

**W**elcome to your 8<sup>th</sup> grade research project! We invite you to embark on a journey of discovery into subjects that fascinate and amaze, dumbfound and define. You will emerge from this journey with a greater understanding of your own views, as well as a passion to share your findings with others. Over the next few weeks, you will explore an issue of personal interest with a focus on a social issue. You will need this packet, your Kealing Writing Manual, a notebook, and notecards every day to be successful.

### Paper Parameters

This paper is not a report. You should start the research process with a topic of genuine interest to you. You will then develop a well-focused question that will be the basis for your research and analysis. The final product will be a 3-5 page paper which is evidence of both research and analysis.

### Social Issues

This unit can encompass a broad array of topics that relate to social issues, both current and historic. Ultimately, your topic should be one of significance either to society or to a specific group of individuals. During day one of this project, your teacher will elaborate on the specifics of how social issues should inform your choice of a research topic.

- Tuesday, Nov. 13 / Wednesday, Nov. 14 Due: Current Events Article on a Social Issue, Project Introduction; Topic Brainstorming; Lesson: Bib and Note Cards; Setting the Tone for Research and Argumentation: Objectivity, Taking a Stand, Credible Sources, and Civility. HW due next class: Topic and Research Materials
- Thursday, Nov. 15 / Friday, Nov. 16 Preliminary Research; Review Bib and Note Cards; Lesson: Writing a Powerful and Clear Thesis Statement Due at end of class: 2 Bib and 5 Note Cards; HW due next class: Research: at least 5 more note cards.
- Monday, Nov. 19 / Tuesday, Nov. 20 8th grade fieldtrip
- Wednesday, Nov. 21 - Friday, Nov. 23 Thanksgiving holiday
- Monday, Nov. 26 / Tuesday, Nov. 27 Thesis Workday; HW due next class: Revise Thesis; Research to minimum total of 20 note cards
- Wednesday, Nov. 28 / Thursday, Nov. 29 Thesis and Research Workday. Lesson: Outlining; HW due next class: Finish Outline; Revise Thesis; Finish Research
- Friday, Nov. 30 / Monday, December 3 Lessons: Sample Paper, Parenthetical Documentation and Works Cited; Writing Workshop: Writing the Body of the Research Paper; HW due next class: Rough Draft of One Roman Numeral from Outline and Works Cited
- Tuesday, December 4 / Wednesday, December 5 Lesson: Introduction and Conclusion Writing Workshop: Peer Editing of Body and Writing of Introduction and Conclusion; HW due next class: Finish Writing Introduction and Conclusion; Completed Rough Draft
- Thursday, December 6 / Friday, December 7 Writing Workshop: Peer Editing and Revision HW: Adult Edit and Signature; Completed Final Copy of Paper (Don't forget works cited.)
- Monday, December 10 / Tuesday, December 11 Turn in Research Papers; Evaluate Research Process and Unit Reading STAAR Benchmark

# Bibliography Cards

## 5 Required

### What

Your bibliography cards will make up your Working Bibliography. Whenever you take a note or record any information from a source, you should create a bibliography card. Use these cards to help you trace your research process and to keep records of your sources. Those sources referred to in your final paper will become part of your Works Cited page.

### How

Every time you find a possible source, follow these steps:

- Make a bibliography card using a 3" X 5" index card.
- Find the appropriate bibliographic form (see guide at the end of this packet) and write it on the index card. Make sure you capitalize and punctuate the entry properly.
- In the top right-hand corner, record the source number and put a square around it. Note that the source number has nothing to do with the order (alphabetical) of the Works Cited page.
- In the bottom left-hand corner, record the place where you found your source.
- If the source has a card catalog number, record that information in the bottom right-hand corner.
- Place the card with the stack of cards that make your Working Bibliography.

	1
Asimov, Isaac. <i>The Earth's Moon</i> . Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1988.	
Austin Public Library	813.08

Fig. 1 Bibliography card for a book by a single author



fig. 2 Sample bibcard, blank.

