

PARENTS ROLE IN INTERDISCIPLINARY SUMMER PROJECTS

Parents you can play an important role in helping your child successfully complete their summer assignments.

Your child will be applying the Big Six Skills research method to complete their interdisciplinary assignments. There will be an abundance of information available from various sources.

The Big Six Skills research model below will help your child effectively and efficiently access this information (Eisenberg, M. & Berkowitz, R., 2003).

The Big Six Skills Research Model has six steps:

- **Task Definition:** In the task definition stage, students need to determine what is expected from the assignment.
- **Information Seeking Strategies:** Once students know what's expected of them, they need to identify the resources they will need to solve the task as defined. This is information seeking.
- **Location and Access:** Next, the students must find potentially useful resources. This is location and access – the implementation of the information seeking strategy.
- **Use of Information:** Use of information requires the students to engage the information (e.g., read it, listen to it, view it) and decide how to use it.
- **Synthesis:** Synthesis requires the students to repackage the information to meet the requirements of the task as defined.
- **Evaluation:** Finally, students need to evaluate their work on the two levels before it is turned in to the teacher. Students need to know if their work will meet their teacher' expectation for quality and efficiency.

The Big Six Skills research model requires parents and students to assume different roles. The parent(s) will assume the role of a “coach” and the child assumes the roles of “thinker and doer”. As the “coach”, you the parent can use the Big Six Skills in assisting your child by guiding him/her through each of the steps. First ask your child to explain the assignments in their own words. This is **task definition**. Parents, you can help your child by discussing possible sources of

information. This is **information seeking strategies**. By helping your child find the resources needed to complete their project, is **location and access**. This step may have to be repeated during the assignments because information needed may not be located students may not be able to identify all they need at the beginning. Parents can help their child by brainstorming with their child alternate places where information might be available. In the **use of information**, parents can discuss whether the information located is relevant and if so, help the child decide how to use it. In the **synthesis stage**, parents can ask for a summary of the organized information in the child's own words. The end of your child's assignment(s) is the evaluation of all the work that has been done. Parents, you can help with the **evaluation stage** by discussing whether the final work answers the original question(s), meets the teachers' expectation, and whether the project was done effectively and efficiently (Eisenberg, M. & Berkowitz, R., 2003).

Parents, as your child gets your help as well as assistance from the librarians, they need to think about what they need to do and find appropriate ways to do their research. This is their role as the "thinker and doer". Encourage them to be as independent as possible. Encourage and engage them in conversation about what is expected of them, and guiding them throughout the assignments using the Big Six Skills research model (Eisenberg, M. & Berkowitz, R., 2003).

Every assignment that your child has is an information problem that can be solved using the Big Six Skills. The Big Six Skills approach can help parents effectively and efficiently guide their child through assignments and at the same time help their child become an independent learner and skillful users of information.

The Big Six Skills have been aligned to the four interdisciplinary content areas social studies, science, math and reading and language arts. This alignment will help you and your child see how this research method is easily applied across the curriculum. Once your child masters research skills using the Big Six Skills model, he/she will be able to transfer these skills on to high school, college, career, and personal life.

To further your understanding of the Big Six Skills Research go to the following websites:

www.big6.com/kids/7-12.htm>.

www.big6.com/2001/11/19/a-big6%e2%84%0a2-skills-overview/>

www.big6.com

**BIG SIX SKILLS ALIGNMENT TO INTERDISCIPLINARY MATH
ASSIGNMENT
Organic Farming**

Student Activities	Big 6 Steps	Explanation
The students will identify and apply math skills to solve the seven problems	Big 6 Step 1 Task Definition	Students will apply mathematic to solve the 7 math problems connected to organic farming. Ask the questions who, what, when, where, how.
The students will show they understand the problems by making plans to solve the problems.	Big 6 Step 2 Information Seeking Strategy	What resources are needed to solve each problem? A math reference book or textbook. World Wide Web.
The students will read each problem and select or develop an appropriate problem solving strategy looking for solutions. Drawing a picture, looking for a pattern, systematic guessing and checking, making a table,	Big 6 Step 3 Location and Access	Use the Internet to locate similar math problems. Use reference and/or textbooks. Get help from parents, librarian, teacher.

chart, working a simpler problem, or working backwards to solve the problems. Select tools such as real objects, manipulatives, paper/pencil, techniques such as mental math, estimation, and number sense to solve the problems.

Use different problem-solving strategies from a variety of different types

Big 6 Step 4
Use of
information

Student will use various methods to solve the seven problems. Mental math, systematic guessing and checking, making a table, graphs, charts.

Select all of the necessary real objects, manipulatives, paper, pencil and technology to solve the problems.

Big 6 Step 5
Synthesis of
Information

Students will review all of the answers in an organized manner.

