

Name:

Block:

## **CLUSTER 8-1 RESEARCH PAPER 2016**

**Overview:** For the next several weeks, we will be working on our research paper assignment. This is an 8th grade requirement and an assignment that all clusters work on in social studies.

The goals of this project are as follows:

1. To work on research skills and learn/practice ways to conduct quality research
2. To practice writing thesis statements and formulating opinions that can be defended, through formal writing, using facts/evidence
3. To work with a variety of different resources and databases in order to broaden our understanding of reliable information sources
4. To go through the process of preparing for and completing a long term writing assignment and to understand the necessary steps that are needed in order to successfully complete a research paper (i.e. setting goals, meeting deadlines, filling in necessary outlines, completing drafts, making edits, etc)
5. To continue to improve on our use of Noodletools as a research asset and notecard medium (used at NHS)
6. To strengthen skills such as self-editing and peer-editing
7. To dive deep into a topic of interest and to teach others - through our research and writing - about that topic
8. To practice our active learning strategies and find ways to tailor an assignment to meet our individual needs while challenging ourselves appropriately

To meet these goals, we will work closely with Mrs. Steiger in the Media Center to research a student-chosen topic related to your ELA feature article assignment. With Mrs. Steiger's support, we will use the resources available to us online and in print through various databases and online learning forums. We will organize our research using Noodletools and complete various pre-writing strategies (graphic organizers, essay outlines, etc) in order to prepare us to write our formal essay. We will go through multiple rounds of draft writing and peer-editing in order to ensure that our final product is of the quality we wish it to be.

ALL research must be CITED by creating online notecards using Noodletools. These citations and the information recorded on your notecards will be checked by Mrs. Steiger and Ms. Harding. It is very important that your information is accurately recorded and that every source is properly documented - this is the only way to avoid issues of plagiarism and give proper credit to those whose work you are relying on for your project.

This assignment will be our primary focus both in and out of class for the next three weeks, with much of class time spent in the Media Center and with access to the school's computers in order to complete our research and begin writing our essays (on Google Drive). Ms. Flanders will also be a valuable resource for us to lean on when we begin writing and drafting our papers. Ms. Harding (as well as Mrs. Steiger and Ms. Flanders) will be available daily after school if you would like additional support outside of class on any of the steps and processes that we follow throughout this project.

**Key Due Dates/Deadlines:** Below are the key due dates/deadlines for the major steps in this assignment. More details on these steps are included in this packet and will be reviewed in the classes leading up to the dates mentioned.

- Topic selection - Thursday, February 25th
- Thesis Statement - end of class Tuesday, March 1st (keep in mind that your thesis may change during research process - this happens as new information is learned and new opinions are formed!)
- Completed research using Noodletools - Thursday, March 10th
- Completed rough draft - Thursday, March 17th
- Final draft - Tuesday, March 22nd

Keep in mind that during the first week of this assignment, Ms. Harding must approve of your topic - both your general topic choice and your narrowed topic focus (including your thesis statement). If you need help coming up with your topic, we are here to help! But don't panic - it has been my experience (as both a teacher and a student) that topics don't really get cemented and solidified until research has begun. And sometimes, even after a topic is chosen, some elements of it change based on new information learned. This is all part of the research process!

**Class Schedule/Agendas:** On the following page is a tentative schedule that we will follow for the next several weeks as we work on our research papers. Use this schedule as more of a step-by-step guide - as you complete each step, move on to the next one, even if you are ahead of the due date. The sooner you get to the research and drafting process, the more time you have to receive feedback and correct any areas in need of editing before reaching the final due date. *Please note that this schedule may be altered/adapted based on student needs, schedule disruptions, or for any other reason necessary.*

*\*\*All handouts referred to in this schedule are included in a second packet that will be distributed later this week. Additional "how-to" handouts will be available in the Media Center and reviewed during specific working blocks.*

*\*\*All screencasts mentioned can be found on Mrs. Steiger's Pollard Middle School's Media Center webpage - [pollardlibrary.weebly.com/research--databases.html](http://pollardlibrary.weebly.com/research--databases.html) (Noodletools is linked to this page as well). Other important resources will be linked to Ms. Harding's homework webpage ([charding.weebly.com](http://charding.weebly.com)).*

