

**East Coweta Middle School**

6291 E. Highway 16  
Senoia, GA 30276  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade – Language Arts  
February 6, 2012

Dear Sixth Grade Parents:

My language arts classes are beginning a month-long project where they will write a research paper. This is a major step in preparing them for the work that is required in the coming years, so I wanted to share some information and dates and deadlines with you now. Much of your student's grades for this nine weeks will come from this project and the different steps involved.

On the back of this page is a list of suggested topics for your student's consideration. Students are encouraged to choose a topic of interest, but I reserve the right to limit or veto choices that I know will be difficult to research. Students are required to use **four different types of reference materials** in their search for information. This includes the following: book, reference book, textbook, dictionary, encyclopedia, newspaper, magazine, internet source (only one), almanac or atlas. I want them to be exposed to as many types of references as possible.

**PREWRITING – CHOOSE AND NARROW A SUBJECT**

Students will submit their research paper topic by **Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>**. I will help them select one. This is a grade.

- Which topic did you choose? \_\_\_\_\_ Did you find **three books** on this topic? \_\_\_\_\_

**ASK QUESTIONS**

Students will prepare four or five questions that they plan to answer with their research. This should help limit and focus their search. These questions will be due **Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>**. This list counts as a grade.

**FIND SOURCES – MAKE A LIST OF SOURCES – TAKE NOTES**

Students will need about thirty 3x5 inch (or larger) **notes cards** as we begin our research on **Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>**. The twenty-five or more completed note cards will be due **Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>** – a grade.



**ORGANIZE YOUR INFORMATION – OUTLINE YOUR REPORT**

We will begin putting the notes into outline form February 7 - 8. The outline will be due **Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>**. This is a grade.

**MAKE A LIST OF SOURCES**

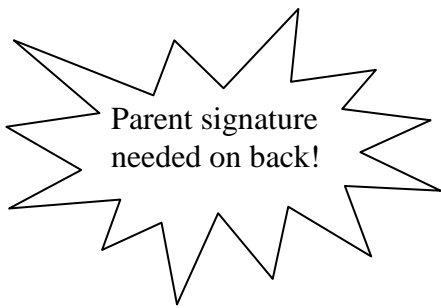
The bibliography list of all the sources used will be due **Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**. Also for a grade (we will use the MLA format).

**COMPLETE FINAL PROJECT**

Students will choose to present their project either as a PowerPoint presentation, a brochure, or a tri-fold/poster board. Each project choice will have a rubric to outline what is expected of them. They will present these in class beginning **Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>**. This is a grade.

Please contact me with any questions. Thank you!

Mrs. Corbett  
6<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts



# Topic Ideas for Research Papers

(These are just some ideas to get you started.)

## Science

Astronomy

- any planet
- our solar system
- our galaxy
- stars
- the moon

Archaeology

Science in Ancient Egypt

Oceanography

Weather

Recycling

## Biographies

Alexander the Great

Alexander Graham Bell

Galileo

Princess Diana

Henry Ford

Hillary Clinton

Napoleon Bonaparte

Leonardo da Vinci

Amelia Earhart

Elizabeth I (the first)

Cleopatra

Queen Victoria

Walt Disney

King Tutankhamun (King Tut)

## Paranormal (for you ghost hunters)

Mummies, ghosts, UFO's, Bermuda Triangle

## Anatomy/physiology/medicine

The eye (eyeball), the heart, the circulatory system, the muscular system, the skeletal system

Ancient medicine

## Careers

Careers for animal lovers, space, writing, sports, music, film & television, law, nurse, oncologist, etc.

## Historical Events/Places/Military

Pearl Harbor

Nuclear submarines

Army Rangers, Green Berets, Navy Seals

Weapons of War (Civil War, WWI, WWII) – airplanes, iron clads, etc.

Vietnam War

## Illnesses

Malaria, Smallpox, West Nile Virus, Leprosy

## Social Studies

Lost civilizations

Native American tribes

WWII, The Holocaust, Death Camps, Auschwitz

Japanese Internment in the U.S.