Carry out the evaluation of each problem for correct solutions.

Big 6 Step 6
Evaluation

Students will go over each problem for correct answers to see how well they did.

**BIG SIX SKILLS ALIGNMENT TO INTERDISCIPLINARY SOCIAL STUDIES
ASSIGNMENT**

Technology and Food Production During the Agricultural Revolution

Student Activities	Big 6 Steps	Explanation
Students will explore how technology and food production during the Agricultural Revolution influence the United States.	Big 6 Step 1 Task Definition	Students will ask the questions about food production during Agriculture Revolution. What, who, when, how and where.
Students will determine which resources can help them access information. The students will apply critical-thinking skills to organize and use information about Agricultural Revolution.	Big 6 Step 2 Information Seeking Strategies	Students will decide which resources are best for the their project. They must choose from primary and secondary resources. Example primary resource is a journal article reporting new findings relating to Agricultural Revolution. A Secondary resource is a history textbook.

Students will locate primary and secondary sources to acquire information about technology and food production and life on the farm. 1800 – early 1900.

Students will skim and scan the resources selected to determine if they are useful for the project.

Big 6 Step 3
Location and Access

Encyclopedias, almanacs, magazines databases, Internet are some sources of required information.

Students will analyze the information by sequencing, categorizing, comparing, contrasting methods of farming, life on the farm.

Big 6 Step 4
Use of Information

Students will use a timeline or sequencing listing 15 major historical agricultural inventions or technologies 1800-early 1900.

Students will organize and interpret information from the social studies outline, timelines, maps, databases and visuals.

Big 6 Step 5
Synthesis of Information

Students will organize all data collected about the Agricultural Revolution.

Students will evaluate the validity of a source based on language, and corroboration with other

Big 6 Step 6
Evaluation

Students will write a two page paper describing how the Agricultural

sources, and information relating
and the Agriculture
Revolution.

Revolution impacted farming
food production in the U.S.

BIG SIX SKILLS ALIGNMENT TO INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE

ASSIGNMENT

The Real Cost of Cheap Food

Student Activities	Big 6 Steps	Explanation
Students will use the webQuest to investigate the inquiries listed.	Big 6 Step 1 Task Definition	Students will use the Internet links provided
Students will find and select appropriate sources to answer the questions related to organic food production.	Big 6 Step 2 Information Seeking Strategies	Students will select sources on the basis of accuracy, validity, and appropriateness to answer the questions
Students will locate and use non-print resources	Big 6 Step 3 Location and Access	Students will go through of sorting and applying relevant, credible information.
Students will identify the main idea, and key facts.	Big 6 Step 4 Use of Information	Students will apply critical thinking skills.

Students will construct tables and graphs, using repeated trials and means to organize answers to questions.

Students will analyze answers to questions to formulate reasonable explanations.

Students will self-assess their completed project

Big 6 Step 5
Synthesis

Big 6 Step 6
Evaluate

Students will use the WebQuest to organize and display knowledge and understanding in a way that the teacher can view and evaluate.

Students will assess the steps they used to answer the questions to learn more effectively in the future. They will assess the quality and effectiveness of the webQuest.

**BIG SIX SKILLS ALIGNMENT TO INTERDISCIPLINARY RELA
ASSIGNMENT**

Getting Real About the High Price of Cheap Food

<p>How do we improve farming practices so that they do not become detrimental to our society?</p> <p>Does awareness empower and ignorance kill?</p>	<p>Big 6 Step 1 Task Definition</p>	<p>Students will brainstorm, consult with others, about the topic and formulate Research questions to address the topics. Students will ask who,what, when, where, how?</p>
<p>Students will begin to seek out all possible sources to gather information needed for project.</p>	<p>Big 6 Step 2 Information Seeking Strategies</p>	<p>Students will fine, evaluate and select appropriate sources for required for appropriate information.</p>
<p>Students will go through the process of finding, sorting and applying relevant, credible information.</p>	<p>Big 6 Step 3 Location and Access</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate their technology skills for accessing information and pursuing inquiry.</p>
<p>Students will identify the main ideas, key facts and quotes. They will</p>	<p>Big 6 Step 4 Use of Information</p>	<p>Students will make sense of information gathered from diverse sources by</p>

differentiate between fact and fiction.

identifying main and supporting ideas, conflicting ideas.

Understand requirements and importance of citing resources).

Apply critical thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, organization) to information.

Students will research and organize and prioritize information from multiple sources.

**Big 6 Step 5
Synthesis**

Students will use technology and other information tools to analyze and organize information.

Students will refine their major research questions guided by the answers to their questions.

**Big 6 Step 6
Evaluation**

Students will assess the process they used to achieve the answer(s) to their questions. They will assess the quality and effectiveness of the research process.

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