I find those resources I don't have? What are the best **search terms** (**Key Words**) for me to use in my searches? What are the best **databases / search engines** for me to use in my search?
Selecting How will I select the information I need?		What **reading techniques** will I use to help me select my information? (Skimming, Scanning, SQ3R) How do I know if this is an **authoritative source of information**? How will I know whether this information is recent, relevant, accurate and unbiased? How will I **record the information** I find? How will I cite (credit) my sources? What bibliography format will I use?

Processing and Organising How can I organise this information so that I can understand it better?		How will **I organise** the information I find? What is the best way for me to **take notes**? Will it help me to use a **graphic organiser** or **mindmap**? How will I **combine information** from more than one source? How will I check that I have all the information I need to solve my **original** problem or answer my research question?
Presenting How can I best share this information with other people?		Who will be my **audience**? How will I **present my information**? What is the **purpose of my presentation**? What is the best **format** to suit my needs? Do I need to learn any skills for my chosen **presentation format?** How will I demonstrate my understanding?
Evaluating What have I learned as a result of this process?		Did I answer my **focus question**(s)? Did I **manage my time** well? How will I be **assessed**? What did I do well? What do I need to **improve**? How will I **apply this knowledge**?

SPECIAL NOTE: It is important to realise that this process is *not linear.* Sometimes you will be doing *one or two stages at the same time* or you may need to go back to a previous stage if you do not have all of the information you need to complete your task.

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Defining the task

Before you start your assignment / research task you need to *get very clear* about what you are being asked to do.

Unpacking the research task

Analysing the question / task

Look at the **KEY WORDS** in your question. Look at the **VERBS** (or action words) in the task. This will tell you what you have to **DO** (Example Define, Describe, Compare, Prove)

e.g. *Identify* and *describe 5 features* that you would include in a *sustainable home* and *explain why* you would include these features.

Write your research task here…

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                   │
│                                                   │
│                                                   │
│                                                   │
│                                                   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Underline or highlight the keywords in the task OR write them below.

Topic(s) / Key Words

Verbs (describe, explain, sequence, justify etc.)

Audience (Who is the audience for my task?)

Presentation Format (this may be prescribed by your teacher, or you may choose. If you can choose, make sure it is a format that suits the task and audience?

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🌐 **Due Date** When is the assignment due? What else is due at the same time? (Make sure you organise your time so that you do not leave the task until the last minute.

🌐 **Assessment** (How am I going to be assessed? Is there an assessment key or rubric?

Expanding your task

There are a number of ways that you can explore your understanding about your topic. You can:

🌐 **Brainstorm your topic using a graphic organiser such as this explosion chart.**