Technology of Ancient Greece

Ancient Rome

## Authors

R.L. Stine

J.R.R. Tolkien

Edgar Allan Poe

## Famous African Americans

Madam C.J. Walker

Langston Hughes

Coretta Scott King

Dr. George Washington Carver

Henry (Hank) Aaron

Bill Cosby

Muhammad Ali

Louis Armstrong

Mary McLeod Bethune

Mary Church Terrell

Maya Angelou

Marian Anderson

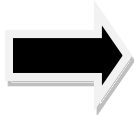
Zora Neale Hurston

## Musicians

Mozart, Gregor Mendel, John Lennon, The Beatles

Any other ideas? Check with Mrs. Corbett

**Parents – please keep signed letter because it contains important information. This counts as a grade and will be due Wednesday, February 8, 2012.**



Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## RESEARCH PROJECT

Monday, February 06, 2012

An overview of what you'll do.

### **ELA6W3: The student uses research and technology to support writing. The student**

- a. Uses organizational features of electronic text (e.g., bulletin boards, databases, keyword searches, e-mail addresses) to locate relevant information.
- b. Includes researched information in different types of products (e.g., compositions, multimedia presentations, graphic organizers, projects, etc.).
- c. Cites references.

### **ELA6W4: The student consistently uses the writing process to develop, revise, and evaluate writing. The student**

- a. Plans and drafts independently and resourcefully.
- b. Revises manuscripts to improve the organization and consistency of ideas within and between paragraphs.
- c. Edits to correct errors in spelling, punctuation, etc.

### **ELA6LSV2: The student listens to and views various forms of text and media in order to gather and share information, persuade others, and express and understand ideas. The student will select and critically analyze messages using rubrics as assessment tools.**

When delivering or responding to presentations, the student:

- a. Gives oral presentations or dramatic interpretations for various purposes.
- b. Shows appropriate changes in delivery (e.g., gestures, vocabulary, pace, visuals).
- c. Uses language for dramatic effect.
- d. Uses rubrics as assessment tools.
- e. Uses electronic media for presentations.

- ❖ You will choose an area of interest to research, and then narrowed the focus of your topic to be more specific.
- ❖ You will develop questions to answer prior to conducting research.
- ❖ You will find **AT LEAST THREE SOURCES** in the media center and **ONE on the Internet**.
- ❖ You will take **AT LEAST 25 TO 30 NOTES** on your chosen topic (on index cards) from those four sources.
- ❖ You will organize your notes into an outline.

Once I grade your outline, you will start working on the bibliography and your presentation. The bibliography will follow the rules for MLA formatting, and you **MUST** have **FOUR RESOURCES**.

- ❖ Your final presentation will be accepted in **electronic form only** this year. You can create a Power Point presentation, a Prezi, or a Glogster, or any other form of media approved by me. This will be done in the computer lab at school (February 29 – March 2) and at home (you can also use your local library).

Make sure you include at least 25 facts in sentence form, and five or more colorful pictures or graphics illustrating the topic. Include a title slide or spot on your poster with your name, class period, and title of your presentation.

You will be graded on the following criteria:

- ❖ Accuracy of content (did you write down correct information?)
- ❖ Knowledge gained (can you accurately answer questions about your topic?)
- ❖ The attractiveness and organization of the presentation
- ❖ The organization of the material (from your outline – is the information grouped correctly?)
- ❖ Graphics and pictures
- ❖ Writing and grammar
- ❖ Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (did someone proofread your project?)

# Research Project: Presentation Rubric

Teacher Name: Mrs. Corbett

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	10	7	4	1	Total
Content - Accuracy	All facts in the presentation are accurate.	99-90% of the facts in the presentation are accurate.	89-80% of the facts in the presentation are accurate.	Fewer than 80% of the facts in the presentation are accurate.	_____x2
Knowledge Gained	Student can accurately answer all questions related to facts in the poster and processes used to create the poster.	Student can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the poster and processes used to create the poster.	Student can accurately answer about 75% of questions related to facts in the poster and processes used to create the poster.	Student appears to have insufficient knowledge about the facts or processes used in the poster.	_____x2
Attractiveness & Organization	The presentation has exceptionally attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The presentation has attractive formatting and well-organized information.	The presentation has well-organized information.	The presentation's formatting and organization of material are confusing to the reader.	_____x2
Writing - Organization	Each section in the presentation has a clear beginning, middle, and end.	Almost all sections of the presentation have a clear beginning, middle and end.	Most sections of the presentation have a clear beginning, middle and end.	Less than half of the sections of the presentation have a clear beginning, middle and end.	_____x1
Graphics/Pictures	Graphics go well with the text and there is a good mix of text and graphics.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are so many that they distract from the text.	Graphics go well with the text, but there are too few and the presentation seems "text-heavy".	Graphics do not go with the accompanying text or appear to be randomly chosen.	_____x1
Writing - Grammar	There are no grammatical mistakes in the presentation.	There are no grammatical mistakes in the presentation after feedback from an adult.	There are 1-2 grammatical mistakes in the presentation even after feedback from an adult.	There are several grammatical mistakes in the presentation even after feedback from an adult.	_____x1
Spelling & Proofreading	No spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the presentation.	No more than 1 spelling error remains after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the presentation.	No more than 3 spelling errors remain after one person other than the typist reads and corrects the presentation.	Several spelling errors in the presentation.	_____x1