On your bibliography card, include

- Source note: This tells where you found the source in case you need to find it again. The source listed above (fig. 1) was found in the Austin Public Library.
- Card catalog number: This number should be included, if appropriate. Write this number in the lower right-hand corner of your card. This number will help you find the source again if you need to do so.
- Source number: Each time you find a new source, give it a source number, starting with source number 1. Use this number to refer to the source on any note cards containing material from that source. Write it in the upper right-hand corner of your card and box it.

# Note Cards

## What

Your note cards provide the data that will form the substance of your paper. When writing your paper, they provide you with something to say and the credibility to say it. Without note cards and without evidence, your research paper becomes an opinion paper. The notes that you take are your claim to authority and prove to your reader that you know your subject.

## How

- Take notes on index cards.
- Use a separate card for each idea so that you can order your cards later.
- Write an analytical comment on the back of each notecard.
- When quoting, copy each letter, word, and punctuation mark exactly as it appears in the text and place quotation marks around the quotation. When paraphrasing or summarizing, be sure that you don't change the original meaning.
- Record the source number in the upper right-hand corner of the card. This keeps you from recopying the bibliographic information later. Source notes should correspond to the Working Bibliography card from which the note was taken.
- In the top left-hand corner, provide the main idea of the note. Be sure to narrow this topic information. (Fifty cards with "rights" at the top won't help you later.)
- Record the page reference immediately after the note. No "pg.," "p," or "pp" precedes the page reference and no period follows.

## Characteristics of good notecards

1. A good note card has a short title.
2. A good note card contains information, main ideas, important facts, and statistics from reference materials.
3. You have rewritten the information, main ideas, important information, and statistics in your own words or have quoted precisely.
4. Each note card focuses on only one idea or concept.
5. The back of the card has thoughtful analysis and/or extension.

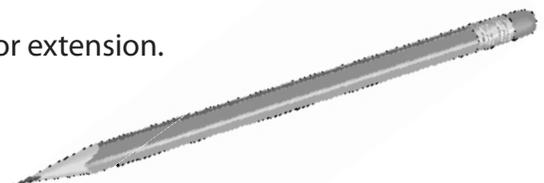


fig. 3 Sample bibcard.

4

Atchley, John A. and Susan Heeger. *The Trials of the New Haven Coven*. New York: Norton, 1990.

Austin Library, Quarry Branch      615.08A

figs. 4, 5 Sample notecards

④

Accusations

“Some claimed that they were beat up, while others thought that spells had been cast upon them.”  
20

④

Results of trials

--All but 3 in State v. Sanchez found guilty. 21

# Outlines

## What

An outline is simply the skeleton of your paper. In an outline, you decide what information needs to be presented and in what order. Feel free to arrange and rearrange as you determine what is most effective for your reader.

## How

After you've collected all of your evidence and data, you'll need to organize your material into some coherent, logical order:

- **Play cards:** Physically arrange your note cards into stacks of related ideas. Try out different combinations and make rough outlines based on those. You should have 3-4 stacks. These stacks will become the main points (I, II, III, etc.) of your outline and paper.
- **Slug them:** Once you have your cards divided into stacks, assign that pile a slug—a word or phrase that describes what is in that pile. Write the slug on the top of each card within that stack. Think of the different orders in which you could present each group of ideas and arrange your stacks. Do you have background information that should be presented first?
- **Review each “slugged” stack.** Look for relationships between the ideas and the information in each stack. Order the cards according to those relationships.
- **Create an outline using the slugs as the Roman numeral descriptions (I, II, III, etc.) and the general subtopics as the letters (A, B, C).** Note that all sections should be parallel (i.e. grammatically identical—all nouns or nouns with prepositional phrases, etc.) with each other.

Note: Somewhere in your outline, you must reach the third level (1,2,3) of evidence.



## Thesis (the map of the land)

### What:

The statement of the purpose or main idea of an essay

The thesis is the topic sentence of your paper; it is the point and the focus to which all of your information leads. It is the map or signpost to your readers showing them where they will go during your paper. All of your paragraphs and evidence should support the main idea that you've presented in your thesis. Each of your main points (the I, II, III, etc.) should tie into your thesis. The way you organize your paper will be reflected in your thesis.