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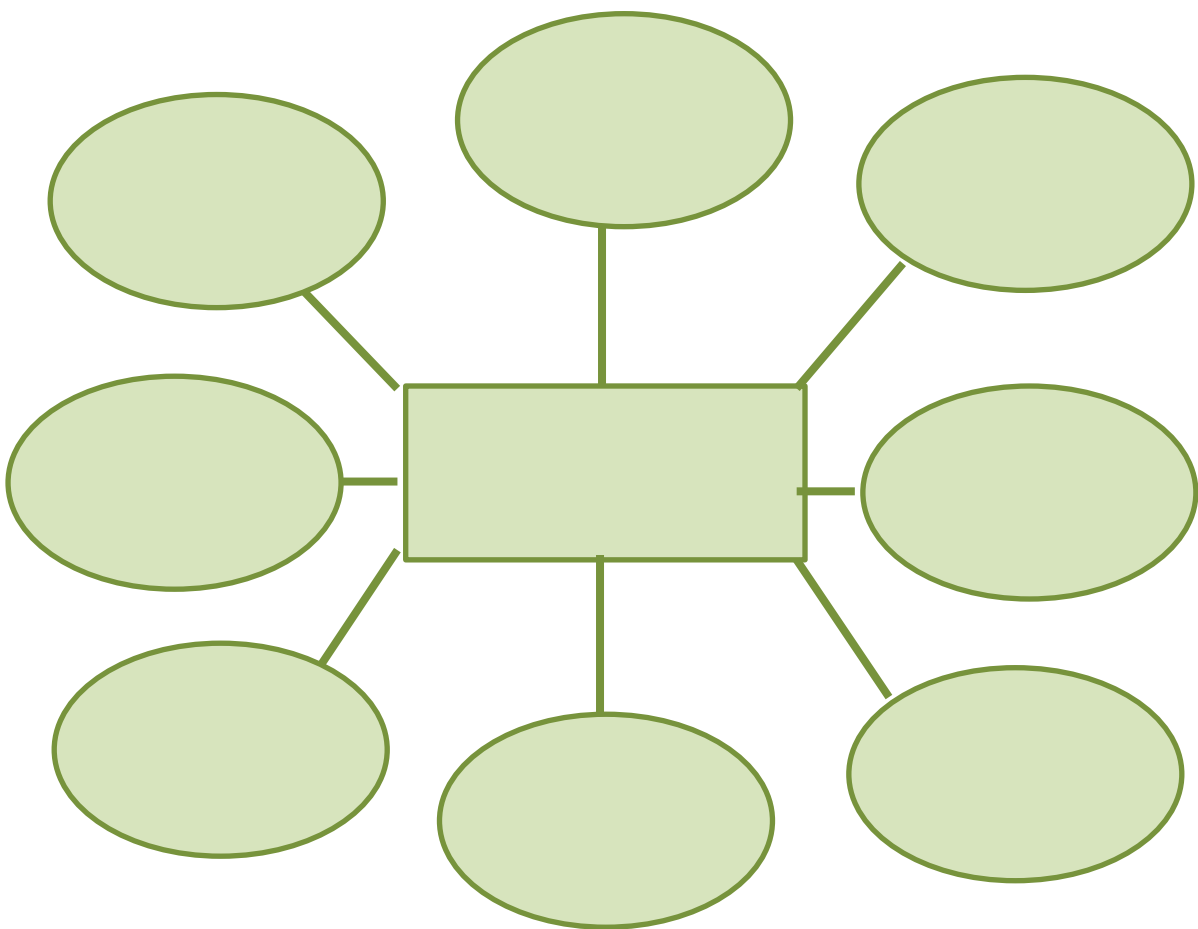
OR

You can use a *Mind map*

A mind map lets you 'rapid fire' ideas about a topic without putting any judgement on the ideas. Sometimes the 'way out' ideas help you to think creatively about your topic. You can create a mind map on paper, or you can use some mind mapping software to help you.

Use this space here to create (or insert) a mind map)

You can use a number of different Apps to create a mind map. Check them out here.

Developing your Focus Questions

The type of question you ask will determine the kind of information you look for and find. If you ask a CLOSED question (one that only needs a YES or NO answer you are limiting the information you find. Try to ask OPEN-ENDED questions. **Use the *Five Ws* and H to develop your questions.**

Questions starter	Write your questions here
Who?	
What?	
Where?	
When?	
Why?	
How?	
	Use the *Knowledge Compass* to develop your questions.

Why not use the *Thinkers Keys* or *Six Thinking Hats* or *Question Matrix* to help you write your questions

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Locating your resources

How do you decide what are the best resources for your research assignment? The type of research task you have will determine the best place to get the information. There are three types of information that you can use:

Primary	*Secondary*	*Tertiary*
This is information that has come directly from the source	Someone has written about the topic	These are lists of resources
Interviews Surveys Original documents (letters, photographs etc) Excursions Guest speakers Realia (real objects)	Books Encyclopaedias Newspapers / Periodicals Journals / Magazines Blogs /Wikis Twitter YouTube	Indexes Directories Search results (from Google or some other search engine)

Where do I look for the information I need?

The two main places that you will locate resources when you do research at school are:

The Library

The school library has a wide range of traditional and digital resources that have been specifically selected for your educational needs. The three most valuable tools that you can use in the library are:

	Library

	Internet
	Other

Searching the World Wide Web

There are literally millions of resources on the internet and that can be a real problem when you are searching for information for your research task. There are some important searching strategies that will help you become a better searcher.

Use these resources on the *Research Safari* to help you.

How to search effectively online

Going beyond Google and Wikipedia

How to evaluate websites

Search Engines

While many students go straight to Google to do their searching there are many other great search engines that have been developed especially for students.