Total Score = \_\_\_\_\_

# Writing an Introduction

## What is it?

An introduction is the first paragraph of a written research paper, or the first thing you say in an oral presentation. You should begin your oral presentation with a general introduction to the topic you will be discussing.

## Why do it?

Without an introduction it is difficult for your audience to figure out what you are trying to say. There needs to be a main idea that they will follow through your paper or presentation. The beginning of your oral presentation introduces the main idea so your audience can follow what you're saying.

## When do I write the introduction?

I recommend writing your introduction last, after you finish your outline. This is to make sure that you introduce what you are actually going to say.

## How do I do it?

Start with a couple of sentences that introduce your topic to your audience. You do not have to give too much detailed information; save that for the body of your paper. Make these sentences as interesting as you can. Through them, you can hook a reader and get them very interested in the line of thinking you are going to develop in your project.

An introduction gives the audience an idea of where you are going in your project so they can follow along. You can give them more background details and supporting evidence for your main idea in the body of the paper itself.

### Example 1

#### **From the Brain to the Bombe: History's First Computing Machines**

The modern computer can fit on a desk or a lap or even in the palm of your hand. However, computers have not always been so small. Compared to today's advanced computing products, the early computing machines were huge, heavy, and slow.

### Example 2

#### **Ella**

When strangers approached Ella Fitzgerald, they often called her "Ella." This bothered the famous jazz singer, who was shy about being in the public eye. "It seemed to me they should say Miss Fitzgerald," she said. It wasn't that the singer's fans didn't have any manners. Rather, they called her "Ella" because her music was so friendly. When listening to one of Ella's tunes, you feel as if you know her well—as if she's singing just to you.

### Example 3

#### **The Eiffel Tower**

One of the most famous buildings in the world is the Eiffel Tower. The iron tower with the latticed frame was built in Paris for the 1889 World's Fair. The Eiffel Tower was supposed to be temporary, but its future is as solid as its construction.

# Writing the Conclusion

## What is it?

A conclusion is the last paragraph in your research paper, or the last part in any other type of presentation.

## Why do it?

A conclusion makes the audience feel that the presentation is complete and has a clear ending. You want your audience to feel that you supported your main idea. Your listeners also may have learned something from you.

## How do I do it?

A conclusion is, in some ways, like your introduction. You restate your topic and summarize your main idea for the audience. You can usually do this in one paragraph. Compare the introductions for these research papers to the endings you see here. Notice how they relate without repeating the same words.

### Example 1

#### **From the Brain to the Bombe: History's First Computing Machines**

Over the next half century, computing devices became smaller, faster, smarter, and cheaper. Clumsy machines evolved into efficient computers. We can thank those early ingenious pioneers, who worked with cranks and hammers, vacuum tubes, and hundred-ton machines to lay the foundation for the computer age.

### Example 2

#### **Ella**

In her later years, Fitzgerald suffered from illness, but she continued to perform, sometimes against her doctor's wishes. "Although voice and body clearly showed the signs of aging," one biographer writes, "her spirit did not." After a long career, Fitzgerald died in 1996 at the age of 78, but the legendary singer will always be remembered. For Fitzgerald, music was "a home from which she rarely ventured." Her fans will always be thankful that they were invited into this home.

### Example 3

#### **The Eiffel Tower**

People loved the Eiffel Tower after it was completed, and the negative comments faded. Two million people visited the Eiffel Tower during the 1889 World's Fair.

#### **WHAT NOT TO DO TO INTRODUCE A PAPER**

#### **DO NOT START WITH**

Hi, my name is Jennifer and this is my paper on kangaroos.  
I am doing my research on kangaroos.  
I'm going to tell you about kangaroos.

#### **WHAT NOT TO DO TO CONCLUDE A PAPER**

#### **DO NOT END WITH**

So that is my paper on kangaroos. I hope you liked it.  
I learned a lot about kangaroos. I hope you did, too.