Date	Class Agenda/Upcoming Due Dates
Mon 2/22	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce assignment/directions and discuss topic requirements</li> <li>• Join Mrs. Steiger's Google Classroom (code: 4b2we9z)</li> <li>• Review/reactivate Noodletools (watch screencast first - "2014 Revalidate Share")</li> <li>• Watch screencast on "Browsing Topics" (more on this from Mrs. Steiger tomorrow)</li> <li>• Begin browsing resources/searching for topics of interest</li> <li>• <b>HW: Watch screencast on "Browsing for Topics in Databases" posted in Mrs. Steiger's Google Classroom AND complete Google Form</b></li> </ul>
Tues 2/23	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of research databases (Mrs. Steiger)</li> <li>• Read "Step 1: Choosing a Topic" Handout (in packet)</li> <li>• Continue browsing resources/searching for topics of interest</li> <li>• Begin working on "Step 2: Narrowing a Topic" Handout (in packet)</li> <li>• <b>HW: Watch screencasts on "Database Citations" and "Creating Notecards" posted in Mrs. Steiger's Google Classroom AND complete Google Form</b></li> </ul>
Weds 2/24	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief review of Database Citations</li> <li>• Continue browsing resources/searching for topics of interest (anything you wish to use in your paper MUST be cited on Noodletools! Review screencast if you need help with this)</li> <li>• Continue working on Step 2 Handout</li> <li>• <b>HW: Step 2 Handout due tomorrow (2/25)</b></li> </ul>
Thurs 2/25	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief review of Notecards</li> <li>• Read "Step 3: Developing and Organizing Your Research Ideas" Handout (in packet)</li> <li>• Browse resources to gather information about debates within your topic (to help you come up with your opinion/what you will be proving through your research) - remember, anything you wish to use in your paper MUST be cited on Noodletools!</li> <li>• Begin working on "Step 4: Getting the Research Under Control" Handout (in packet)</li> <li>• <b>HW: Watch screencast on "Website Citations" posted in Mrs. Steiger's Google Classroom AND complete Google Form</b></li> </ul>
Fri 2/26	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to browse resources to gather information about your topic (anything you wish to use in your paper MUST be cited on Noodletools!)</li> <li>• Continue working on Step 4 Handout - you will use this to finalize your thesis statement (you are searching for evidence you can use to support your opinion!)</li> </ul>
Mon 2/29	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief review of Website Citations</li> <li>• Continue to browse resources to gather information about your topic (anything you wish to use in your paper MUST be cited on Noodletools!)</li> <li>• Complete Step 4 Handout</li> <li>• Begin working on "Step 5: Writing the Thesis Statement" Handout (in packet)</li> <li>• <b>HW: Step 5 Handout (Thesis Statement) due tomorrow (3/1)</b></li> </ul>
Tues 3/1	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p>

**Early Release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thesis Statement MUST be approved by Ms. Harding by the end of class today!</li> <li>Complete “Research Strategies - Keywords” Handout (in packet) - use this whenever you are “stuck” or can’t find what it is that you are looking for!</li> <li>Review Mrs. Steiger’s screencast on database citations</li> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>All notes to be taken using Noodletools</b></li> <li><b>HW: Watch screencast on “Creating Outlines” posted in Mrs. Steiger’s Google Classroom AND complete Google Form</b></li> </ul>
Weds 3/2	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of organizing Noodletools notecards (i.e. creating piles, organizing by paper paragraph and/or controlling idea, exporting to paper outline, etc) and using digital outline</li> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>All notes to be taken using Noodletools</b></li> </ul>
Thurs 3/3	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>All notes to be taken using Noodletools</b></li> </ul> <p><i>*Remember - you may need to change your original thesis statement based on new learnings and the information that you uncover through your research - this is all part of the process! Any changes should be approved by Ms. Harding.</i></p>
Fri 3/4	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding’s classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>All notes to be taken using Noodletools</b></li> </ul>

Mon 3/7	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding’s classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>All notes to be taken using Noodletools</b></li> </ul>
Tues 3/8	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>All notes to be taken using Noodletools</b></li> </ul>
Weds 3/9	<p>**Class in the Media Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>Research must be completed by tomorrow 3/10</b></li> <li><b>All notes to be taken using Noodletools</b></li> <li><b>HW: Watch screencasts on “How to Use In-text Citations” in Classroom</b></li> </ul>
Thurs 3/10	<p>**Class in the Media Center (LAST DAY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief Review of In-Text Citations</li> <li>Research using databases and Media Center resources</li> <li><b>RESEARCH DUE TODAY</b></li> </ul>
Fri 3/11	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding’s classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read and Complete “Writing the Introduction” Handout (in packet)</li> <li>Complete “Introduction Graphic Organizer” Handout (in packet)</li> <li><b>HW: Type your intro paragraph (based on graphic organizer)</b></li> </ul>

Mon 3/14	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and Complete "Writing the Body Paragraphs" Handouts (in packet)</li> <li>• Work on "Body Paragraph Graphic Organizer" Handouts (in packet)</li> <li>• <b>HW: Work on "Body Paragraph Graphic Organizer" Handouts</b></li> </ul>
Tues 3/15	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on "Body Paragraph Graphic Organizer" Handouts (in packet)</li> <li>• <b>HW: Type your body paragraphs (based on graphic organizers)</b></li> </ul>
Weds 3/16	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and Complete "Writing the Conclusion" Handout (in packet)</li> <li>• Work on "Conclusion Graphic Organizer" Handout (in packet)</li> <li>• <b>HW: Type your conclusion paragraphs (based on graphic organizers)</b></li> </ul>
Thurs 3/17	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer-editing of Rough Drafts</li> <li>• <b>HW: Make edits to your draft based on peers' edits</b></li> </ul>
Fri 3/18	<p>**Class in Ms. Harding's classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer-editing of Rough Drafts</li> <li>• <b>HW: FINAL DRAFT DUE TUES 3/22</b></li> </ul>