Search Cube	search-cube	Sweet Search	Sweet Search A Search Engine for Students
Duck Duck Go		Wolfram Alpha	WolframAlpha

Add notes here about your search results:

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Checking the validity of your resources

How do you know what is a 'good source' of information when you are conducting your research?

Use **RADCAB** (Created by Karen M. Christensson, M.S. Library Media Education

RELEVANCE   Is the information relevant to the question I am trying to answer?

APPROPRIATENESS   Is the information suitable to my age and core values?

DETAIL   How much information do I need? Is the depth of coverage adequate?

CURRENCY   When was the information published or last updated?

AUTHORITY   Who is the author of the information?

What are his or her qualifications? Are they an expert in this area? How do you know?

BIAS   Why was this information written? Was it written to inform me, persuade me, entertain me, or sell something to me?

Name of Resource		
URL:		
Criteria		Rating
Relevance		
Appropriateness		
Detail		
Currency		
Authority		
Bias		

Notemaking Outline 1

Task / Problem

Subheading	Notes

Expand this chart as you need to complete your notes.

Notemaking Outline 2

Task / Problem

Heading 1
Subheading a)
Subheading b)
Subheading c)

Heading 2
Subheading a)
Subheading b)
Subheading c)

Heading 3
Subheading a)
Subheading b)
Subheading c)

Heading 4
Subheading a)
Subheading b)
Subheading c)

Research Notes 1

Topic:_____

Focus Question:_____

Research Notes 2

Topic:_____

Focus Question:_____

Research Notes 2

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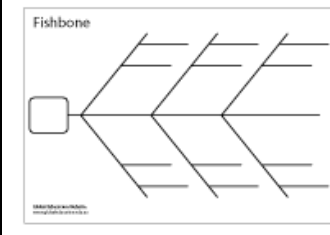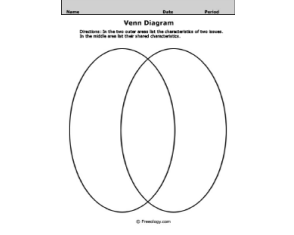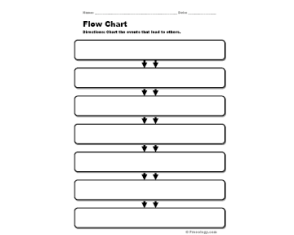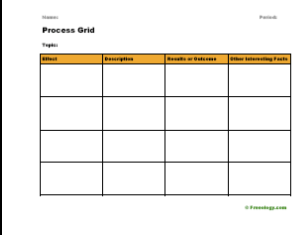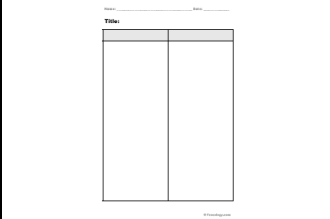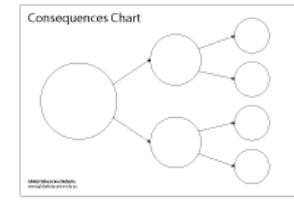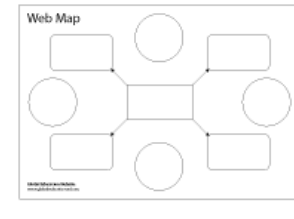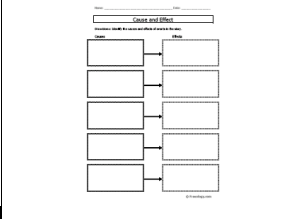
Graphic Organisers

Using Graphic Organisers to write your notes

Sometimes using a structured *note making sheet* called a "Graphic Organiser" can help you organise your information as you do your research. This will help you at the stage where you need to write your report or develop your presentation. Here are some graphic organisers that you may find useful.

Fishbone Diagram	Venn Diagram	Flow Chart	Matrix
T Chart	Consequence Chart	Web Map	Cause / Effect

There are many other *graphic organisers* that you can use to organise your information as you do your research. Follow this link to Research Safari to download copies of the organisers and look for others.

Presenting your work

The presentation format you use will greatly depend on the *purpose* and *audience* for your tasks. Listed below are a range of presentation and digital storytelling tools that you may consider using for your final product. To get more information on how to create dynamic projects visit the Research Safari website.