Your thesis statement is a decision to follow a certain direction in your research. It will help your reader to follow a train of thought throughout your paper.

### Where:

The thesis statement is the last sentence in your introductory paragraph. Here, you're telling the reader what you will be discussing in the rest of your paper.

### How:

- Looking at your preliminary research, write a brief paragraph explaining what you will be discussing in your paper. Do not use questions or phrases.
- Take this thesis paragraph and condense it into a sentence two. Make it interesting for your reader. This is the hook that keeps them reading your paper.

### Samples:

1. If we wish never to repeat the mistakes of our past, the national debate on race relations must continue, and the works of W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington must remain an integral part of America's literary canon.

2. Modern Rock 'n' Roll started with the African American blues singers of the Mississippi River Delta, long before Elvis Presley popularized it in the 1950's.

3. Fad diets are dangerous because they rarely have been studied for long-term effects, they are typically oppositional to natural safe eating habits, and because it is nearly impossible for people to maintain a strict dietary regimen over an extended period of time.

4. "School choice" is the wrong choice for Texas – wrong for teachers, wrong for parents, and most importantly, wrong for students.

5. Leonardo DaVinci, the original "renaissance man" made numerous developments in art, medicine, and technology which continue to have a profound influence on modern life.

6. Juveniles can be diverted from crime by active learning programs, full-time sports, and intervention by mentors and role models.

## Works Cited

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- Fudge, E. L. *The Blue Elf Songbook: Very Sad Songs*. Madrid, Spain. LeToruneau University Branch Press, 1992. Print.
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- Vernon, Victor. *Social Mores and Movements in Mythological Critters*. Paris, France: LeRouge Press, 1994. Print.
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# Research Rubric

Author's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Overall Score/Comments:

<p><b>5</b> "A+" 96-100</p>	<p>A "5" meets all of the requirements of a "4," but it also appeals to the reader because it...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporates profound thought</li> <li>• evokes emotions (compassion, empathy, anger, etc.)</li> <li>• contains original or unusual ideas which have been fully elaborated</li> <li>• uses a variety of quality sources</li> <li>• evokes amazement in your teacher</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> "A" 95</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• displays evidence of research</li> <li>• all evidence clearly supports thesis</li> <li>• thesis is clear and profound</li> <li>• interesting and appealing to the reader</li> <li>• is informative and educational</li> <li>• uses appropriate genre conventions for style</li> <li>• sophisticated appropriate language or style</li> <li>• shows depth of thought and analysis</li> <li>• shows clarity; makes sense</li> <li>• authoritative/believable</li> <li>• well-chosen title</li> <li>• is focused; doesn't stray from topic at hand</li> <li>• all sources cited and documented parenthetically (works cited page correctly formatted)</li> <li>• is organized; structure is well thought out</li> <li>• exhibits professionalism</li> <li>• has excellent mechanics</li> <li>• avoids first and second person point of view and rhetorical questions</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b> "B" 85</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most research supports thesis</li> <li>• thesis is somewhat clear and profound</li> <li>• somewhat interesting and appealing to the reader</li> <li>• diverges some from genre conventions</li> <li>• shows some analysis</li> <li>• a few clarity issues; some ideas presented awkwardly</li> <li>• well-chosen title</li> <li>• is mostly focused; doesn't stray from topic at hand</li> <li>• uses a variety of quality sources</li> <li>• all sources cited and documented correctly</li> <li>• exhibits professionalism</li> <li>• has a few slight mechanical errors</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b> "C" 75</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lacks sufficient evidence of research</li> <li>• diverges from conventions</li> <li>• some ideas unclear or confusing</li> <li>• lacks focus; may be repetitive</li> <li>• lacks a variety of quality sources</li> <li>• citation errors and omissions</li> <li>• lack of professionalism</li> <li>• errors detract from understanding</li> </ul>
<p><b>1</b> 0-65</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fails to turn in complete paper</li> <li>• little attention to genre and/or style conventions</li> <li>• lacks evidence of research</li> <li>• fails to inform and educate the reader</li> <li>• plagiarism / lack of academic integrity</li> <li>• serious citation errors</li> </ul>