Slideshow Presentation	Brochure	Poster	Digital Story
Report	Podcast	Website	Journal / Diary
Model	Documentary	Cartoon / Animation	Movie

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Writing your bibliography

A bibliography is a list of resources used in preparing a piece of work.

When writing up a piece of work you will need to cite (quote) the bibliographical references of all resources you have used. There are many different referencing formats you can use. ***MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHICH FORMAT IS USED AT YOUR SCHOOL AND FOLLOW THAT ONE***. The example below is from the Harvard Referencing System.

Bibliographical references need to be cited in two different places:

1. Where a document is referred to in the text.
2. In a list at the end of the work, which is arranged alphabetically by author, then by date. This author/date system of description is referred to as the Harvard System.

Books (incl. Reference)

Include the following information in this order:

1. Author's surname, (comma) initials. (full stop)

2. Date, (comma)

3. Title of book, (italics) (comma)

4. Publisher, (comma)

5. Place of publication. (full stop)

For a reference book:

Title of book, (italics) (comma)

Year, (comma)

Edition, (comma)

Publisher, (comma)

Place of publication. (full stop)

Dixon, J. 1993, How to be a successful student, Penguin Books, Ringwood.

Books (Edited)

Include the following information in this order:
1. Editor's surname, (comma) initials. (full stop)
2. Year, (comma)
3. Title of book, (italics) (comma)
4. Publisher, (comma)
5. Place of publication. (full stop)

Harvey, J. 2002, Water pollution, Penguin Books, Ringwood.

For an Article in an edited book:

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Bryant, S. 1999, 'The energy crisis of 1920', in P. Jarman (ed.) World wide energy, Blackwell, Sydney.

Interviews

Include the following information in this order:

1.   Surname of person being interviewed, (comma) initials. (full stop)

2.   Month and Year of interview, (comma)

3.   Title of interview, (italics) (comma)

4.   Interviewer's name

5.   Type of interview e.g. tape recording, transcript, video recording [in square brackets]

6.   Place of interview. (full stop)

Berger, P. Aug 2002, Teaching in L.A., Interviewed by J. Smith [Transcript of Interview] Melbourne Conference Centre.

Journal Articles

Include the following information in this order:

1.   Author's surname, (comma) initials. (full stop)

2.   Date, (comma)

3.   Title of the article, (in single quotation marks) (comma)

4.   Title of the journal, (italics) (comma)

5.   Volume, (comma) number, (comma) month/season, (comma)

6.   Page numbers of article. (full stop)

Burns, S. 1989, 'There's more than one way to learn', Australian Wellbeing, Vol. 6, No 33, October, pp42-44.

Newspaper Articles

Include the following information in this order:

1.   Author's surname, (comma) initials. (full stop)

2.   Date, (comma)

3.   Title of the article, (in single quotation marks) (comma)

4.   Title of the newspaper, (italics) (comma)

5.   Date of publication, (comma)

6.   Page numbers of article. (full stop)

Popham, B. 1997, 'Saving the future', Weekend Australian, 7 February, p2.

Videos

Include the following information in this order:

1. Title (italics)
2. Date, (comma)
3. Format, (video recording) (comma)
4. Publisher, (comma)
5. Place of publication. (full stop)

South American wetland 1982, video recording, BBC, London.

World Wide Web

Include the following information in this order:

1. Author – person or organisation responsible for the site
2. Site date, the date the site was created or last revised (comma)
3. Name of sponsor or publisher, (comma)
4. Place of sponsor or publisher, (comma)
5. Date of viewing of the site, (comma) year, (comma)
6. URL. (full-stop)

Department of Finance and Administration 2001, Department of Finance and Administration, Canberra, viewed 7 August, 2001, http://www.finance.gov.au.

If your school uses a different Referencing System you can find details of the different referencing styles at the Research Safari

Evaluating your work

The _evaluation_ stage is perhaps one of the most important stages of the **Research Process**. Not only does it give you a chance to see how well you did in the task, but it also helps you to identify the areas you may need to work on in the future.

Some of the questions you would ask yourself are:

How did I go?

What did I do well?

What did I struggle with?

What do I need to improve next time?

What are five key things I learned from this task?

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

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How will this learning make a difference time?

What is one skill I need to work on for my next assignment?

How else could I have done this task?

Add any other information you may need for your assignment here.

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END